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AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND WOMEN AND POLITICS NETWORK

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The idea was born out of meetings of the NZ Political Studies Association Conference.

The aim is to promote communication between women teaching, researching or interested/involved in politics/public policy (in paid or unpaid work).

Over 300 copies of this newsletter have been circulated. Newsletters are published two/three times a year.

NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER

The theme for the next newsletter will be "Women and the Law". If you are interested in writing an article, have information for our teaching and research news section, a book you would like to review, or information about relevant conferences, please contact:

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WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS: A CROSS-NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

by **JENNIFER CURTIN**

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In recent years there has been increasing interest in the divergent development of trade union membership in western countries. Women are a sizeable component of the union movement, yet few previous studies have incorporated a gender focus. This paper is drawn from a larger project in which I seek to rectify this omission by surveying the main patterns in women's union membership and representation in unions across countries and over time.

Women can no longer be seen as a supplementary and temporary feature of the paid labour force. Between 1960 and 1985 women's labour force participation rose by 40 percentage points in Sweden, Denmark, and Norway; close to 30 percentage points in Australia, the United States, and the Netherlands, while the German speaking countries, along with Italy, Ireland and Japan showed smaller increases. Regardless of this variation, these participation rates have proved remarkably resilient to the various periods of economic crisis experienced cross-nationally since the 1970s.

Lovenduski (1986:166) argues that such increases could be expected to have had at least four effects on economic associations such as trade unions: an influx of women into trade unions; an increase in women on the decision-making bodies of unions; an accommodation of women's demands in union agendas; and more women being nominated by these organisations onto corporate bodies. It is the first two of these effects I focus on in this article.

When looking at the unionisation rates of women across countries the most obvious aspect is the variation that exists between countries. In 1989, female union density levels vary between 98% in Sweden and 12.6% in the United States. Despite this variation similar patterns emerge with respect to changes over time. While in the early years of the trade union movement a common trend across countries was to exclude women, this became increasingly unjustifiable as women became a permanent feature of paid employment. Between 1960 and 1989 there has been an increase in women's union density in seven of the ten countries looked at here¹. This was quite substantial in Denmark and Sweden, and moderately so in Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom. The US, Austria and Netherlands were the exceptions.

¹I have data for ten countries (Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden, United States, United Kingdom).

The majority of the increase in women's unionisation across countries occurred between 1970 and 1980, particularly in the Scandinavian countries where, during the same period there was massive and rapid expansion in public expenditure and particularly welfare state expenditure. In Denmark between 1968 and 1974 public sector employment increased by 46%, much of which was picked up by women (OECD, 1991). In Sweden, women account for 87 percent of total health, education and welfare employment growth (Esping-Andersen, 1990:202).

Between 1980-90 in seven of the ten countries, a decline in women's union density occurred. Only Sweden, Denmark, and Canada show any continuing growth tendency during this period. Such patterns reflect what has occurred with respect to overall union density during the same period. In addition, although generally women's unionisation rates are less than men's across almost all countries (the exceptions being Sweden and Finland), female union density has not declined as rapidly as male unionisation over the last thirty years.

While Lovenduski's claim that increases in women's labour force participation would lead to increases in women's union membership, this is yet to be reflected in the upper echelons of the union movements. According to the European Trade Union Confederation only two confederations had women leaders in 1993: the French CFDT and the Belgian FGTB (ETUC, 1994). By 1995, the Swedish white collar confederation and the Australian Council of Trade Unions also had women leaders.

At the executive committee level the comparative position of women in national confederations is slightly better. Data from the ETUC indicates that across countries there has been an increase or at least a maintenance in the levels of women's representation between 1981 and 1993. However, in only six of the nineteen confederations for which there is data does the number of women on executives come close to matching the proportion of female membership (ETUC, 1994).

Several union confederations now have a system of reserved seats, which appears to ensure at least a minimum level of representation, although in the cases of Australia, Italy and the UK it has served to increase the representation of women quite substantially. Such developments have focused on rule changes concerning the selection of representatives, which is usually done by adding seats rather than displacing the existing seat holders. This strategy has the immediate effect of increasing the numbers of women on boards and committees, but risks being labelled as tokenism and may marginalise such women from important decision-making and collective bargaining (Trebilcock, 1991).

ETUC figures also show that at trade union congresses female representation is low, and rarely involve a quota system. Women are more likely to be in appointed official positions than elected ones, yet it tends to be the latter who have voting rights on policy issues. Finally, with respect to negotiation and collective bargaining teams, women are very poorly represented and information on the participation of women at this level is difficult to obtain (ETUC, 1994).

Trade unions have been advocating policies to promote women for approximately twenty years now, yet the picture is still grim. The number of women in upper echelons of union confederations seldom comes close to matching the proportion of female membership. So

what implications do such statistics have for trade union policy-making, the democratic nature of trade unions, and for union strength in general?

While there has been an overall increase in women's trade union membership over the last thirty years, in many countries women continue to make up a large proportion of *potential* union members. While recruitment is a major issue for the union movement as a whole women have yet to be recognised as an explicit recruitment challenge. Having trade unions appear more 'women friendly' through better representation of women in official positions could be seen as a means by which these potential members become actual members, thereby increasing union strength.

It is apparent that despite the growth in women's membership, the increase in the representation of women has been slow, and women remain proportionately under-represented within union hierarchies. It would seem that at least in the short term, affirmative action strategies or quotas of some kind are necessary if the representation of women is to increase, thereby allowing unions to adapt more quickly to their changing membership environment.

Finally, in this period of globalisation and internationalisation, trade unions are having to adjust to substantial changes to the environment in which they operate. In Australia this has recently involved the undermining of trade union involvement in shaping economic and social policy. Accepting, acknowledging and providing voice for different groups of workers within trade unions therefore becomes increasingly necessary if unions are continued to be viewed by governments and employers as representative of 'the working class' in public policy making arenas.

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FREE TO WORK? SACRIFICING WOMEN AT THE FREE MARKET ALTAR

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Five years have passed since the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act, a piece of legislation which, the reformers claimed, would deliver individual freedom for all, and put

pay, so to speak, to gender differentials in the labour market. The 'market', after all, can not discriminate. Penelope Brook, in Freedom at Work, quotes E.F. Paul (1989):

Rather than condemning the market system, feminists ought to be glorying in it, for it has proved remarkably adaptable to women's evolving desire to work full-time, to work throughout their lives, and to work in new and challenging jobs...(p.149)

Let's leave aside for the moment the rather generalised judgement of what women want, and Paul's narrow definition of 'work'. Where's the party to glory in the advancements for women created by five years of a market oriented employment system? Proponents of the Act continue to glory in its success. A recent article by Wolfgang Kasper, published by the Centre for Independent Studies and entitled *Free to Work*, worships whole-heartedly at the altar of the free market, and claims that the ECA has delivered, among other things, "equity of opportunity". (p.52) Interestingly, although somewhat unsurprisingly, gendered outcomes do not figure in this article. This may be a reflection of the unswerving commitment to the individual, through which it may be inferred that one's gender is not a relevant variable in the 'proof' of the Act's success. Or it may be that the omission is intentional. In-depth research strongly indicates that there have been gendered impacts resulting from the ECA - but unevenly burning incense sticks might detract from the worshipping ritual.

