

NEW ZEALAND

Rosemary Seymour

Learning Ourselves — An Overview of Programs and Directions

The following study presents glimpses - in an overview - of the many areas of activities that come under the term "Women's Studies" in New Zealand, a country of 3.14 million of predominantly European origin. The term "Women's Studies" in this case includes any form of teaching and research about, or significantly related to, women; plus associated resources - libraries, archives, bookshops and bibliographies. In keeping with the theme of the special issue it shall concentrate on higher education and refer to other aspects when they draw attention to the more circumscribed subject.

The examination is presented in three sections: *Introduction* (teaching institutions, women's groups, government departments/bodies, resources, publications); *Responses to a questionnaire* (figures and facts; teachers/teaching; issues; and course content); and *Case Studies* (University of Waikato, Victoria University, Auckland Feminist Tutors, and *Broadsheet*).

Materials have been drawn from the following sources (besides the books etc., in the Selected References): the writer's research, since 1974, on women's studies in tertiary institutions of education, government departments/bodies, community centres, and women's groups, carried out mainly by annual travel throughout the country; responses to a questionnaire sent to all known teachers of Women's Studies inviting them to speak for themselves for the purpose of this article; Women's Studies Association (NZ) Annual Conferences; United Women's Conventions (NZ); and Women's Studies at the University of Waikato.

TEACHING INSTITUTIONS

Technical Institutes, Community Centres, etc.

The country has twenty-two government funded community colleges and technical institutes. Some of these offer short Women's Studies courses — occasionally without any takers, but usually successfully. Besides these, there are community based groups such as Workers' Educational Association (WEA). In the past, WEA has been assisted with some government funding; but this is to be withdrawn. This retrenchment has serious implications for Women's Studies tutors and the courses which they have been offering. Some of these tutors are very highly qualified and experienced. It is likely that they will continue to offer Women's Studies in an unpaid capacity.

Universities

All universities, except Otago, have one or more courses (see chart below). Canterbury and Waikato also offer sections of Women's Studies within other courses: Industrial Law (3rd year) and Sociology of Literature (3rd year and graduate), respectively. Even Lincoln

Agricultural College is contributing by mounting a survey to investigate how women students are coping with the practical work requirements for their courses.

There are Centres for Continuing Education or Extension Departments at all universities, which offer courses. Waikato, for instance, has offered the following courses in Hamilton recently: 'Women as Artists', 'Women and Depression', 'Advanced Assertiveness Training', 'Women and Change', 'Menopause', 'Women and Trade Unions', 'Women and Self-Esteem'; and, in smaller cities and towns, 'Women and Society'. A member of the Auckland Centre for Continuing Education said (personal interview, November, 1982) that there is no lack of tutors offering their services; and no lack of students for Women's Studies courses focussed on art, literature, and politics. Enrolments have been very low for courses that are general and those specifically related to work and education, possibly because demand is being met by WEA and Women's Studies Association of Auckland.

Women Studies Courses Offered to 1983

<i>University Course</i>	<i>Department/ School</i>	<i>Level</i>	
Auckland	Women and Literature	English	3
	Women and Law	Law	2
	Women Artists	Art, History	3
	Women in New Societies	History	3
	Anthropology	Anthropology	3
Canterbury	Sociology of Gender	Sociology	2
Massey	Women and Society	Sociology	2
	Feminist Theoretical Perspectives	Sociology	2
	Career Development of Women at Work	Business Studies	-
Otago	-	-	-
Victoria	Women in Society	Interdisciplinary	2
	Image of Women in Western Arts	Interdisciplinary	2
	History	History	3
	Philosophy & the Women's Movement	Philosophy	3
Waikato	Introductory	Interdisciplinary	2
	Activities, Status, Consciousness	Interdisciplinary	3
	Women and Education	Education	3
	Women and Psychology	Psychology	3
	Women and Psychology	Psychology	Grad
	Women and Work	Sociology	3
	Sociology of Women	Sociology	Grad

WOMEN'S GROUPS: ASSOCIATIONS, CENTRES, COLLECTIVES, ETC.

