

# women talking politics women talking politics

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## Contact us:

Women Talking Politics is the newsletter of the women's caucus of the New Zealand Political Science association and the Aotearoa/New Zealand Women and Politics network.

To send editorial or comments or questions please contact [womentalkingpolitics@gmail.com](mailto:womentalkingpolitics@gmail.com)

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Dr Therese Arseneau,  
Political Science,  
University of Canterbury,  
PO Box 4700,  
Christchurch, New Zealand

Nga mihi mahana nui kia koutou, warm greetings from the Northern Hemisphere. This newsletter opens with an apology. In 1987 (during my *first* academic career) I contacted colleagues about setting up a network newsletter to circulate amongst women teaching, researching and working in politics. I had not counted on the overwhelming response from so many women over so many years. Twenty years later when I returned to university research and the responsibility to edit an edition of the newsletter returned to me, I am afraid I dropped the ball, or should that be the pen? Therefore, if you were looking for your 2008 edition of the newsletter - this is it! But, thanks to Erina Okeroa and Celia Sheerin, this edition is out just in time to mark our changing political and global climate, and to remind you of the New Zealand Political Science Conference, 30th November – 1st December 2009, being held at Auckland University. The theme for this year is 'Post-Broadcast Democracy: the political implications of media proliferation'. See page 10 for further details.

Dr Bronwyn Hayward  
Political Science UC, NZ and Visiting  
Research Fellow 2008-2011  
UK Tyndall Centre for Climate Research  
UEA, UK  
And UK RESOVLE centre for Research on  
Sustainable Values, Lifestyles and  
Environmental Change, University of  
Surrey (D3) Guildford GU27XH, UK

## Our changing political and global climates – can we “grow” and remain “happy”?

By Dr Bronwyn Hayward

University of Canterbury NZ and Visiting Research Fellow 2008-2011

UK Tyndall Centre for Climate Change UEA,

And RESOLVE Research centre University of Surrey, UK

As the world’s media attention is turning towards the Copenhagen climate talks in December, and political tempers heat up here in a recession plagued Britain, I find myself thinking a great deal about home.

Two major debates have been raging in the Northern hemisphere which have created an unusual tension in the build up to climate change negotiations in this part of the world. One is the intense debate about whether economic growth can deliver prosperity (Jackson, 2009). The other is the debate about what makes a nation’s population happy and content (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Women’s voices often struggle to be heard in international debates and yet they have much to contribute both to the climate negotiations and to these deeper questions. Around the world, women and children are the communities most at risk in a changing climate, and yet their concerns are often given scant attention (Hayward 2008, Malone 2009). In New Zealand, Maori and Pacific women and children in particular are at risk from short and medium term climate changes. Living in over crowded and/or under insured housing, they are more at risk from the spread of new tropical diseases and flooding (McMichael, 2003). Many women from these communities are already struggling with debt and yet our new government policies for climate change simply subsidize some key industries and pass the costs of meeting new international carbon targets on to the community, including the women with children who can least afford it.

In the medium term, intensive dairy farming also presents a new threat to the security of our economy and environment in a changing climate. Farmers are used to seeing themselves as the backbone of the country and amongst those closest to the land, so it is understandable that they struggle to comprehend why they are increasingly cast as villains. However perceptions about the desirability of dairy and meat consumption are changing rapidly in our affluent, climate conscious, international markets and this change has knock on effects including impacts for our service sector (leisure and tourism). New Zealand is being repositioned in the eyes of the world’s wealthiest European consumers, as a less green destination, and that repositioning combined with strong challenges to NZ tourism from Latin America and UK ‘stay-cations’ is a big problem. New Zealand has always targeted high quality consumers - these are the people who can afford to travel long distances for vacation experiences and who are prepared to pay that little bit more for quality goods, yet these are also the markets most aware of environmental degradation. New Zealand is in an increasingly vulnerable economic position if these consumers begin to view our distance, our dairy industries and our climate dithering as undesirable. The recent *Guardian* article which was so critical of New Zealand’s foot dragging on climate change policy is not a one off, but a worrying symptom of a much wider sea change in how our traditional markets view us.

To avoid repositioning ourselves in the eyes of our most affluent European and Asia markets, as climate laggards, methane spend thrifts or growth junkies, we need to engage with the wider underlying debates in climate change negotiations; debates which have significant long term implications for New Zealand. The first is the prosperity without growth debate. This debate is not new, it has been around since the Limits to Growth reports of the 1970’s, but its sophisticated re-articulation by the UK sustainability and economics commissioner Professor Tim Jackson, has captured European political attention as governments here struggle to find routes out of recession. Jackson argues we can not sustain our planet or our communities while locked into our current economic growth models and traditional patterns of consumption. It is not enough to look to greener technology or decouple our economy, (using fewer resources to achieve more), Jackson and a range of leading economic thinkers have focused attention on what type of economy would better support human and environmental flourishing. This new turn in economic thinking connects with a second significant debate here in Europe, the wellbeing or ‘happiness’ debate. The latter debate was sparked by a series of reports that noted that beyond a certain point, as countries become wealthier in terms of GDP, their populations become less happy - indeed as inequalities grow, everyone, rich and poor, starts to feel less satisfied (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009).