Since the ECA has taken away the tools with which analysts can scrutinise post-ECA developments (even those contracts lodged with the Department of Labour are not openly accessible), commentators have had to rely on anecdote, official statistics and/or expensive survey research for analysis. Anecdote is unreliable. Official statistics are often in the form of averages. Kasper, for example, states that the average increase in weekly earnings between 1991 and 1994 has been 0.4%. This is nothing to write home about in any event, but such a figure obscures the complexities of wage movements, which will differ according to such variables as skill level, industry, occupation, ethnicity and gender.

Also used as an offering to the (free market) gods are statistics which show increases in employment since the Act took effect. In fact, female (paid) labour force participation has increased more than that of our male counterparts. This may be good news, but there is a need for caution. Firstly, it would be dubious to solely congratulate the ECA for employment growth. Greater female labour force participation is by no means confined to New Zealand's shores. Moreover, simply citing these statistics is not good enough - there will be several reasons for the growth in women's participation in the paid workforce. My suspicion is that for many, entry to the labour market has not been due to the ECA ushering in brave new opportunities. That women still predominate in the growing pool of part-time and casual work is testimony to the need for caution. Statistics of participation *per se* tell us nothing about the nature of a person's work, its quality or lack thereof, nor do they take into account wider economic conditions and variable circumstances. Reduced income support (together with tightened eligibility criteria), the move to market rentals, increases in education and health care costs, all act to limit the choices of many, such that participating in a low income insecure labour force becomes more of a necessity. This phenomenon may gel with the neo-liberal notion of 'self-reliance', but notions of choice and equity of opportunity are very questionable.

So what does gender based research of post-ECA developments show us? A 1993 analysis by Suzanne Hammond and Raymond Harbridge¹ concludes that the ECA has disadvantaged women in the paid workforce. Women are less likely than men to have received basic wage increases, and where basic wage increases have been achieved they have been, on average, a third less than those received by men. We are less likely to have contracts which have penal and overtime rates built into them, and in contracts which continue to include penal and overtime rates, women are more likely than men to have had these rates reduced. We are also less likely to receive productivity based payments.

Industry focused research further supports the argument that the ECA has had gendered impacts. Research by Raymond Harbridge and Maryan Street² into post-ECA experiences of women in the service industry concludes that "[t]he combined effects of new working time arrangements and for some, the lowering of base pay rates in new employment contracts has meant that 30 percent of those who responded have experienced a reduction in take home pay - and that finding may underestimate the true extent of the reductions experienced." My research, comparing work experiences in the male dominated plastics industry and the female dominated hotel/restaurant industry show that the latter has fared considerably worse since 1991 in indicators such as basic wage rates, provision of overtime and penal rates, job related allowances, workplace training, and job permanence³.

These pieces of research, as well as many others which can't be discussed here, show that there continues to be differential outcomes for men and women in the labour market, and the Employment Contracts Act, rather than reducing gender gaps, has exacerbated them. We need to look beyond simple participation to patterns of the quality of participation being experienced in the paid workforce. The ECA has magnified the vulnerability of workers in traditionally vulnerable segments of the workforce, where women continue to predominate.

Hence the reason for no party from feminist quarters. Overall, women can not afford to worship the ECA as Kasper does. Then again, maybe it is due to a widespread discontent that Kasper resorts to using a statement by that well known labour market analyst and sometime mountain climber Sir Edmund Hilary to support his beliefs.

¹Suzanne Hammond and Raymond Harbridge, "The Impact of the Employment Contracts Act on Women at Work", *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol.18, no.1, April 1993. The authors' findings are taken from a database established by Raymond Harbridge, which is the most comprehensive available for post-ECA analysis. At the date of publication, the database contained collective contracts covering 187,000 workers, 47.5% of whom were women. The authors stress "that the data reported cannot claim to be a complete dataset" - it is confined to collective contracts and relies on voluntary provision of contracts by unions and employers. The database is therefore likely to include 'better' contracts.

²Raymond Harbridge and Maryan Street, "Labour Market Adjustment and Women in the Service Industry: A Survey", *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol.20, no.1, April 1995, pp 32-33.

³C Dixon 'Intervening to Opt Out: the State and the New Zealand Labour Market', paper presented to the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, Melbourne, 1995.

LOOKING BACK IN ANGUISH?

by **ROBIN INGRAM**

Heading into the 1990s, those women who had been involved with labour market reformation over the previous two decades could look back with justifiable pride. Against opposition from groups both outside the organised labour movement and, sadly, groups inside it, they had campaigned for and helped to achieve some substantial legislative successes, which were assist, protect and defend women's participation in the paid workforce. The Equal Pay Act, the introduction of the Human Rights Commission, the Maternal Leave Act followed by the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act of 1987, and the observation of equal employment opportunity (EEO) policies had been the result of a concerted effort by many different women (and men) representing a variety of interest groups. And at least some acknowledgement of their dual role in the paid workforce and in the home was happening. By the end of this period women were in the strongest position ever viz-a-viz having the formal means at hand to protest and defend themselves against discriminatory employment practices.

And the legislation did have some positive outcomes. The Equal Pay Act required private sector employers to progressively pull gender differential wage rates together. Despite opposition from male workers and outcries from employer groups that this would bring financial destitution on the country, it did not. Under the aegis of the Human Rights Commission, some major cases against discrimination occurred. And once again, some women found themselves involved in a struggle with both their own union and their employers. The Ocean Beach freezing workers adamantly resisted giving the same employment prospects to women as to men. And the response of the Air Stewards and Hostesses Union to a case brought by a group of air hostesses was hostile, to say the least.

The existence of this sort of resistance proved just how necessary it is to have a formal structure in place, one not dependent on the goodwill or otherwise of others whose interests or privileges could be challenged. This was a lesson, apparently, not taken to heart.

So, by the end of the eighties, women could look back with pride, and prepare themselves to continue the fight for further improvements, which were many. Occupational segregation remained a distinctive feature of the NZ labour force, generally characterised by the number of women at the low paid and unskilled end, and their grouping in a relatively small number of occupations. Prue Hyman, researching employment equity before the 1990 Employment Equity Act was passed, found that of the nineteen lowest paid industrial groupings, fourteen were female dominated (Hill, 1992). In 1990, 51 percent of female employees were to be found in six occupational groups - clerical, sales, teaching, medical, typing and bookkeeping.

Parental leave had been a major step forward, but since it was unpaid it still left NZ considerably behind the rest of the world. The Equal Pay Act had reduced gender wage discrimination by eliminating separate male and female rates in various awards and collective agreements, and consequently the ratio for average hourly earnings narrowed from about 73 percent to 78 percent during the implementation period of the Act (Hyman, 1993). After 1987, the wage differential decreased insignificantly and there remained a desire for change. A new organisation, the Campaign for Equal Value, Equal Pay, took up the flag and the result was a new piece of legislation, the Employment Equity Act 1990. This Act was composed of two parts - EEO and Pay Equity. The latter, the most contentious part of the legislation, was aimed at eliminating the traditional undervaluing of 'women's work'.