Traditional: Pre-mid-60s

The National Council of Women, the Business and Professional Women's Association, Country Women's Institute, Women's Division Federated Farmers, and the Federation of University Women mount occasional seminars, have annual conferences, write submissions, and promote research and publications. Many of their Women's Studies activities were stimulated by International Women's Year. Our only national study of rural women was carried out by the Federation of University Women in association with the Sociology Department of the University of Canterbury. The National Council of Women, a voluntary, co-ordinating organisation, which carried out a national study of Women at Home, in 1975, is probably the best measure of change and of the generally acceptable content of Women's Studies. If, as is frequently believed the image of feminism is the main barrier against women enrolling in Women's Studies courses, this representative body should do much to increase acceptability. Its aims include affirmative action for making changes in the family and the community, and for the development of vocational and social skills. Discussions in their seminars tend to be focussed on problems and home; but NCW encourage participants to relate their personal experiences to political action.

Feminist Post-mid-60s

The Society for Research on Women in New Zealand (SDRW) took form in 1965-66. A group of women who wanted to mount a series of lectures on Women in New Zealand, as a follow-up to a successful series on American women, found an almost complete lack of information beyond details of births, deaths and marriages. Therefore, they decided to carry out surveys of 1000 women in each of the four main cities. They succeeded in this — with generous support of goods, services, and training from universities, firms, and government departments. This major achievement by a group of amateurs is internationally unique. They no longer aim at national projects; but contribute excellent research findings, usually published in brief monographs, by small groups on topics such as: Money, Child Care, Employment, Solo Mothers, Immigrants, and Suburbs.

The Society for Research on Women emphasised research, and saw its consequences as by-products. It was followed by overtly polemical groups, such as Auckland Feminists, who were responsible for *Broadsheet*. Later there was NOW, an American import. This was soon eclipsed or absorbed by an Australian import, Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL), which aims to educate women in women's issues as a pre-requisite for political activity. Later groups, with high educational components expressed through publications, seminars, and submissions, are the Working Women's Council and Feminist Teachers. The latter direct their efforts to educating their members in educational content and aspects of teaching as a career. The former mounted, over a two year period, meetings in all New Zealand cities to clarify and publicize the sixteen clauses of 'The Working Women's Charter'.

The most important source of publications, besides SROW, is the Women's Studies Association. This has now mounted five Annual Conferences. The papers, which are presented by Government researchers, university lecturers, women's studies tutors, members of government advisory bodies, and interested individuals, are published. The Association also publishes a sporadic Newsletter of short articles and news items. An Auckland branch presents one-day seminars on topics such as Health, Employment, Religion.

Health organisations are vigorous and well-organised. A Women's Health Network was recently given a record grant from the Mental Health Foundation for research into mental health. This group puts out a regular Newsletter. Hecate, a Wellington Collective, make health articles readily available to anyone who drops in, and they offer individual and group discussion.

Important cross-fertilization opportunities have been offered every two years by nationwide United Women's Conventions. These attract about two thousand women who attend work-shops, keynote talks, dramatic presentations, etc. They spawn groups to carry on learning processes: for example, "Feminist Teachers". Historical and contemporary information about individuals and organisations is published annually in *Herstory Diary* by a Collective in a succession of locations. A multi-media Gallery has been established in Wellington for several years. Its success is measured by the fact that it has recently moved into larger premises. Besides regular displays and sales, it issues a newsletter, holds seminars, discussion-groups, poetry-readings, etc. It also mounts multi-media exhibitions on specific themes, e.g., violence, motherhood. The art component of the latter has been touring the country for two years.

By no means all the energy and activity is to be found in the larger cities. I have found no town or township, however small, which does not have at least one women's group (even if it has only three members) — writing submissions to government and letters to newspapers, giving talks, educating family, neighbours, police, and town councillors; and developing self-expression and communication skills. In the tourist city of Rotorua there are about ten feminist women who are frequently running courses from time to time on various areas of interest in several institutions. Even in a remote area like Golden Bay, a tiny township has formed a United women's Front which mounted a successful seminar with the help of the Vocational Guidance Council Officer for Women's Affairs. And some indefatigable gadflies in the sleepy city of Nelson, centred on hops and pottery, put out a newsletter (35+ pages) to keep issues simmering.

OCCASIONAL REPORTS, SEMINARS, ETC.

(A) Submissions to Royal Commissions and Select Committees are rich sources of a very wide range of facts and opinions. The Parliamentary Select Committee Enquiring into Discrimination against Women in New Zealand, 1974, elicited the first major set of articulations of women's wrongs and of recommendations for change.