In New Zealand’s case, we seem to have our national happiness balance about right, the 2009 OECD report noted that New Zealanders on average report very high rates of life satisfaction overall, despite

relatively modest incomes. So if we have life so good down-under - why as a nation do we appear to be hell bent on locking ourselves into a path of unsustainable economic growth, (including intensive dairy farming and mining of conservation land) which threatens to undermine the very essence of what makes life in New Zealand so special? Our sense of well being, our environment and our ability to live well are precious. This country stands out as a nation amongst the OECD because our community feels satisfied and content despite relatively modest incomes. It is time New Zealand women's voices were heard as they speak out to defend the prosperity of our nation, its environment and its people, against the impact of out dated models of economic growth, models that make us more, not less, vulnerable to a changing climate.

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## **A critique of the New Zealand Government climate change policy**

**By Jeanette Fitzsimons, Green Party MP**

The overarching goal of all New Zealand government policy is rapid economic growth. It assumes that business as usual is possible, transition to a low carbon economy is not necessary, and that the Copenhagen talks will fail anyway, leading to no binding agreement to reduce emissions.

There is no attempt to plan for a very different kind of world with changing climate, depleting oil reserves, fresh water, fisheries and food supply and ensuing economic crises.

The emissions reduction targets belatedly offered into the Copenhagen negotiations ignore the science which requires 25-40% below 1990 levels. Even the 10-20% offered is highly conditional on New Zealand getting its way in other parts of the negotiations. New Zealand's failure to meet its Kyoto targets (emissions have in fact risen 25% since 1990) is used to argue for soft targets in the next period. Further, the Government has made clear its intention to meet almost all of any target that might be agreed, by purchasing emissions units overseas.

Internationally, New Zealand is arguing that we should give up trying to reach an internationally binding agreement on future emissions at Copenhagen and instead try for a "politically binding" agreement with no mechanisms to enforce it internationally. That is admitting failure before we start the negotiations, and failure of course would play well into this government's desire to get away with doing almost nothing.

As I write this, the Bill amending our existing Emissions Trading Scheme has just been passed despite much opposition from the Greens and other parties. It seriously weakens the legislation passed last year which was already generous to big emitters. The new Bill extends the exemption for farmers until 2015, caps the price of carbon (but not the quantity of emissions) until 2013, and gives free allocation of units on an intensity, or output basis. So as industries grow their production and increase their emissions, taxpayers will pick up 90% of the cost of the additional emissions. The free allocation will never phase out if output grows faster than 1.3% a year.

This ETS will do virtually nothing to lower emissions but will transfer huge wealth from ordinary families and small business to the big emitters. It will reward speculators but is a slap in the face for those who are already making serious efforts to reduce their emissions but who will now get little return on those investments.

The mere fact of having an ETS is being used as a reason for doing nothing more on complementary measures. The NZ car fleet is 50% less fuel efficient than in the EU, and worse than China. We have no fuel economy standards for new vehicles and work towards them has just been cancelled. Money has been diverted out of public transport into new motorways. Work on upgrading commercial buildings has been stopped.

Government policy is locking us into old technology and denying us the prosperity, jobs and environmental quality of a low carbon economy

## Climate change – our biggest environmental challenge

**By Jo Goodhew, National Party MP for Rangitata**

National is committed to combating climate change and reducing New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions. Our approach is about New Zealand doing its fair share and protecting our clean green reputation. But we're also realistic about the costs, the impacts on jobs and what a small country like New Zealand can do. We've set an ambitious target to cut emissions 10-20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. In setting the target we balanced economic opportunities with our environmental responsibilities. We've amended the Emissions Trading Scheme to make it workable and affordable. Our changes to the ETS encourage businesses and families to be more energy efficient and to use less carbon over time. We're confident that our changes to the ETS will give a strong incentive for Kiwis to adopt greener technologies. We believe that consumers will be more willing to make more environmentally friendly choices. We've also invested \$323 million into the 'Heat Smart: Warm Up New Zealand' home insulation fund. The scheme has made 20,000 houses warmer, drier and healthier in its first four months. It's improving energy efficiency, benefiting people's health and helping keep New Zealand clean and green. A further new initiative is around bio fuels. National believes bio fuels can play a part in the solution to renewable fuels. That's why we've invested \$36 million into a bio diesel grants programme, promoting bio diesel production to kick start the bio fuels industry. We've also passed legislation that exempts electric vehicles from road user charges to encourage their uptake. Electric cars have huge environmental benefits in that they are far more energy efficient and quieter than conventional vehicles, and can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With agriculture being almost half of our emissions, tackling the issue of agriculture emissions is important. That's why we've announced a Centre for Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research and are pushing for a Global Alliance to research how to cut world-wide emissions from agriculture. The Global Alliance has the potential to make significant contributions to New Zealand and the world.