So this was the industrial relations environment at the beginning of the 1990s, although it was operating within the broader economic environment of Rogernomics progressively set in place after Labour's 1984 election victory. Based on laissez-faire economic theory, Labour proceeded to reduce state involvement in all areas of the economy. Labour market policy, however, stood out as an area which Labour was reluctant to radically reform. Presumably, some form of agreement existed between the government and the trade union movement that the structure of industrial relations would remain relatively untouched, in return for the union movement remaining quiet. And it was presumably because of the existence of some such agreement that the Employment Equity Act was passed at all, an act completely at odds with Labour's ideology at that time.

With the advent of a National Government in 1990, no time was wasted in completing the job that Labour had begun. The Employment Equity Act was immediately repealed, and the government introduced the Employment Contracts Act 1991 (ECA). This Act altered the structure of industrial relations in the most dramatic change since the 1930s.

At the time of its introduction, unions in nearly all industrialised countries were seeing a gradual drop-off in union membership. In response to this, unions were having to alter their organising methods and their responses to membership issues. The NZ union movement had already seen some movement towards enterprise bargaining, with the central union leadership favouring the gradual emergence of industry-structured unions who, with increased numbers, would have greater resources to push for industrial democracy initiatives (Hyman, 1994).

Even before the introduction of the ECA, there had been increasing numbers of part-time, casual jobs, jobs which tend not to have associated benefits, which tend to be difficult to organise, and which women tend to move into. Moreover, a swing away from production and towards the service industries moves industrial strength away from blue collar, predominately male workers, who have long been the traditional union membership.

Some unions were already involved with internal change, moving towards a less male hierarchical oriented organisation, and expanding the internal democratisation of the union. For example, Syd Jackson, as secretary of the Northern Clerical Workers Union, changed the union's procedure from holding a General Meeting twice a year, in Auckland, to having over thirty General Meetings, twice a year, all over the top half of the North Island (Fraser, 1995).

Consequently, when the ECA was introduced, a slow process of change was taking place in some unions. The ECA precipitated an unnaturally fast rate of change (as also happened in other areas of the economy). How did this Act affect women in the paid labour force and the unions which represented them?

The Act is based on an employment relationship governed by principles of "freedom of contract", where individuals are "free" to make whatever bargains they please with whomever they please (Hammond and Harbridge, 1993). The Act removed compulsory unionism compulsory arbitration disappeared, and no mechanisms were put in place to ensure that bargaining takes place. The employer can refuse to come to the table, and if they do come to the table can refuse to settle an agreement. Strikes to settle an agreement binding more than one employer became illegal. This effectively gives employers the power to unilaterally choose enterprise bargaining even if the workers either individually or collectively choose some other form of agreement. And "unions" have been removed from the statutes. There is no process for registration or recognition of unions, no specification of their rights, roles of obligations. As Angela Foulkes of the CTU points out, this makes it difficult for unions to claim a place in negotiating key elements of industrial policy or of wider social and economic policy.

Of course, an industrial relations system based on the ECA is still unfolding. But some effects were immediate. Unions instantly lost enormous numbers of members. The National Distribution Workers Union (NDU) and the Service Workers Union (SWU) - both unions with about three-quarters of their total membership women - suffered total membership losses of about 40-50 percent (Oxenbridge, 1995). Overall, by early 1996, union membership had reached its lowest point in a decade ('Troubled Unions considers mergers', Evening Post, 1.2.96). The loss of members and the corresponding loss of financial resources saw some unions collapsing totally, like the Communication and Energy Workers Union which disappeared in late 1995. Other unions responded by taking over or merging with each other. Since 1991, 12 unions have merged and others are still proceeding. The Service Workers, the National Distribution Union and the Food and Beverage Workers are currently committed to a process of amalgamation.

These three organisations, amongst other common interests, each has a high proportion of female membership. However, for many other women unionists, amalgamation brings with it the fear that women's interests will be swamped if women find themselves thrown in among larger numbers of men who don't know or don't care about issues of significance to women. The same holds true of the move to enterprise bargaining, where a small group of women, say the clerical staff, would find themselves at a severe disadvantage when it came to having issues which may be more specific to women represented at the bargaining table.

The jury is still out on this one, but it is true that some unions with predominantly male memberships are responding to women's issues. In 1995, the Dairy Workers Union, with a female membership of about twenty percent, had a major investigation into the employment experiences of their women members, and their relationship to the union. Conducted by Alison Enright of The Working Women's Resource Centre, the women were broadly questioned on a variety of topics, including what specific workplace topics/issues were of significance to them, and what motivated or inhibited them from becoming more closely

involved with the union and its leadership echelon. Recommendations were put in place for active measures to be taken.

The Wood Industry Union, with a tiny female membership of only about two percent, is currently applying to the EEO Trust for funding for an EEO project.

And it is of significant note that the Working Women's Resource Centre, itself funded partially by trade union donations, has survived the shakedown following the introduction of the ECA. In an environment where simply attempting to retain wage rates and conditions of employment suddenly took on enormous significance, the continued existence of the Resource Centre can be seen as an acknowledgement of women's participation in the union movement.

Perhaps of significance is the fact that women are entering the labour force at a faster rate than men, in the areas of both part-time employment and full-time employment. Unions, if they are to attract and retain membership, must make themselves 'attractive' to women members, or find themselves irrelevant.

Unions have had to respond to the loss of the financial protection afforded them by compulsory unionism. Many commentators argue that compulsory unionism was particularly good for covering the most vulnerable group of workers, making it literally easier to find them and thus to pass on negotiated benefits. Others do not agree, arguing that compulsory unionism encouraged the growth of a top heavy, male, hierarchical organisation, that, once firmly established, showed little interest or inclination to accommodate interests of other groups within the union movement, groups like women, for example. It was this structure that union women ran head first into when fighting for the gains of the 1970s and 1980s. Other countries without compulsory unionism have in fact been considerably more successful than NZ in developing much stronger conditions of employment - Sweden is one such case; and Australia, without a compulsory mechanism, has been far more successful than NZ in closing the gender wage gap.

In a study done in 1992, Boxall and Haynes looked at the 20 percent of contracts lodged with the Labour Department which had been negotiated without union involvement. They reported that the reasons cited included fundamental agreement with the employer about the need for changes which the unions have opposed, as well as a sense of alienation from union politics, and workers' belief they can negotiate better deals than the union (Boxall & Haynes, 1992). Boxall and Haynes also, not very surprisingly, found that the weakest group of workers, covered by those unions most dependent on the conciliation and arbitration system because it enabled them to win award gains first achieved by the stronger unions, had been the most severely affected the ECA; and that union membership in this area had fallen by between 20 and 40 percent. This would seem to suggest that no real empowerment of that group of workers had taken place.