(B) Government Departments of Labour, Education, and Health promote occasional research, such as the Teacher Career and Promotion Study which is investigating factors influencing the differences between male and female career patterns. Occasional publications include: *Women in the Workforce . . . facts and figures*, Department of Labour, 1980; *Report of the Conference on Women and Health*, Department of Health, 1977; *Equality and the Sexes* (Report on the Conference, Education and the Equality of the Sexes, 1975), Department of Labour; 'Sex-role Stereotyping in Science Text Books'; 'Sex-role Stereotyping in Mathematics Text Books'; and 'Sex-role Stereotyping in School-Journals' (xerox), Department of Education.

(C) Four Government Advisory bodies on Women's Affairs contribute a trickle of information and analyses. One of these, the Advisory Committee on Women and Education, has recently been axed as an economy cut. The body that was known until 1981 as the Committee on Women, and is now the Advisory Committee on Women's Affairs, put out

an irregular *Newsheet* with information and comment about legislation, seminars, publications, activities, etc. The Women's Advisory Committee of the Vocational Training Council has published discussion papers on Training and Employment, one with special reference to the impact of 'new technology' on women-intensive areas of the workforce. They also have a report on their pilot course in Basic Engineering Skills for Young Women, offered at a Technical Institute in 1981.

(D) Some excellent articles can be found in the newsletters and journals of professional and trade associations. The Public Service Association has published a comprehensive discussion paper *The New Technology and the Employment of Women*; and they published in their Journal the findings of their survey on Sexual Harassment. The Auckland Law Society published a report on the problems of women in law careers. An example of Women's Studies activities by unions is the series of seminars being run in 1982 by the New Zealand Bank Officers.

RESOURCES: LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The General Assembly Library, a copyright collection, holds copies of every publication in New Zealand, including all Newsletters of women's groups; and materials such as submissions to Parliamentary Select Committees and Royal Commissions. The Auckland War Memorial Museum Library accepted, in 1961, the material about N.Z. women that Enid Roberts had collected for the Women's Archives at Radcliffe College. Branches of the National Council of Women continue to build on this by sending in clippings, etc. about women in all walks of life. The Alexander Turnbull Library holds papers of notable women, ordinary women and women's organisations. These include diaries of pioneer women. The National Art Gallery and Museum has a modest collection of biographical material about women artists and some slides of their work.

The University of Canterbury Library holds the Archives of the National Council of Women, Christchurch Branch: clippings, periodicals, pamphlets, minute books, correspondence, etc. The University of Waikato has an excellent collection of books and about fifty titles of serials. A major item, supported by a grant from the IWY Committee of the Committee on Women, is the forty titles of *The Source Library of the Women's Movement*. Discussions about establishing a Women's Studies Resource Centre within the Library have been halted because of economy cuts. The Women's Studies Resource Room, Sociology Department, University of Waikato has received some funding from the University Grants Committee, the University of Waikato, the Committee of Women, the Business and Professional Women's Association, and small donations from interested individuals. Intermittent support for cataloguing has been made available through special unemployment schemes of the Department of Labour; and the U.S./N.Z. Educational Foundation appointed a Fulbright Fellow to spend six months organising the Collection. Unfortunately, it has no regular source of finance and access is restricted because of lack of servicing.

The Government Advisory Committee on Women's Affairs (formerly the Committee on Women) is building up a basic collection. The Broadsheet Collective has a comprehensive collection of serials, N.Z. and overseas; and they have recently completed indexing their own feminist serial, *Broadsheet*. Blue Stockings, Auckland, houses the biographical material sent in for the Media Women's Awards 1982. Approximately one and a half metres of shelving under the categories of: Health/Science/Medicine/Professionals/Business; Sport

and Recreation; Entertainment and Arts; Community; and Education. Many Women's Centres and women's groups have useful, if haphazard, collections of serials, newsletters, xerox articles, organisation records, and ephemera. The main Women's Health Groups have well-stocked and well-organised resource materials.

Specialist bibliographies are occasionally issued: e.g., *Women and Violence*, *Women and Education*, and *Education and the Equality of the Sexes: a list of resources*, Department of Education, 1978. *Women's Studies in New Zealand*, a general bibliography-directory has been compiled annually in the Sociology Department of the University of Waikato. The volumes are divided into three parts: Research (completed and ongoing); teaching; and directory.