Climate change is our biggest environmental challenge and National is committed to doing our part.

## Response to National's ETS

**By Liane Dalziel, Labour MP for Christchurch East**

The Labour Party agreed to sit down with National to achieve an enduring settled ETS for NZ. We believed we already had that with the scheme we had in place but we were willing to make concessions. We were likely to have agreed:

- To the dates proposed for inclusion of stationary energy and transport, with a compromise entry date for agriculture in the middle.
- To accept the proposed transitional price cap and transitional one-for two allocation rule.
- To support intensity based allocation within a cap.

All were less than ideal compromises, but it appeared to us that the only substantial issue that this required National to compromise on was the issue of the cap on free allocation in agriculture. If they had done so, an enduring and effective ETS would have been achieved (albeit at higher cost to taxpayers than the currently legislated ETS).

Instead we have an ETS, which does the opposite of what it should do and it is softer rather than tougher on emitters. The government has served up an ETS which does not properly encourage the mix of our productive economy to change towards lower emission goods. Overall, the ETS is now designed as a licence to increase emissions, especially in agriculture, rather than an incentive to reduce them.

Labour in government settled on a market solution when the "fart tax protest" organised by Federated Farmers and the National Party put paid to the carbon price option. National's carving up of the market is irresponsible. New Zealand will be poorer financially and our emissions will be higher as a consequence.

And one day when our overseas markets tell us that our clean & green rhetoric is not enough, New Zealanders will find out the real penalty that National has imposed on us.

## How well does Australian democracy serve Australian women?

A report by Sarah Maddison and Emma Partridge for the Democratic Audit of Australia<sup>1</sup>

Since 2002, the Democratic Audit of Australia, at the Australian National University, has been conducting an audit to assess Australia's strengths and weaknesses as a democracy. As part of this project we recently completed a focused audit that considers the extent to which Australian democracy has promoted gender equality.

The report considers draws upon the principles of democracy that inform the Democratic Audit of Australia, namely:

- popular control over public decision-making;
- political equality in exercising that control;
- the principle of deliberative democracy; and
- the principle of human rights and civil liberties.

In addressing these principles we consider a number of key issues in the provision of gender equality, specifically:

- the legislative framework that is intended to eliminate discrimination against women;
- the history and current functioning of the policy machinery that was developed in order to monitor the impact of public policy on women;
- the level of representation of women in Australia's parliaments, on public
- sector boards, in local government and in the judiciary; and
- the degree to which women's non-government organizations are consulted with, have access to, and are supported in their relationships with government.

We also assess Australia's progress towards gender equality against the measures outlined in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA).

On the whole, the picture that emerges from this assessment is not positive. Whereas Australia was once a leader in the global struggle for gender equality, the report makes clear that in recent years Australia has resiled from this commitment and many of the achievements of an earlier period have now been undone.

Firstly, Australia's legislative framework for the protection of women's human rights is inadequate for ensuring a substantive gender equality in areas such as women's access to, and equal participation in, the labour market. Although the SDA does prohibit discrimination against women on particular grounds in particular circumstances, it cannot compel a government to develop further legislation or policy that removes obstacles to women's equal citizenship, including their participation in the labour force. Without an entrenched constitutional or legislative statement (such as a bill of rights) promoting equality between women and men, there is little legal recourse available to address persistent inequities such as those evident in the work and family arena.

Secondly, it appears that increasing the level of parliamentary representation of women within a two-party system where each party has a binding caucus has done little to improve gender equality. While a politics of presence is inarguably important for symbolic reasons, an increase in the number of women in parliament does not mean that governments are more likely to introduce policies aimed at removing barriers to gender equality. Certain circumstances, such as the recent conscience vote in the federal parliament concerning RU486, may challenge this status quo, but in general, women in both major parties are bound to the party line.

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<sup>1</sup> **Dr Sarah Maddison** is the Senior Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales.

**Emma Partridge** is a Research Principal at the Institute for Sustainable Futures, at the University of Technology, Sydney.

The full 140 page report is available for download from: <http://www.democraticaudit.anu.edu.au/> Hard copies are also available – call the Democratic Audit on 6125 0696 or email: [daa@anu.edu.au](mailto:daa@anu.edu.au)

Thirdly, we find that the early promise of Australia's innovative women's policy machinery has not been fulfilled. The world-leading model that developed here in the 1970s and 1980s certainly had the potential to entrench gender analysis as a central and legitimate part of the conduct of government business. However, a government hostile to this goal has demonstrated the ease with which the machinery itself can be dismantled. Reliant as it was on pressure from an active and vocal women's movement, in a time of relative movement abeyance the federal machinery has been stripped of power, influence and considerable funding with barely a peep. As a result, gender analysis of many issues is now non-existent inside government.