So, with the loss of compulsory membership, unions had to alter the way they dealt with their members, and to reassess their organising strategies. Certainly some of the unions with large female memberships have risen to the challenge. Sarah Oxenbridge, of Victoria University, has done a comparative study of the experiences of the Service Workers Union and the National Distribution Union post 1991 (Oxenbridge, 1995). Both these unions are

characterised by a large female membership and high levels of staff turnover. The Service Workers have adopted the "organising model" of unionism, which, Oxenbridge explains, focuses on the use of 'gender-conscious organising styles and organisers who are representative of the female and minority workers who they are organising", and is aimed at involving membership participation and correspondingly increasing their commitment to the union and their sense of empowerment. Oxenbridge found that officials of both unions expressed uncertainty about how appropriate the organising model is for NZ conditions, amongst other things that the high level of staff turnover militated against it, as did the number of part-time workers. But FinSec, the financial sector union, has also taken on the organising model. And a study by Geoff Plimmer (of Victoria University) found that using the organising model resulted in a much increased level of commitment to the union (Plimmer, 1996).

Not surprisingly, the government and business interests constantly tell us that the ECA has been an outstanding success. Jenny Shipley was recently quoted as saying that it had done more towards providing equity for working women than any other development for a long time (Hyde, 1996).

Universal paid parental leave seems as far away as ever, although a few private sector agreements have been made. The National Distribution Union succeeded in negotiating two weeks paid parental leave in an agreement with Woolworths in 1995, and within that union there are a handful of similar agreements. Accounting firm Price Waterhouse are believed to have been the first company in New Zealand to offer a group of staff three months paid maternal leave when they reached an agreement last October that women who had worked for the firm for seven years could take three months leave on full pay or six months on half pay ('Firm pays maternity leave for staff', Dominion, 17.4.96).

These meagre provisions are a start, but quite pitiful compared to arrangements in other countries. Sweden, for example, offers a year's paid leave at 80 percent (90 percent until a couple of years ago when it was cut back) of the recipient's salary. Alison Enright commented in an interview that New Zealand, Swaziland, Lesotho and the United States were the only members of the United Nations lacking statutory provision for paid parental leave.

Parental leave was provided for much more broadly in the state sector prior to the ECA, but it has been lost in the roll-back of employment conditions following the legislation. Andrew Norton, the Northern Area Manager of the Nurses Organisation, pointed out recent contracts in that industry where nurses have trade off paid parental leave in order to keep other conditions (like a collective contract).

And a couple of studies have found that even the taking of unpaid leave is problematic. One such study, undertaken by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, discovered parents who had applied for leave and not been granted it by employers, or who had been actively discouraged from taking it.

Currently a coalition of various women's groups are campaigning for paid parental leave of twelve weeks for all employees, with payment being set at 100 percent of earnings up to the

level of the average male wage. ('Oh baby, it's hard for kiwis to get paid parental leave', Sunday Star Times, 19.5.96).

Equal employment opportunities have received a large degree of official recognition in the 1990s environment, and this is because it gels so nicely with laissez-faire philosophy. After repealing the Employment Equity Act the National government established a working party on Equity in Employment. Its recommendations were rejected by the government, who preferred a voluntary promotion of EEO through a joint private/public sector trust, the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust. The Trust has about 170 member organisations, and is currently involved in a project called Work and Family Directions, along with the Women's Affairs Ministry and the Employers' Federation. The project aims at finding ways to balance women's paid employment and home life, after a survey by Women's Affairs found that employers considered EEO to have cost implications. EEO is entirely voluntary, and seemingly an uphill battle. Unions do succeed in applying for and getting EEO in place in individual companies. Early this year FinSec succeeded in establishing one such policy with the insurance company National Mutual. But installing EEO policies is entirely dependent on the goodwill of employers, and subsequently not an effective way of achieving employment equity.

Indeed, apart from the question of equal pay, other forms of employment discrimination are still sadly with us. Alison Enright gives anecdotal evidence of women lacking access to training (as, in fact, do many unions) and being denied promotions to higher paid positions (this was an issue that arose in the Dairy Workers survey mentioned above). These sorts of discriminations are very difficult to prove. Even open discrimination which quite blatantly breaks existing laws continues today. Francesca Holloway, author of *A Working Mother's Handbook*, found cases of women being given notice when they announced their pregnancy, although this is an illegal act by an employer.

The issue of equal pay is a long way from being resolved and now very difficult for trade unions to deal with. In the ECA environment, equal pay complaints are now (with only one exception) possible only within the workforce of a single employer, while the theory of the undervaluing of female-dominated work is an occupationally-based one (Hyman, 1994). The pay gap seems to be particularly related to occupational segregation, and is a problem found at all pay levels from lowest to highest and across all industries. A report published in March 1996 by Statistics New Zealand showed that women's pay averages 81 percent of men's, fractionally up from 1992 at 90 percent ('Gender pay differential proves stubborn', Dominion, 24.4.96).

There is not yet any proof of the laissez-faire argument that market forces will equalise wages and conditions for women. Indeed, evidence strongly suggests that quite the contrary situation in fact arises: the free market gives employers the opportunity to manipulate conditions much the way it suits them. Even Prime Minister Jim Bolger was forced to publicly tell employers to back off a bit from the enthusiastic "use" of the ECA. But the Act has given employers the ability to unilaterally change wages and conditions without the agreement of workers, and this despite promises to the contrary. Unions have found employer opposition to be a major obstacle to their ability to communicate with and organise workers. This includes union members and delegates being discriminated against on the basis of their union involvement, employers preventing organisers and delegates from talking

to workers on site, blocking access to sites and refusing to negotiate contracts with unions (Oxenbridge, 1995).

Obviously unions are trying to accommodate women's issues and alter union management to a less hierarchical, more member-oriented organisation. But with recent studies showing that of all OECD countries, New Zealand and Britain are the two where the gap between rich and poor is growing the fastest, presumably the struggle simply to retain wage rates will remain the most dominant priority.

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- G. Plimmer, 'Commitment to the Union', *FinSec News*, No. 37, June 1996.
- Pat Walsh and John Dickson, 'The Emperor's New Clothes: The Uncertain Fate of Equal Employment Opportunities in the New Zealand Public Sector, 1988-1992', *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations*, 19(1), April 1994.
- M. Wilson, 'Contractualism and the Employment Contracts Act: Can They Deliver Equality for Women?', *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations*, 19(3), 1994.
- Note: Peter Conway of the National Distribution Union is currently working on a booklet concerning the effects of decentralised bargaining and how five year of that has impacted on the pay and conditions of retail workers. It will be released some time within the next two months.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

WOMEN AS RESEARCHERS AND SUBJECTS OF RESEARCH AT THE 1996 PUBLIC POLICY NETWORK CONFERENCE

by **ELIZABETH SHANNON**

Department of Political Science, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252C, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001. Email: E.Shannon@polsci.utas.edu.au

Jointly sponsored by the Department of Political Science and the Centre for Public Management and Policy, University of Tasmania, the 1996 Public Policy Network Conference was held on February 1-2. A total of 24 papers were presented over the two days in what was a fairly demanding schedule. I am concentrating on 'women' in this review not only because this is going out for WAPSAnews, but also because Judith Homeshaw is writing a general review of the Conference for AJPS which will cover some of the fascinating papers given by John Dryzek, Mark Considine and Stephen Bell, to name a few.