PUBLICATIONS, BOOKSHOPS AND PUBLISHERS

The most important of the regular publications is *Broadsheet*. Another important journal is *Circle*, a Lesbian publication which has been going for several years. The most widely read magazine in the country is *New Zealand Women's Weekly*. Like the National Council of Women it provides an excellent measure of change. Although it has a reputation for conservatism, it has changed over recent years as it absorbs the content of Women's Studies. Its articles (average 1000 words) describe and analyse negative aspects, legislation, and positive changes.

Outlets for research are mainly in annual Conferences of Associations attached to the various disciplines. The Associations of Sociology, Psychology, and Anthropology now have major Women's Studies components in their Conference Programmes. In the 1980 Conference in Christchurch of the sociological Association of Australia and New Zealand the Women's Studies stream was the only one to run through all the time-units on all the days; and it was certainly the liveliest.

There are women's bookshops in Wellington (1980) and Christchurch (1982). One struggled on in Dunedin for several years, but has recently expired. The University Bookshop and an alternative bookshop are filling the gap by building up special sections for Women's Studies. Several other general bookshops in smaller and larger cities have such sections; one has a special section for Virago publications. Kitty Wishart, who pioneered feminist books in the Auckland Campus Bookshop, has had an untold influence in developing ideologies from early slogans and simplistic intervention through introducing e.g. *The Dialectic of Sex* and *SCUM Manifesto* when they were first published. She reports that 'in the early 70s the women browsing through her Women's Studies section were mainly intellectuals in their 20s and 30s. Now her readers are aged from 16 to 70'.¹

There are publishers' agents who specialize in distributing overseas books from Virago, Feminist Press, Women's Press (Brit.) and publishers such as Pluto, Sheba (Brit.) and Zed (Brit.) who have Women's Studies sections. Benton and Ross increased the sales of Virago, when they took it over in 1981, by 800%. This year, they became publishers themselves; and a New Zealand Women's Press has been founded.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire was devised to give 'all those involved in this area the opportunity to speak for themselves about content, method, ideology, aims, etc'. It was sent to all *known* teachers of Women's Studies. Respondents were invited to consider the Questionnaire

'EITHER as a series of stimulus questions, OR as a formal questionnaire'. They were also invited to 'feel free to add, modify, comment'; and each section ended with a specific request for further comments. All questions were drawn from my nine years of research notes made during annual travels throughout New Zealand. Disappointingly, few wrote unstructured responses. Exceptions included a male lecturer in Law who had the good sense to re-write most of the questionnaire to suit his own situation, and the leading member of the Auckland Tutors Group who selected and adapted.

Responses are set out under the categories of: (A) Teachers Colleges; (B) Technical Institutes, WEA, Continuing Education, University Extension, Community Colleges, and feminist groups; and (C) Universities. Only three questionnaires were returned from Teachers' Colleges — all from the same College. There is always a problem about getting questionnaires in Women's Studies to appropriate teachers in these Colleges, because these courses are usually *ad hoc* electives lasting only six weeks. Twenty four forms were returned from category (B). Many of these were multiple; some generalised for several courses, tutors, institutions/groups: this made it impossible to subdivide this group; or to attempt accuracy in quantification. Thirteen forms were returned from the Universities. One lecturer (Literature) was overseas; and one (Law) regretted that she did not have time. One did not reply.

SECTION ONE: FIGURES AND FACTS

At the teachers' college level courses are concerned with gender stereotypes and the socialization processes that encourage these. One was set up in 1978, the other two in 1982. One course is permanent; the other two are *ad hoc* electives. A single teacher is involved in each series. Appointments are permanent for two (one part-time) and temporary for one. Two teachers are senior lecturers; one is a lecturer. The levels of the courses are first year or third year and the number of students ranges from 20 to 45. Assessment includes test, essay, class participation, action project, examination and research project. Teaching methods vary from formal to informal seminars, but the participatory is preferred. Technological devices are not used except for the occasional use of an overhead projector.