Finally, it is evident that the women's NGO sector has been effectively marginalised from any significant policy influence or even participation in policy debates over the past decade. An earlier commitment to funding a wide range of such organisations, that would provide policy advice from a wide range of perspectives, has been replaced with a much narrower and more constraining funding model in which both the number of funded organisations and their capacity to act independently of government is restricted. The absence of these voices in public debates over work and family policy has in turn restricted the terms of the debate and allowed the federal government to pursue a policy agenda that has further entrenched gendered inequalities.

The majority of these observations have been about the federal sphere of politics. There is a growing sense that the current federal government has been intent on winding back many of the gains made by the Australian women's movement since the 1970s. Policy changes (such as changes to childcare funding) and the resistance to other policy initiatives (such as the introduction of paid maternity leave), have sent a clear signal to Australian feminists that the issues of most concern to the women's movement are not on the government's agenda. The federal government's attitude to work and family policy in particular, highlights a lack of commitment to the issues that women themselves are putting on the policy table.

In this political climate there is a legitimate expectation that women should be able to turn to their State and Territory governments to address inequities and shortfalls in policy and service provision at the federal level. However, our report finds that the sub-national jurisdictions vary widely in their response to issues of gender equality, most particularly in terms of the work done by the State and Territory policy machinery. Some States, such as South Australia, have risen to the challenge with a revitalised gender analysis framework, whereas others, such as New South Wales, have significantly downgraded their machinery and capacity for strategic gendered policy advice. The result is a decidedly unequal pattern of protection, participation, representation and appropriate policy for women depending on geographic location. In any case, there are few areas where the States and Territories can compensate for a lack of commitment to a substantive gender equality at the national level.

In summary our report raises some serious concerns about the extent to which successive decades of feminist activism and varying levels of government commitment have failed to achieve a substantive gender equality in Australia. Above all else it documents the necessity for ongoing pressure on Australian governments from extra parliamentary advocates for gender equality. Where this pressure has been weak or absent, governments in both national and sub-national jurisdictions have either neglected this aspect of democratic political equality or have actively resisted the continued pursuit of gender equality.

Looking to the future, there is further concern that rebuilding the policy machinery and the NGO sector will require a renewed struggle by a revitalised Australian women's movement. There is little evidence to suggest that a change of government at the federal level would be enough to turn the situation around. Neither major party currently demonstrates much commitment to gender equality as an essential component of democracy and therefore, as something that should be provided for as a matter of principle. Because of this, any new government is instead likely to need persuading that there is a more immediate electoral benefit to be gained from the investment of time, effort and money required to reconstruct what has recently been dismantled. Nevertheless, if substantive and entrenched gender equality is ever to be achieved in Australia the concerns we raise in this report must be addressed.

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## Accessing and Understanding Disengaged Populations: Notes on Researching Young Non-voters

By Celia Sheerin<sup>2</sup>

While New Zealand's electoral turnout statistics remain higher than most other western democracies, the trend of long-term turnout decline is clear and presents cause for concern. Youth non-voting has been identified as a particular problem, with 38% of 18-24 year-olds choosing not to vote in the 2002 New Zealand General Election. Concerned with such trends, and given a lack of existing research on youth non-voting in New Zealand, in 2006 I conducted a pilot study on youth non-voting as the basis for my Masters thesis in Political Science at the University of Canterbury.

The research compared the attitudes and experiences of 18-24 year-old voters and non-voters, drawing from depth interviews with 20 young people (including 10 voters and 10 non-voters), and a focus group discussion with four young voters. In addition to establishing a better understanding for the reasons behind youth non-voting in New Zealand, one of the key aims of the study was to evaluate the usefulness of purposive snowball sampling, depth interviews and focus groups – which might be termed feminist research tools – for accessing and understanding young non-voters. This article presents some of my findings, in the hope that they may be of use to others studying disengaged populations.

### Understanding youth non-voting through in depth interviews and focus groups

Heather Devere's 1993 study on the political attitudes of New Zealand women aptly highlights some of the benefits of using qualitative research approaches within political science (Devere, 1993). It is surprising that few other studies of political attitudes have adopted a qualitative approach; as such methods offer an apt way to access people's perceptions, opinions and understandings. Importantly, as Devere argues, by limiting the choice of possible answers quantitative surveys do not allow for the full range of opinions to be expressed and complex attitudes can be oversimplified (Devere, 1993).