Eight women presented papers, two of whom, Christine Cheyne and Amanda Wolf, were from New Zealand. Cheyne, from Massey University, presented 'Citizen Participation and Pursuit of Accountability: Making a Case for Voice', in which she argued that the New Zealand public sector was currently witnessing a reduction in citizenship in favour of consumerism as a result of public sector reforms. The necessity to reinvigorate citizenship was stressed and some strategies by which this may be achieved were presented. Wolf, of the Victoria University of Wellington, presented 'Negotiating Fairness in Rules', in which she explored the concept of 'fairness'.

Two women presented discussions on 'work in progress'. Janice Caulfield, University of Queensland, discussed the unintended consequences of privatisation policies to do with road funding reforms, as part of urban infrastructure. Elizabeth Russell, Monash University, discussed concepts that may be applied to environmental policy.

Other works were presented by Ann Nevile, Australian National University, and Jenny Stewart, from the University of Canberra. Nevile's paper, 'Financial Deregulation in Australia and Japan: Developing a Model of Policy Change', undertook a comparative policy analysis to draw out the strength and weaknesses of her own, original model which explored the effects of multiple variables on the process of change within policy communities. Stewart also presented her own analytic model in 'Public Management for the Environment: A Trans-Disciplinary Framework', which drew on insights from economics, ecology, management (decision-making) theory and political theory.

Finally, two papers drew on women as subjects of research. Marian Sawer and James Jupp (ANU) presented a work in progress, 'The Two-Way Street: Government Shaping of Community-Based Advocacy', in which the power and influence wielded by consumer,

environmental, multi-cultural and women's peak bodies are analysed through a number of theoretical perspectives.

Elizabeth Shannon, of the University of Tasmania, presented 'A Modern Mephistopheles: Feminists and Foetalists in Coalition', in which the unexpected alliance of pro- and anti-abortion groups on issues such as the new reproductive technologies were explored in the context of an increasingly 'radicalised modernity' of globalisation and de-traditionalisation.

The diversity of research and the excellence of some of the papers provided for an interesting two days. The Tasmanian weather was comparatively mild and it was a rare luxury for those of us who live here to have such a stimulating conference on our own doorstep. While women did not feature greatly as subjects of research, the representation of women presenting at the conference was encouraging. I look forward to next year's offering.

ROBIN'S NEWS

by ROBIN INGRAM

Book News

Looks like everybody whose anybody is either writing a book, has just written a book, is sponsoring somebody else to write a book for them, or has had a book written about them.

The **Business Roundtable** (BRT) paraded yet another of their pet causes past the public earlier this year - David Green's *From Welfare State to Civil Society: Toward Welfare that Works in New Zealand*. Partly funded by the BRT, one of the very original proposals Green came up with was to force some unmarried mothers to live with their parents, or in supervised accommodation (Does this sound like something straight out of Renee's last novel *Does this make sense to you?*, a very well written description of the awful social environment that unmarried, pregnant women of our mother's generation confronted). Mr Green completely omitted to suggest any solutions to men's contribution to solo motherhood! We're waiting with bated breath for volume 2!

And then the BRT repeated the act this month, with the release of an American report they had commissioned on how to control crime in NZ. *Controlling Crime in New Zealand* recommended amongst other things that police resources be directed mainly at property crimes and away from involvement in domestic disputes! Since about 50 percent of homicides are a result of family violence, this is an absurd suggestion, and the police thought so too.

Meanwhile a little booklet published by YWCA actually offered some practical solutions about how NOT to become a solo mother in the first place, and the public outcry was a wonder to behold. The booklet, *Sisters*, aimed for a high school audience, and discussed among other things lesbianism and bisexuality. Minister of Health, Jenny Shipley stepped out in its defence, and the controversy eventually died away, but no until after multitudes of letters to various editors complaining about it being an evil publication.

The month of May saw the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the **Ministry of Women's Affairs**. It didn't seem to make much of a dent on the consciousness of Aucklanders, but in Wellington they celebrated with the publication of a "booklet", *The Full Picture*, outlining how gender analysis might be used to achieve not equality but equity between the sexes. Incidentally, the Ministry was awarded \$3.941 million in the recent budget allocation.

And talking of sexuality, University of Auckland staff member **Dr Raewyn Dalziel** is working towards a book on public women, knowledge, sexuality and political action. Should be interesting when it finally hits the press.

Frances Porter and **Charlotte McDonald** have edited the recently published *My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates* (Auckland University Press-Bridget Williams Books). This is a book of extracts from journals, letters, waiata and other sources telling of the experiences of women in 19th century New Zealand. It's a beautifully researched book containing some pretty acute descriptions of the issues which affected women in their daily lives.

Ripeka Evans, previously chief executive of the Maori broadcasting agency Te Manghai Paho, announced in February that she was leaving the agency to complete her work on a biography of Dame Mira Szaszy. Presumably the funds she received from her old employer when she reached a confidential out-of-court settlement a month or so ago will ensure that completing the book won't be too onerous a task.

Judith Devaliant has recently produced a biography of **Elizabeth Yates**, the woman from Onehunga who was not only the first female mayor in NZ, but also the first woman mayor elected in the British Commonwealth. Elected in 1893, the year women won the vote, she was on the receiving end of a great deal of chauvinistic male hostility for the one year she remained in office, and after she was voted out it was 63 years before another woman mayor was elected in NZ. *Elizabeth Yates: The First Lady Mayor in the British Empire* is published by Exisle Publishing, and is one of a series planned by them on people who shaped the nation.

And another biographical study appears in *A Stand for Decency*, the story of **Patricia Bartlett** and the Society for Promotion of Community Standards. Written by Carolyn Moynihan and published by the Society, Gordon McLauchlan of the NZ Herald commented that a woman as complex and interesting as Patricia Bartlett deserved much better than this hagiographic publication. Make sure you have a large packet of chocolate bikkies beside you to take away the taste while you dip into it.

And two of our rather well known politicians are both busy with upcoming books. **Marilyn Waring** has one due for publication in July; while **Sonja Davies** is at work on the sequel to her autobiographical *Bread and Roses*.

And not to be left out of it, aspiring politician and ACT candidate **Donna Awatere Huata** has just produced her magnum opus *My Journey*. The story of her life from kid-hood through to current respectability (she was embarrassed to tell the story of her peeing in the office of a certain educational officer over National radio - well, fair enough, too), we can only hope that the next twenty years will be as interesting as the first twenty were?

1996 is the one hundredth anniversary of **The National Council of Women** and presumably to coincide with this occasion, Victoria University Press has released an excellent reference book, a history of the early years of the Council. Written by **Roberta Nicholls**, *The Women's Parliament* covers the early years of the group up to 1920 and discusses the women involved, their activities and the ideologies they had to contend with, their achievements and eventual decline.

Judy McGregor, formerly editor of the Sunday News, then the Auckland Star, and currently a professor at Massey University has just released *Dangerous Democracy? News Media Politics in New Zealand* (Dunmore Press). The book covers a broad range of topics, and one of McGregor's contributions is an entertaining analysis of the gender factor in the news media's coverage of politics, 'Gender Politics and the News: The Search for a Beehive Bimbo-Boadicea'. This one is a really good read for anyone who's even vaguely interested in women and politics, with some pretty revealing descriptions of how the way men think defines - well - everything. Consider this, for example, Helen Clark describes how she once spent an evening with various people including Paul Heylen of Heylen Polls. "Heylen was yapping on about his 'preferred Prime Minister' question and about how it was designed to appeal to the need for a father figure in us all. How can a woman ever rate in a poll question that has got that sort of underlying assumption" (p.191).