In contrast to teachers colleges, course titles, teaching and methodology and organization were much more varied for the second group - technical institutes, etc. Course titles include: 'Tutor Training in Women's Studies'; 'Women and Environment'; 'Twentieth Century Women Writers'; 'Women as Artists'; 'Women Make a World'; 'Assertiveness'; 'Opportunities'; 'New Outlook'; 'Community Workers Certificate'. Three courses are graded or creditable towards a diploma or certificate. Six are assessed by participation; and one by participation plus an action project. In two, the tutors are assessed by their students. Most are located in Community Centres, University Centres for Continuing Education, or Technical Institutes. One is located in a feminist group; one in a Women's Centre; and one in the tutor's own flat. Teachers or convenors have various relationships to their institutions; but most describe themselves as tutors with yearly appointments. One is a co-ordinator (permanent) of several modules; several teach/convene more than one course. Three are permanent; two share a tutorship; and two are unpaid. Ages range from 26 to 60. Classes, usually consisting of two hours per week for 6 to 10 weeks, are conducted informally as seminars, tutorials, discussion groups, workshops; but there is occasionally some lecturing and exercises. One used 'entirely practical art exercises, resulting in a collaborative art project'. Use is occasionally made of visits, speakers, films, tapes, videos, overhead projectors, or computers.

The University responses tended to focus on more traditional and academic topics and methodology. The first Women's Studies courses were set up in 1974 and enrolment varies from 7 to 140. The greatest number of teachers involved is 12; but most courses have only one teacher. The predominant form of assessment is by essay; followed by test. Three courses are assessed by the students. Participation, action project, examination, and research project are frequent; journals/diaries and reviews occasionally. Most courses are 3rd year level; four are second year; and two graduate. There are Women's Studies sections within at least two other courses. All courses are credits for degrees; and most are full year. Lectures predominate over seminars and tutorials, although in a few they are infrequent. Technological devices are not used often. Most courses are taught by senior lecturers, medium status, slightly fewer by lecturers; one by a junior lecturer; and one partly taught by a professor (highest teaching status). Age-groups range from under 20 to 61-65. Topics include: Education, Work (paid and unpaid), Status, Law, Consciousness, Management Career, Sociology of Gender, Theory, Psychology, Literature, History of New Societies, Image of Women in Western Arts, and Women as Artists.

SECTION TWO: TEACHERS/TEACHING

The nine questions in this section elicited information on the aims of the courses and the reasons for offering the; on changes that have occurred; and on feminists and their roles in women's studies. Differences in aims among three groups of respondents were noticeable. The teachers' colleges tended to agree that cognitive/empirical, affective/subjective/-expressive and conceptual/theoretical aims were of average importance. No one aim was considered very important. In contrast the second group was high on political changes in the family, on affective/subjective/expressive aims, on social skills and on participation. For example:

That the women in the group should; enjoy being together; learn to listen to each other; learn to discuss differences without being threatened; learn sources and resources and how to use them; identify what they want to do next and how to go about it; know about women in (NZ) society and about themselves as women; find discussing ideas enormously interesting.

To teach self-awareness, group awareness, creative flow; knowledge about our female art heritage, sensitivity to art, articulation, self-confidence, bonding between women, etc etc.

To provide language, theory, perspective (feminist) which will allow them to understand, describe and experience more positively and confidently what they already know.

The University respondent tended to focus on cognitive/empirical, on political changes regarding the family, and on a conceptual/theoretical focus on history, the family and society.

Closely connected with aims and purposes of these courses are the reasons for teaching women's studies. Surprisingly, little difference was found among the three groups. Reasons included educating women because of the lack of facts and awareness about women and feminism and to alleviate a preponderance of fallacies and myths. Sexism in society, commonality among women, and a need to help women were mentioned frequently.

All respondents noticed changes since the courses were first established at the teacher's colleges. 'Consciousness-raising' of students and the 'developing of positive attitudes' as well as a growing 'awareness of stereotyping and prejudice generally' and 'legal changes' drew mention. In the second group student enrolment has increased (in one case from 25 in 1976 to 400 in 1982); but decreased in other courses, possibly because more courses are

available. Students are closer to a cross-section of the community and include more male students; they are better informed before the course about physical and emotional aspects; many are now referred to courses by counsellors, social workers and doctors; they are now prepared to make intense emotional effort; and they rely more on experiences of the group. Courses are less structured; and topics are more comprehensive, but depend on participants' interests and information. Aims are higher. Tutors are developing more strength and confidence to share with their students, as they become more familiar with their material, practised in their method, and as they learn more from their participative courses. A very tangible result of all of this has been an increase in community activities and in political action. A decrease in sexist language by male colleagues and invitations to contribute to contiguous courses were noted by the university lecturers. Growth in knowledge and a growing need to reassess accumulating knowledge led to a stronger theoretical and historical focus.