In contrast, I found that the use of depth interviews and focus groups produced information-rich data, and allowed participants to speak for themselves in their own terms. This proved particularly valuable for two reasons. First, it afforded me insight into the reasoning behind young non-voters' attitudes towards politics, politicians and voting – which would have been obscured if I had followed a quantitative approach. The depth interviews with young non-voters revealed myriad reasons behind the decision not to vote, ranging from lack of interest in politics to limited knowledge about voting facilities, and from convictions about non-voting being a political statement to basic disorganisation on Election Day. Moreover, when I compared participants' questionnaire responses to the data from the interviews and focus group, I found the survey responses often misrepresented participants attitudes, and hid important information about their attitudes towards voting and elections.

Second, the depth interviews allowed new issues to emerge which neither the literature nor I had predicted. For instance, concerns about lack of education about politics at school were frequently raised by participants, and young non-voters who had been outside New Zealand for the election highlighted that there were significant barriers to voting from overseas. Likewise, these important insights would have been obscured by quantitative means of investigation.

I found that while the focus group and depth interviews had different advantages and disadvantages (depth interviews, for instance, allowed greater insight into each individual's attitudes, while the interaction of the focus group gave rise to several new ideas as participants questioned each other and built on responses together), they worked well as complementary techniques. Many of the issues raised in the focus group were 'fleshed out' in the interviews, and the use of two data collection methods enabled better understanding of 18-24 year-olds attitudes towards voting and elections.

I also found unanticipated benefits to conducting the study as a young researcher myself. Research on young people can quickly become misguided if young participants are intimidated by researchers or fall into the trap of wanting to please researchers by giving the 'right' answers to questions. However, being from the same age group, I easily established good rapport with participants – a major asset in terms of accessing their attitudes,

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<sup>2</sup> Celia Sheerin was a UC scholarship holder for her MA and highly commended in the NZ Electoral Commission Wallace Awards for her final thesis, Sheerin C (2007) *Political Efficacy and Youth Non-Voting: A Qualitative Investigation into the Attitudes and Experiences of Young Voters and Non-Voters in New Zealand* available online at <http://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/962>

perceptions and understanding – and I felt participants were more comfortable and candid speaking about their political attitudes with someone close to their own age. Similar benefits have been noted by other studies where young researchers have been an integral part of the data collection process (Hayward et al. 2006; Kirshner et al. 2003).

### **Accessing young non voters using snowball sampling**

My study confirmed the experiences of other qualitative researchers who have experienced difficulties accessing ‘hidden’ or disengaged populations not easily reached by conventional means (Wilson-Kelly, 2006; Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005, Booth, 1999). Young non-voters proved unresponsive to self-selection, and compared to the young voters in my study were much more difficult to recruit for interviews. They also tended to be more disorganised in terms of arriving at interviews on time (or at all!).

However, I found that purposive snowball sampling provided a useful way of accessing the friendship networks of young non-voters. Other studies involving hard-to-reach populations also recommend snowball sampling as a successful means to recruit participants who might otherwise be distrustful, war or simply unaware of the research (Vance, 1995; Martin and Dean, 1993; Rosenthal, 1992). I found that snowball sampling provided a useful way of accessing friendship networks of young non-voters, and also that non-voters recruited in this way were happy to be involved in the study because they were introduced to it by someone they knew and trusted.

While the snowball sampling method can be criticised for limiting the diversity of participants (because they may all be linked in the same friendship network), this can be mollified if participants are snowballed from a range of different contact people. In this vein, my study recruited participants from seven different contact people, resulting in a diverse range of perspectives and views. I would recommend this approach to others involved in small scale studies of disengaged populations.

The results of my study suggest that young non-voters in New Zealand are influenced by a wide range of factors in their decision not to vote. The depth interviews and focus group revealed myriad reasons for youth non-voting in New Zealand, and myriad solutions are therefore required in response. Declining youth turnout will not be reversed by any single measure, just as it cannot be explained by any single cause. Rather, my research highlights that a range of educational and institutional changes over both the short and long term may be needed to curb the rising trend of youth non-voting in New Zealand. The use of qualitative methods in my study – snowball sampling, depth interviews and a focus group discussion – not only allowed me to access the attitudes and opinions of young non-voters towards politics and voting, but to access them in such a way as to reveal their rich depth and inherent complexity.

\* \* \*

## **Networking Researchers**

**Huia Forbes** (Ngati Hikairo, Waikato-Maniapoto), is in her third year of a PhD at the University of East Anglia where she is part of the Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment. Huia’s work looks at the ways in which some iwi and hapu in the Kawhia region (West Coast of the North Island) are engaging with each other, their communities and local government in resource management and planning. She is passionate about her research which focuses on the relationships we have with our natural taonga and the actions that these relationships bring about. She is also interested in the ways that our regulatory frameworks (the RMA, local and regional plans as well as the institutions they have come from and are themselves creating) are changing the ways in which we think about our natural taonga.