And run your eyes over these two contributions to the gender struggle the next time you're in your favourite bookshop. *Lip Service*, by American feminist **Kate Fillion**, about the myth of female virtue (where we discover we're not morally superior after all). And the newly expanded edition of *Manhood*, by Australian psychologist **Steve Biddulph** (where we discover that we're motivated by inner feeling and spirit, and - lacking our true soul mates, find ourselves driving slowly past building sites wanting to whistle).

General News

Talk about Showdown at the OK Corral! **Helen Clark** probably thinks that would be a holiday considering all the shots that have been aimed at her, lately. Having said publicly that she'd resign from the leadership if Labour's standing in the polls remained low, she got caught out when that was precisely what happened and a group of front bench MPs 'privately' asked her to go. One of these was **Annette King**, who emerged as a likely deputy leader with **Mike Moore** running the show, again. Well, she's still there, (and the polls are still pretty dismal) which proves that she's either a consummate political negotiator who simply outplayed the plotters, or that **David Lange** was right when he confidently predicted that there was no chance she'd be overthrown because the women in the party would not tolerate a move against her. "If you slit her throat, you have a gender calamity", the New Zealand Herald quoted him as saying (6.6.96).

On the other side of the House, **Jenny Shipley** has been attacking claims that poverty exists, been attacked on the state of the mental health industry in Nzild, and defended her doctors from the rather obsessive attacks of the Hon. **John Banks** when he announced that he was going to publicly identify "state-funded killers". If nothing else, you have to admire her for her staunchness! She'd just ignore the bullets if she was at the OK Corral, and wade on in, because that's what she has to do all the time as Minister of Health. A recent analysis of her chances for leadership of the National Party said this "...Mrs Shipley would not be well-supported in a leadership bid. Aside from being excluded from the male culture that still pervades National, she is seen as overbearing, overly intellectual, and too insistent on having the last word, both publicly and privately" (Dominion, 4/3/96).

Someone else who's been under fire is the always entertaining mayor of Dunedin, **Sukhi Turner**. Dunedin hasn't had a left-wing mayor for so long that the City Fathers (Yes, definitely "fathers") had forgotten that people still existed who don't think like they do. Imagine! Turner committed the ultimate sin against the old guard when she delivered her now infamous "State of the City" speech to the Dunedin Lion's Club in April. She accused Dunedin's commercial sector of "behaving like primitive tribespeople" and told them they had a "cargo-cult mentality" which was a major obstacle to any serious discussion of the city's future (Independent 10.5.96). AND she allowed that Scourge of the Right, that Monster of revolutionary persuasion, writer **Chris Trotter**, to write her speeches. I'm sure that no one at all will be surprised to hear that when TV3 did a survey of Dunedin residents, they found overwhelming support for mayor Turner among all groups of people except for men in business suits (Evening Post 23.5.95).

Latterly, Green Party member **Danna Glendening** (who is contesting Wellington Central, and whom we suspect will not be in the top ten) announced that her party was now on the internet. For all you geeks out there, The Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand can be found at <http://www.greens.org.nz> Which reminds me that Australian writer and feminist **Dale Spender** was in Nzild in June to speak at the Women in Science conference being held in Wellington where she had some interesting comments about the world of information technology. It was time to see cyberspace as a village square rather than a superhighway she said; to call it a superhighway "says more about the men who have done the naming than it does about the new forms of communication" (Education Review, 5.6.96). She said that women were already locked out of the new technology as they were not part of the decision making processes and that we had to embrace the computer culture or risk being shut out altogether.

National Party has been having a few inhouse disputes. Their final list included five women in the top twenty rankings: **Jenny Shipley** (4), **Georgina Te Heuheu** (7), **Katherine O'Regan** (10), **Joy McLauchlan** (13), and **Belinda Vernon** (19). The biggest surprise was the position of **Georgina Te Heuheu**, a relative newcomer (although the family has long established connections). In an interview, she was emphatic that her success could not be seen as tokenism: "There is no way I was placed a net fourth just because I am a Maori or a woman. I have my background, my track record. Being a Maori and a woman is the icing on the cake" (NZH 11.6.96).

Hardly any other Maori make the top fifty. Coming in at number 56 is **Peta Butt**, who made party history when she was elected National's Maori vice-president. Her election created deep divisions amongst National's Maori supporters. The out-going vice-president, **Chris Bedwell**, called for her to withdraw her nomination, and **Dick Dargeville**, chairman of the Auckland division's Maori committee, said he had never heard of her (NZH 30.4.96). But the debate was eventually settled, and she will be standing in the **Te Tai Rawhiti** constituency against Speaker **Peter Tapsell**. This is her first venture into politics, and amongst her priorities are education, Maori employment and economic development.

Gael Donoghue, National's Wanganui candidate in 1993, announced her resignation from the party late April, and is changing her allegiance to the Social Democrats. Donoghue had contested the 1993 election after the party nominated her in preference to the sitting MP Cam Campion, but was thoroughly defeated at the polls by Labour's Jill Pettis. An ultra right winger on the issues of morality and abortion, her move was not unexpected. (Wanganui Chronicle, 1.5.96).

While in May, the Nat's Owairaka candidate **Cheryl Parsons** resigned after being left off the preliminary list. A former diplomat and finance industry executive, her omission came as a surprise, as Parsons was a very prominent member of the party. The Sunday Star Times noted that National Party sources say she was a casualty of long-term factional feuding in the Auckland division (12.5.96). Phil Raffles, the laissez-faire principal from West Auckland, won the reopened nomination for the seat, which is the old Mt Albert electorate, home base to **Helen Clark**. And it looks like the Nats might have the country's first two Asian MPs, one of whom is Chinese immigrant and company director Patsy Wong, from Christchurch, who has a ranking inside the top thirty and therefore pretty sure of a place.

Auckland Central will be a battle of the Valkyries, **Sandra Lee** representing the Alliance and **Judith Tizard** representing Labour. What a perfect manifestation of the current stand-off between those two parties. Watch this column for further developments!

We note the absence of long-standing Labour MP **Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan** from Labour's list. Could she be intending to retire from Parliament before the next election?

Former Labour candidate and Anglican priest the **Rev. Ann Batten** was named Consumer Affairs and joint women's affairs spokeswoman for New Zealand First. While former Labour cabinet minister and current United MP for Yaldhurst, the **Hon. Margaret Austin**, has chosen to contest the Ilam seat in Christchurch after having said she would not be standing for re-election. It's a family affair, since her hubbie Jack is also standing for United, against Jim Anderton.

When ACT had to choose someone to replace Sir Roger Douglas, the Evening Post reported that ACT education spokeswoman **Muriel Newman** was on the list of potential leaders. As it turned out, yet another ex-Labour cabinet minister, Richard Prebble, got that job. But four of the top 12 positions of ACT's caucus line-up are held by women - **Donna Awatere Huata**, education spokeswoman; **Patricia Schnauer**, justice and law and order; **Ann Dill**, conservation and environment; **Muriel Newman**, social welfare. **Val Wilde**, race horse trainer and sister of ACT's former president Rodney Hyde, is contesting the Palmerston North seat for ACT in the coming election.