Despite these optimistic results much pessimism was evident. In all three groups women were concerned about redundancy, about appointments on "soft" money, and about their continued status. Many felt overworked and expressed concern about adequately handling an expanding program in both numbers and academic scope in a time of contracting resources.

All the respondents described themselves as feminists. Definitions that included concern for rights, equality of opportunity, freedom to choose and the promotion of a non-sexist society came from the teachers' college group. The components expressed in the second category included a full recognition of women's worth or potential, centrality of female experience, and self-worth as independent of gender; belief in oppression of women as economic, political (social, cultural, institutional); belief in right to equality of opportunity; committal to working towards elimination of sexist practices and attitudes, and changing the system. To the university women feminism included commonality with other women and articulation of experience as women; commitment to social change, and to create a new reality of equality; recognition of informal skills and experience; concern for increased knowledge about women; and development of cognitive and vocational skills. Little difference was noticed among the three groups. An answer from the technical, community, continuing college group said:

One who needs to change the racist, classist, and sexist nature of societies' hierarchies through her experience as a woman.

A university reply agreed:

A person committed to fighting against sex oppression, because it's morally wrong or unjust. Also concerned with the links between sex oppression and other oppressions especially race and class.

SECTION THREE: ISSUES

The third section of the questionnaire focussed on reasons for reluctance of some to enrol in a women's studies course, on the qualifications necessary to teach such a course, on the consequence to students and teachers and on the focus of students' discussion, projects, etc. The question on the reluctance of some to enrol in a women's studies course showed a surprising unanimity. It was generally agreed that the image of feminism, followed closely by a fear of what others would say, kept many out of the courses. At the same time those that did enrol found many differences among the students and some feared that differentia-

tion could lead to hostility and to conflict. Although some thought differentiation had more potential for growth, commonality tended to encourage sharing and a positive self-image.

Although the earlier question to the respondents on their feminist views resulted in a unanimous response the question on who can teach women's studies resulted in a variety of replies. Women who were feminists, any woman and women with academic qualifications, all received positive answers. The only unanimity in this question was that men should not teach these courses. Some university tutors were willing to accept appropriately qualified males as contributors only. The differences between the non-university group and the academic women can be seen in the following comments:

Our tutors must *understand* the issues facing women, have many contacts in the community, be acceptable by a cross-section of women (both feminist and non-feminist), and be able to encourage participation and confidence. We see our courses as 'door openers', but whether or not a particular woman goes through any door is completely up to her'.

The courses should be organized by women with a feminist perspective. In a university, if they are to receive academic credit, they will have to be taught by academics. But excellent women's studies courses or research can be conducted by women who draw on own experience and reading. Men can contribute to women's studies especially when the courses incorporate attempts to understand gender and not just women's experience. Women should have control over this contribution.

Two questions directed themselves to consequences of women's studies: one a political result, the other consequences to the personal, social, family and professional lives of the students and teachers. Most replies indicated that political relevance encourages action and an expanding of horizons and definitions. The difficulty with assessing personal and social consequences from the answers is that although most agreed that the consequences were "good", and/or "positive" these answers were not qualified and therefore tell us little.

Individual experiences, personal problems and interaction with fellow students tended to be the focus for students' discussions and projects in all three kinds of teaching organizations. Personal experiences were related to empirical comparisons in teachers colleges, to political action and family considerations in the technical institute, community college group, and to 'theoretical explanations' in the university courses underscoring the focus of these differing institutions.

SECTION FOUR: CONTENT

This section looked at content and at change in content - both that which has occurred and suggestions for improvement. Content areas receiving most attention from all three groups include social environment, contemporary New Zealand, women's commonality and differentiation, affirmative action and empirical research. No-one listed "deliberate, exclusive feminist perspective". When it came to changes the first group emphasized how teachers and schools reinforce sexism. The second group felt that the content had become more radical and that topics and resources were more accessible and varied. The University group was concerned with contact with other departments, with comparative material, and with slowly improving library materials. The greatest degree of differentiation seems to be in the second group, probably a reflection of their many constituents and their lack of a defined institutional home as in teachers colleges and universities.