Huia has a BA (Maori and Geography) and LLB from the University of Canterbury. She worked as a Solicitor in both New Zealand and the UK before returning to study at University College in London where she completed an MSc in Environment, Science and Society. Her PhD is funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council with whom she has a studentship. In New Zealand she is also supported by Waikato-Tainui which has awarded her a Waikato-Tainui Doctoral Scholarship as well as her iwi and hapu which have given her support and encouragement throughout.

**Huia Forbes:** PhD Student  
 The Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment  
 (CSERGE) School of Environmental Sciences  
 University of East Anglia  
 Norwich NR47TJ  
[H.Forbes@uea.ac.uk](mailto:H.Forbes@uea.ac.uk)



## Gender dimensions of climate change

By Geraldine Terry, School of International Development and Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK

**Geraldine Terry** is a PhD candidate at UEA, UK and editor of a new book, *Climate Change and Gender Justice*. It looks at the gender dimensions of climate change vulnerability, and examines climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives through a gender lens. It is published by Practical Action Publishing in association with Oxfam and is available from

<http://publications.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam/display.asp?K=e2009102714551387>

She also co-edited "[Gender Based Violence](#)" in Oxfam GB's Working in Gender and Development series. This book is aimed at gender and development practitioners, and was also published in 2007. Her book "[Women's Rights](#)", aimed at a popular audience, was published in 2007 by Oxfam GB and Pluto Press.

Geraldine writes:

There are complex links between gender relations and climate change, whether we are discussing human vulnerability to climate change's effects, adapting to those effects or reducing the levels of greenhouse gases (GHGs). A person's vulnerability to climate change depends in part on gender roles and relations. Rural women in developing countries are one of the most vulnerable groups (IPCC 2007). This is because they are often dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, do most of the agricultural work, and are responsible for collecting water and fuel. Climate change is widely predicted to affect all these areas of women's lives adversely. For instance, increased climate variability is making agriculture more unpredictable, and continuing desertification in some regions exacerbates the domestic fuel crisis. In urban areas, on the other hand, poor women are likely to bear the brunt of health problems caused by 'urban heat island' effects, increases in vector-borne diseases like malaria and, for cities situated in dry zones, water shortages (United Nations Population Fund 2007).

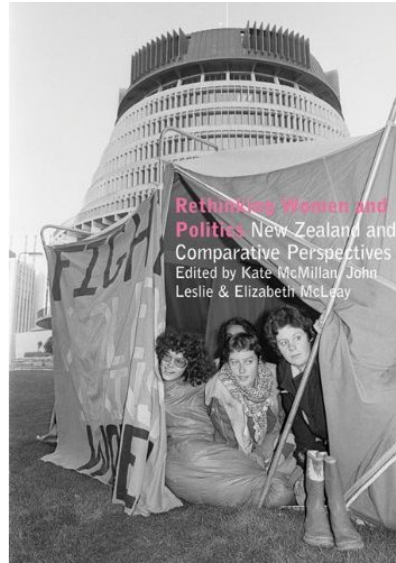
There is a tendency to present women solely as victims of climate change, rather than as agents capable of contributing to solutions, and to make broad generalisations that lump together all women in the global South. We need nuanced and context-specific analyses that can be used to identify appropriate responses, and we need to recognise that women can be powerful agents for change. Since women in the global South are especially vulnerable, adaptation resources should be channelled towards them. Women's full involvement in adaptation efforts is also essential to make sure they are *effective*. There are two main questions; what do women need to enable them to adapt to climate change effectively, and how can we support adaptation that is gender-just as well as effective?

Greenhouse-gas emissions can be reduced in several ways; switching to renewable sources of energy and using fossil fuels more efficiently, slowing the rate of deforestation, adopting more efficient agricultural practices, and, last but not least, transforming consumption patterns in industrialised and rapidly-industrialising countries. All these broad strategies also have the potential to affect gender relations in one way or another; conversely, mitigation policies that aim to change behaviour in any of these areas will need to be based on a sound understanding of gender relations if they are to succeed. As well as bringing about genuine and substantial emissions cuts, mitigation policies should do so in a way that promotes, rather than damages, gender justice.

Geraldine Terry has worked for a number of NGOs including Oxfam on gender and development. She studied for an MA in Gender Analysis in Development in the School of International Development at University of East Anglia, UK and is currently conducting post-graduate research, funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council, on gendered perceptions of, and responses to, climate risk in Uganda.