And here's a prediction by former Labour Party president, currently teaching at Auckland University, **Maryan Street**: "It's my view that MMP politics will be no less adversarial than the political culture under FPP" (Evening Standard 16.2.96). She said that under MMP she wanted to see a real commitment to selecting women for winnable seats and being placed high on party lists, policy trade-offs being scrutinised by women before being agreed and continued efforts by women to change the culture of politics (Don't hold your breath on that last one!)

At the local level, after a three year fight to have her position as a Te Arawa Trust Board member recognised, **Cathy Dewes** finally made it! First nominated in the 1993 elections, the nomination was rejected by the board over the issue of giving a woman speaking rights relating to the iwi. Dewes appealed to the High Court, with the back of her iwi and hapu, and finally another election was held in 1995 in which she was voted in again. The Trust Board Executive Officer, Sandy Gibbons, said the board was going through a restructuring process, in which "the role of women has been accounted for" (Te Maori News, v.5, no. 7. 1996).

Several Nzild women have been receiving honours lately. **Ann Knowles**, the NZ Employers' Federation chief executive, was made a companion of the NZ Order of Merit, in honour of her services to women and the community. A Queens Service Medal went to **Olive Gwendolyn McCay**, the longest serving woman local body member in the country. The **Hon. Margaret Shields**, a former Minister of Women's Affairs, received the Queens Service Order. Catholic pro-life campaigner **Marilyn Pryor**, now Dame Marilyn, became only the third woman in NZ to be awarded the Order of Pope Gregory the Great. And the death of a previous holder of the Queens Service Medal was reported in Rotorua's Daily Post in May. **Ina Beatrice London** died in Rotorua aged 94. She had been a foundation member of a local branch of the Country Women's Institute, a president of that Federation for several terms, and active on the National Council of Women.

The 75th national conference of the Country Women's Institute is starting on July 22 in Wellington. February was the 75th jubilee of this organisation, and planning has already begun for the centennial celebrations.

And the National Council of Women celebrated one hundred years of activism on April 13. Its membership consists of 46 affiliated national societies and 38 branches where nearly 140 organisations with a combined membership of over 200,000 are represented. The Ministry of Women's Affairs has granted the National Council of Women \$150,000, to mark the centennial and to provide it with an autonomous funding base.

Another group of women, the League of Mothers and Homemakers, was disbanded in April after 70 years of service. Membership had declined since the mid-seventies, and it is expected that many branches will carry on friendship and service groups under different names.

The *Platform for Action* display, which has been travelling around NZ, is coming to Auckland in June. *Platform for Action* was the outcome of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women held in Beijing last year, in which twelve key areas of action over the status of women are outlined.

John Gray, author of *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, quoted in the Sunday Star Times 9/6.96: "I haven't been to New Zealand before. But I have had a lot of Australians on my conferences and they're my favourite audiences. They're really like Martians, through and through. In California, men are Martians but they've got their Venusian side as well. Australians are pure Martian. I teach them that it's OK to be Martian 'cos they've been inundated with so many feminist influences they begin to feel that it's not OK to be masculine"

New Zealand Herald '100 Years Ago' column, 7.6.96:

"Those who had formed a high ideal of the moral influence which women would exercise on political life, have not seen that ideal realised, and it is doubtful whether thousands of those who earnestly wished and strove for the conferring of electoral rights on the sex, would labour so now if the same thing had to be done over again. .. This does not refer to all women, for there are tens of thousands who bear their blushing honours as enfranchised citizens meekly, prepared to use the new influence for the furtherance of all that is pure and true and good... it is those who have allowed themselves to be dragged into the dirty business of politics that have brought dishonour on the sex, and have made those who were the most sympathetic and strenuous advocates of women's rights wish to God that women had never got the franchise... The weakness of women will add a new element to the corrupting influence of politics".

Boy! It's tough being popular? After losing a court case to stop a woman sending him knitted socks and scarves, businessman Sir Robert Jones claimed he had been harassed by "mad women" all his life and that he'd learned to spot them from a mile way: "They have Te Awamutu written all over them" (Dominion 28.3.96).

NOTICES

ELECTRONIC DISCUSSION

The following New Zealand feminist electronic discussion lists are available:

FMST- TALK

A talk facility for FMST subscribers only augments the electronic journal. Post a message containing: subscribe fmst-talk to: majordomo@massey.ac.nz

WS-L (Women's Studies at Massey University)

WS-L is a discussion list specifically for Massey University students and staff. Members outside Massey with an interest in Aotearoa's largest Women's Studies programme and its various activities, may also join WS-L. However,

principally WS-L is used to discuss assignments, distribute news and views about Women's Studies courses and get advice. It operates as an ongoing bulletin board or tutorial for both internal and extramural students.

To subscribe to WS-L: Send an email message to: majordomo@massey.ac.nz

Type the following as the message subscribe WS-L

FMST invites submissions of short articles (up to 30K) to:

FMST@STONEBOW.OTAGO.AC.NZ

Try out your ideas, comment on FMST, debate your research, review feminist books, films or issues relevant to women and Feminist Studies in Aotearoa and the Pacific.

Women's Studies Programme, Massey University, PO Box 11-222, Palmerston North, Aotearoa New Zealand
<http://cc-server9.massey.ac.nz/~wwwms>

JOB VACANCY

Research Assistant, New Zealand Election Study 1996 - Department of Political Science & Public Policy (fixed term for one year).

The New Zealand Election Study (NZES) will be conducted immediately before and after the 1996 election. It needs a suitable person to assist in general research, survey administration and coding, data preparation and analysis. The appointee must be able to pay meticulous attention to detail, and have a commitment to data quality. You will have a degree in the Social Sciences or other appropriate subject, and some experience in numerical data analysis, but otherwise should be willing and able to learn that skill rapidly.

The position is for one year, and could be filled by two half-time appointees who would be expected to be enrolled for MPhil or DPhil thesis related to aspects of the research programme. The salary will be up to \$28,000 per year.

The Department of Political Science & Public Policy is part of the School of Social Sciences. For further information contact the Project Director, Jack Vowles, Department of Political Science & Public Policy, phone 07 8562889 ext 8378, fax 838 4702 or email poli0297@waikato.ac.nz

Applications on the official University of Waikato form close on Friday, 12 July 1996.

CONFERENCE - FEMINISM IN TRANSIT 3

A cross-disciplinary conference presenting the work of postgraduate students whose research is informed by feminism. Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University, Canberra; Friday 19-Saturday 20 July (wintertime); registration/information/enquiries to the convenors, c/o email brook@coombs.anu.edu.au - or phone Heather Brook (06) 249 3049. Early registration is strongly recommended.

F.I.T.3 is supported by:

- the political science program and/in the research school of social sciences, ANU
- the centre for women's studies graduate program, ANU
- the RSSS women's network, ANU.