CASE STUDIES

Women's Studies, University of Waikato

The University of Waikato offers a cluster of courses: one 2nd-year (interdisciplinary); four 3rd-year (one interdisciplinary, one each in Education, Sociology, and Psychology); and two graduate (Sociology and Psychology).

21.201 Women's Studies: an Introductory Course. This course has had a series of three lecturers. It was initiated as an interdisciplinary exploration, through cross-cultural literature, economics, history, law, etc., of work and power. In subsequent years it has focussed on the family and economic production, especially the changing relationships between motherhood and economic production. Literature is used to reveal women's lives and the expectations placed upon them. Women's political demands are explored in earlier and current aspects of the women's movement. The focus is now on N.Z. material, with special lectures and tutorials, and is internally assessed through participation, essays, and tests.

21.301 Women: Activities, Status, Consciousness. This course explores activities, status, and consciousness in a range of situations and processes of change. Emphasis is on recent feminist critique of feminist critique. The course is unstructured: lecturer, students, and occasional outsiders contribute according to their experience and research, selecting from topics suggested in the following framework: (A) OVERVIEW: existent social structures and feminist alternatives; language; literature; history; and Women's Studies. (B) THIRD WORLD: imposition of western and male stereotypes; consequences for women, and their responses. (C) WESTERN URBAN: lack of 'fit' for women between their work, interests, and responsibilities, on the one hand, and existing housing, urban design and services, on the other; and women's responses. Students choose their own topics for a single piece of work to be researched and discussed over the year.

18.309/21.302 Psychology and Women. This course aims to separate myth from reality, stereotype from data. After a brief look at how psychology in the past has regarded women, the course takes a developmental view of women's life experiences. The focus is on N.Z. The structure is on seminar lines. Initially, students are allocated, in turn, an article to comment on during the weekly seminars. Later, groups of students are asked to take responsibility for the organising of the entire seminar discussions.

31.331/21.304 Women and Education. The first part of the course relates, through the four perspectives of conservatism, liberalism, Marxism, and radical feminism, feminist theories to educational theories. The second part examines the overt and hidden curricula of educational institutions through a feminist perspective; subject and career choices, sex stereotyping, and control of knowledge. These parts are taught through guided readings and prepared discussion. Guest speakers introduce the topics of Maori women and education, and the transition from school to work. The third part of the course consists of student seminars. Emphasis is on the N.Z. context throughout the course. There are four pieces of work required, and a test.

25.317/21.303 Women and Work. This course is unstructured: lecturer, students, and occasional outsiders contribute according to their experience and research, selecting from topics suggested in the following framework: (A) OVERVIEW: division of labour in non-contemporary Western societies and in anthropological/Third World. (B) CONTEMPORARY WESTERN: occupational segregation — Home/family, workplace; structural-situational blockages/accommodation; women-intensive workforce areas; past patterns and present changes in consciousness and politicisation. (C) MODELS/THEORIES of explanation and intervention: economic, psychological; sociological; socialist; feminist. (D) CHANGE: goals and strategies; agents of change; economic aspects (especially micro-electronics). Students choose their own topics for a single piece of work to be researched and discussed over the year.

In as far as these courses are offered as a first supporting subject for a B.Soc.Sc., they are not marginal. One of them is a core course within a discipline (Sociology). The total enrolment of about 150 students (in a university of just over 3000 students). The number in the 2nd-year course has increased rapidly from 8 to 21 to over 70. There are three women

members of staff (two Senior Lecturers and one Lecturer) responsible for teaching and convening these courses. In addition, up to 11 others are involved in the 2nd-year one.

The first to be put forward for approval was Sociology of Women in 1973. Later, the Head of Psychology explored interest in an inter-disciplinary course; but there was insufficient support. Subsequently, the competitive³ spirit being roused, his department offered Psychology of Women although there was no one, male or female, qualified to teach it. The course was 'aptly described as a "mess" '4 (of the smorgasbord or pick-'n-peck type) in its first year; but it has survived and is popular. The Sociology one was supported by six months preparatory research by a specially appointed part-time lecturer. Her preparation included selecting books and serials (thanks to generous setting-up grants by the Sociology Department and the International Women's Year Committee) for a core collection in the university library. This course has survived with fluctuating enrolments and shifts in content. It is now called 'Women and Work.'