Email [G.Terry@uea.ac.uk](mailto:G.Terry@uea.ac.uk)

## New Literature and Notices



**Rethinking Women and Politics: New Zealand & Comparative Perspectives** edited by Kate McMillan, Elizabeth McLeay & John Leslie (Victoria University Press, Wellington)

Has the introduction of MMP and other social and political changes in New Zealand made a difference to women's involvement in and engagement with local and national government? Investigating the women's movement since the 1970s, this book asks why the issues defined as urgent in Catt & McLeay's 1993 book *Women & Politics in New Zealand* still have not been adequately addressed

**Peart, Raewyn. 2009. Castles in the Sand: What's happening to the New Zealand coast? (Environmental Defence Society, Waitakere City)**

This book examines the story of the New Zealand coast — what it means to New Zealanders the natural history of the coast, the ways it was utilised by Maori and European settlers, and the extraordinary post-war era of bach-building. Author Raewyn Peart sets out the social, political and economic factors that have fuelled the more recent development of the coastline, and she looks at the tension between private and public interests, Maori and Pakeha, environmental preservation and development, and the responsibilities of central and local government. The book calls for a change the management of the coast to ensure continued access for all New Zealanders, protection of our natural heritage, and responsible, sustainable development

**Hayward, Bronwyn (editor). 2008. The Politics of Climate Change: NZ and Small Pacific States (Auckland, Dunmore Books)**

Chapters include: Beyond Science: Climate change as a perfect political dilemma (Penehuro Fatu Lefale); The Potential of Civil Society Climate Change Adaptation Strategies (Iati Iati); The Effect of Aid on Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change: Insights from Niue (Jon Barnett); Nowhere Far from the Sea: Political challenges of coastal adaptation to climate change in New Zealand (Bronwyn Hayward) Climate Change Policy and New Zealand's 'National Interest' (Tom Bührs); Carbon Footprints, Life Cycle Analysis, Food Miles: Global trade trends and market issues (Caroline Saunders and Andrew Barber); Transitioning to Low-Carbon Urban Form and Transport in NZ (Ralph Chapman); Developing a Long-Term Climate Change Mitigation Strategy (Jonathan Boston); Framing Science: Climate change in the mainstream and alternative news of New Zealand (Linda Jean Kenix); Facing and Managing Climate Change: Assumptions, science and governance responses (Edward P. Weber); Exploring Perceptions of Risks and Vulnerability to Climate Change in NZ Agriculture (Nick Cradock-Henry); Some Issues for Maori Communities Raised by the IPCC 2007 Fourth Assessment (Erina Okeroa); The Impact of Neo-Liberalism on Children's Attitudes to Climate Change Mitigation (Nicholas Kirk).

# National Council of Women of New Zealand

By K J Smith

Greetings to Women and Politics Newsletter Readers

My name is KJ Smith and I am the new Project Coordinator for The National Council of Women of New Zealand. One of my main projects for the next 18 months is to collect and collate information, research, data and evidence for CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).

## What is CEDAW?

CEDAW is the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Convention defines discrimination against women as,

... any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

## Why is it important for New Zealand Women?

New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in January 1985. Every four years the New Zealand Government reports to the CEDAW Monitoring Committee and at the same time, NGOs are also encouraged to write the Alternate Report.

This reporting process provides a way for New Zealand women to tell the government and the international community if and how they are discriminated against.

## How you can get involved:

Contributing to the consultations on CEDAW is your opportunity as a group representative, or an individual woman to oppose the barriers women and girls face in this country. This work helps to keep the New Zealand Government honest. But more than that, your participation can reach beyond these shores by influencing the UN Monitoring Committee on how it critiques the performance of other countries.

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is facilitating the nationwide consultation process to produce the Alternate NGO CEDAW Report 2010. One of the reasons we facilitate this report is to minimize the cost to other organisations in the sector allowing more groups to be involved in the process. At this stage we are collecting the contact details of those organisations that wish to be involved in this process or to receive information and updates of our progress.

If you would like more information on CEDAW and the NCWNZ's input into the project please go to <http://www.ncwnz.org.nz>. On this website you can also learn about what the National Council of Women of NZ are and what we do. Otherwise you can visit the United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw> or <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm> to find out more about the Convention. If you would like to see the 6th Government Report from The Ministry of Women's Affairs you can go to: <http://www.mwa.govt.nz/our-work/international/cedaw.html>

Kind regards,

**K J Smith**  
**Project Co-ordinator**  
**National Council of Women of New Zealand**  
**10 Park St**  
**PO Box 12 117, Wellington**  
[www.ncwnz.co.nz](http://www.ncwnz.co.nz)

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## Notices of Conferences

### The New Zealand Political Studies Conference

**Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December**

The annual conference of the New Zealand Political Studies Association will be held at the University of Auckland on November 29-December 1, 2009. A welcome reception will be held in the evening of November 29 and a Conference Dinner will be held in the evening of November 30.

The theme of the conference is *'Post-Broadcast Democracy: the political implications of media proliferation'*.