PERSPECTIVES FOR CHANGE CONFERENCE

The third Perspectives for Change conference is set for September in Christchurch. At the time of going to press, the September programme is:

- 23: Women's Alcohol and Drug Conference
- 24-26: Perspectives for Change
- 27: Indigenous Peoples' Alcohol and Drug Conference

A women's forum is being organised to precede ALAC's Perspective for Change conference. This forum will be held at the Christchurch Town Hall on Monday 23 September 1996. The day is likely to start at 9.00 am and finish at 5.00 pm, with time to socialise thereafter. We are planning for an attendance of approximately 125 women. The forum will provide an opportunity for women to hear a variety of perspectives and to participate as a united group. We are not planning to break into small workshop groups, as there will be other times to network during the day and at the Perspectives for Change conference. Themes will include:

- rural women
- lesbian women
- training of the workforce
- alcohol and pregnancy
- young women (linking with the theme of Perspectives for Change)

You will note that the conference is being held in the last week of the school holidays. We are aware that this has implications for child care. We will endeavour to provide for your expressed needs in this regard. Also note that there is no registration fee for this forum. Lunch, morning and afternoon tea will be provided, as will non-alcoholic drinks and food at the social event which will close the day.

- Val Norton, Nancy Fithian and Margaret Manuka-Sullivan, ALAC Women and Alcohol Project.

WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE - CONFERENCE

Conference Notice: Registration Invited. 1996 marks the 75th anniversary of the election of Edith Cowan to the West Australian parliament. Edith Cowan was the first woman to be elected to any Australian parliament and only the third woman in the Commonwealth. To celebrate this anniversary a very special one day conference is being organised.

Women in Public Life - Celebrating Edith Cowan - Friday, June 28, 1996, Churchlands Campus of Edith Cowan University, Western Australia.

The exciting program reflects not only Edith Cowan's achievements and aspirations for women, but also the challenges and dilemmas facing both young women and all women today in public life, the church, health, education, law/justice, children's issues, the workplace, the public sector, politics, citizenship, business, the media and sport. Major guests: Eve Mahlab (Lawyer and a Businesswoman of the Year), Geraldine Doogue (Journalist and Broadcaster), Hon. David Malcolm (Chief Justice, WA and a descendent of Edith Cowan), Dame Margaret Guilfoyle (Former Senator and Federal Minister). Prominent Western Australian women will lead discussion groups during the afternoon:- Health; Law; Public Sector; the Workplace; Children's Issues; Voluntary Work; Media; Education; the Church; Politics; Business; Citizenship; Sport and Recreation; Young Women. These topics include the many areas of Edith Cowan's participation in Public Life.

Conference Fee \$75 (concession \$35). Includes morning and afternoon teas, lunch, and refreshments at 5.30 pm. To register for the conference contact 'Women in Public Life Conference', Edith Cowan University, Pearson Street, Churchlands, WA, 6018, fax (09) 273 8046; telephone (09) 273 8070.

Organising committee: Assoc Prof David Black (Curtin University), Dr Elizabeth Constable (MLA), Dr Patricia Crawford (UWA), Ms Janice Dudley (Murdoch University), Ms Sash Messer, Assoc Prof Harry Phillips (Edith Cowan University), Hon Barbara Scott (MLC), Ms Hilary Shilkin (Edith Cowan University), Dr Judyth Watson (MLA).

FEMINIST FUTURES: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The Australian Women's Studies Association conference moves West for the first time since its inception in 1989. Join us for CONFERENCE '96 - FEMINIST FUTURES: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THEORY AND PRACTICE - 27-29 November, 1996 - the University of Western Australia, Perth, WA. Call for presentations:

30 minute paper

10 minute panel (please indicate the other two members of the panel)

90 minute workshop

Please submit a 250 word (approx.) abstract by 15 June, 1996.

Accommodation: St Catherine's College, UWA

Registration fees: \$200 (full); \$95 (concession)

General Enquiries: Annie Goldflam/Lesley Aloni

Centre for Research for Women: ph (09) 380 3718/3719; fax (09) 380 1092

email: <goldflam@cyllene.uwa.eu.au >

Presentation Enquiries: Bev Thiele: ph (09) 360 2269; fax (09) 310 1899

Janice Dudley, Associate Lecturer in Politics, School of Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Murdoch, 6150 Western Australia. Telephone (09) 360 6115; Fax (09) 360 6381; email: dudley@central.murdoch.edu.au

ADVERTISING IN NEWSLETTER

Full page ads \$30.00. Half page ads \$18.00. Please contact Heather Devere.

BACK COPIES OF NEWSLETTER

The following issues of the Aotearoa Women and Politics Network Newsletter are available at a cost of \$5 each from Heather Devere:

"Electoral Reform and Women" - August/September 1992

"The New Right and Women" - November/December 1992

"Reflecting on Suffrage" - May/June 1994

"Researching Women and Politics" - February 1995

"Women and International Relations" - July 1995

"Maori Women and Politics" - 1996

If anyone has any other issues which they can let us have for photocopying and for our archive, please could they send them to Heather Devere.

CONFERENCE DIARY 1996

Date	Title	Place	Contact	Details
28 June	Women in Public Life - Celebrating Edith Cowan	Churchlands Campus of Edith Cowan University, Western Australia	Suite 4, 271 Selby Street, Churchlands, WA 6018 Fax 09 387 7724 Tel 09 383 7120 email <dudley@central.murdoch.edu.au>	Reg. Fee \$75 (concession \$35)
8-10 July	The Democratic State: Individuals and Communities NZ Political Studies Association Conference	University of Auckland	Chan Dixon Tel: 09 3737 599 Fax: 09 3737 449 Email: cj.dixon@auckland.ac.nz	Standard registration \$100 Full-time student \$75
19-20 July	The 3rd Feminism in Transit Conference	Australian National University, Canberra	Heather Brooks, Political Science, RSSS, ANU Tel: 61 6 249 3049 email: brook@coombs.anu.edu.au	A cross-disciplinary conference presenting work of postgraduate students whose research is informed by feminism waged: \$25 unwaged: \$15
21 July	Philosophy and Women's Studies Conference	Australian National University, Canberra	Penelope.Deutscher@anu.edu.au (philosophy ANU) Elizabeth.Wilson@anu.edu.au (Women's Studies, ANU)	A\$40 full A\$25 concession
2-4 October	Australasian Political Studies Association Conference 1996	University of Western Australia, Perth	Campbell Sharman Political Science Dept, Uni of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6907 Fax: 61 9 380 1060 Tel: 61 9 380 2086 email: apsa96@uwa.edu.au	Gender Politics: Sandra Penrose, email: spenrose@uniwa.edu.au Special session: Political Change in NZ David Denmark, email: denemark@uniwa.edu.au
28-29 November	7th Conference on Labour Employment and Work	Victoria University of Wellington	Pat.Walsh@vuw.ac.nz or Philip.Morrison@vuw.ac.nz	Papers invited from any university discipline and public or private research into issues of labour, employment and work in NZ
27-29 November	Feminist Futures: New Directions in Theory and Practice	University of Western Australia, Perth, WA	Annie Goldflam email: goldflam@cyllene.uwa.edu.au Bev Thiele, ph 09 360 2269 fax 09 310 1899	Women's Studies Association conference \$200 full \$95 concession