Keynote Speaker [Professor Terry Flew](#) (Media and Communication, Creative Industries Faculty, Queensland University of Technology) will be speaking on the topic of *Digital and Social Media, the Public Sphere and News Media*.

Opening address is by [Hon. Phil Goff](#), Leader of the Opposition and former Lecturer and alumnus of the University of Auckland Department Of Political Studies.

The conference will run five simultaneous streams presenting papers in the fields of: Political Theory, New Zealand and Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Communications and Media, Public Policy and Urban Politics. Submissions for presenting papers have now closed.

#### Stream Coordinators:

**Political Theory:** Steve Winter ([s.winter@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:s.winter@auckland.ac.nz))

**New Zealand and Comparative Politics:** Jennifer Lees-Marshment ([j.lees-marshment@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.lees-marshment@auckland.ac.nz))

**International Relations:** Steve Hoadley ([s.hoadley@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:s.hoadley@auckland.ac.nz))

**Political Communications and Media:** Joe Atkinson ([j.atkinson@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.atkinson@auckland.ac.nz))

**Public Policy and Urban Politics:** Michael Mintrom ([m.mintrom@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.mintrom@auckland.ac.nz))

Please see <http://nzpsa.wordpress.com/next-conference/> for further details

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### The UK Women & Politics Conference: February 19<sup>th</sup> 2010

The PSA (UK) Women & Politics Group, and conference organizers in 'Politics at The University of Manchester', invite paper abstracts for the forthcoming conference *Shifting Agendas*. This conference will showcase gender research from across the discipline of Politics. Colleagues researching women & politics will be all too aware of the need to work across identity boundaries and to incorporate conceptions of intersectionality in their research whether it is in policy, institutions and party politics, international relations, Europe or feminist theory. In addition, this conference offers space to think about the placement and assessment of such research within the discipline. We welcome paper proposals within the following broad four strands:

- *Theorizing and Operationalizing Intersectionality*  
This strand highlights papers considering 'intersectionality' in theory, policy or practice.
- *Conserving Feminism*  
Papers could consider party positioning, 'the women's vote', women in politics/political parties, institutions. In addition, papers would be welcome on the theme of generational shifts within feminism and/or feminist theory.
- *Gender & the profession*  
This strand focuses on the assessment of 'gender research' within the discipline.
- *Sexuality & Politics*  
This strand features papers in this growing area of research from all perspectives in the discipline, including theory, policy, representation and governance.

**Key note speakers:****Paisley Currah (CUNY) and Wendy Smooth (OSU)**

- Paisley Currah (CUNY) recently co-edited *Transgender Rights* (2006; with R. M. Juang and S. P. Minter) which was a Lambda Literary Award finalist. His most recent article is "We Won't Know Who You Are: Contesting Sex Designations on New York City Birth Certificates" (*Hypatia*, 2009, co-authored with Lisa Jean Moore) and current book project is entitled *The United States of Gender: Legislating, Litigating, and Regulating (Trans) Gender*. Paisley serves on the APSA Committee for the Status of LGBTs in the profession and is the president-elect of the ASPA Sexuality & Politics Section. He is on the editorial board of *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *GLQ: A Journal for Lesbian and Gay Studies* and *Women Studies Quarterly*.

- Wendy Smooth (OSU) current book *Perceptions of Power and Influence: The Impact of Race and Gender on Legislative Influence*, examines the impact of race and gender on the distribution of power and influence in U.S. state legislatures. Her work considers the ways in which institutions preference gender and racial norms through their institutional arrangements, norms, preferences and day to day operating procedures. Wendy is active in APSA Women & Politics Section and serves on the editorial board of *Politics & Gender*.

**Registration and Accommodation:**

Registration deadline is January 10, 2010. Limited places – register early

Venue: Hulme Hall, M14 5RR, The University of Manchester, UK

Please contact Angelia Wilson, Politics, at the University of Manchester: [a.r.wilson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:a.r.wilson@manchester.ac.uk)

If you are looking for accommodation, you can maybe stay at the Princess Hotel on Portland Street.

Booking directly through ConferCare (0161 306 4089): You will need to quote "Hulme Hall" as the venue for the conference. Janet, Linzi or Karl will take care of you. The rate at the Princess will be £50.00 B&B and you will need to provide a debit/credit card to guarantee the room. Payment will be on departure.

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**On behalf of Dr Bronwyn Hayward (editor) - thank you to those who contributed to the November 2009 Issue of *Women Talking Politics*; the news letter of the women's caucus of the New Zealand Political Science Association. If you would like to contribute an article to the next edition of 'Women Talking Politics', please email: [womentalkingpolitics@gmail.com](mailto:womentalkingpolitics@gmail.com)**

**For any further subscription enquires, please contact:**

**Dr Therese Arseneau,  
Political Science,  
University of Canterbury,  
PO Box 4700,  
Christchurch, New Zealand.**

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