The burden of trying to cover too much ground in both these courses led to moves for establishing supporting interdisciplinary ones. At the same time an informal Women's Studies Committee was established. This was later made a Standing committee of the Academic Board (the body responsible for administering University academic affairs). The Committee is made up of the three Lecturers/Convenors of the five courses, the Librarian, and representatives of the Schools of Study and of the Waikato College of Teacher Education. Co-opted members include two women officers from the Centre for Continuing Education, student representatives of the courses and one for the student body of the University, and two interested women lecturers. All members are women, except that the figurehead Chair, who does not attend meetings, is the Dean of Social Sciences. The Committee has some voice on the highest administrative bodies through its formal Chairman; and through individual members, one of whom, the Librarian, is ex officio a member of the Academic Board, and one of whom is an elected member.

The courses have excellent supporting services. The University Library has the best collection in N.Z. of books and serials in Women's Studies. The Sociology Department is the location of the Women's Studies Resource Room and of annual volumes in a series recording research (published and unpublished) and teaching, *Women's Studies in New Zealand* it also houses a Parent Education Archive and a Demography Archive. In Psychology, Jane Ritchie sometimes publishes her students' essays/project reports. This year, Lynne Gifford, Lecturer in Sociology, mounted a much appreciated series of weekly seminars by outside lecturers. In 1980 a Fulbright Fellow contributed to lectures and organised part of the Women's Studies Resource room. A second Fulbright Fellow has been appointed for 1983/1984.

Unfortunately, Women's Studies in this university is uniquely vulnerable. Its courses are dependent on the good-will of Departments for Lecturers and for secretarial services: this will be increasingly strained as economic restrictions are felt. It is also dependent on the good-will of an individual, the Dean, whose term of office will expire. All courses are tied to individual lecturers, not to independent positions; and it is bad luck, indeed, that one of the three lecturers concerned is untenured, and one is about to retire. As the latter has sole responsibility for the Women's Studies Resource Room and the bibliography, *Women's Studies in New Zealand*, these are as threatened as her two courses. The Waikato situation

is not typical of other universities where Women's Studies lecturers are tenured and in their prime.

Broadsheet

The issues of this journal have now accumulated enough material to provide a groundwork for Women's Studies to chart and analyse the Women's Movement in New Zealand with its internal relationships of alliances/hostilities, plus its wider relationships to a range of events here. Much of this material is not to be found in newspapers and other journals.

Broadsheet is one of the world's oldest feminist magazines, and it is bought by a wide range of women. It was created by a Collective with energy, insight, courage, business sense, and a desire for action - in reaction against simplistic slogans and activities such as consciousness-raising and 'self-education of the group'. After the triumph of the anti-abortion forces in 1978 (which imposed on New Zealand women some of the harshest legislation in the world), there was a general loss of heart. A long and vigorous campaign had been defeated. This was accompanied by increasingly tense controversy, especially between lesbians and non-lesbians, over counter-claims between cultural activities and political activities. This split went wider and deeper than the *Broadsheet* Collective: it existed right throughout the Women's Movement — and erupted in the fourth United Convention, 1979, so bitterly that there has been no national convention since.

The journal provides information (including records of women's groups throughout the country) and analyses of ideologies, action, and legislation. It copes as well as can be expected with the dilemma of trying not to offend two wings of readers: radical feminists and those new to the ideas of the Women's Liberation Movement. Themes covered include: education, the arts, violence, advertising, aging, religion, health, motherhood, incest. Two major issues analysed in detail have been the mothers' 'dependency allowance', supported by government advisory bodies, and abortion.

The focus has broadened beyond the old issues of white, middle-class women to chart and comment on: the Springbok Tour and the violence associated clashes with protesters; Maori and Pacific Island women; exclusion of housewives in the Accident Compensation Bill; unemployment, especially attrition in women-intensive workplace; work co-operatives; right-wing racist and anti-women groups; nuclear threats; and government cuts in social services.

Writers to *Broadsheet* have provided its readers with descriptions of all the activities that have been central to the Women's Movement: Knowhow; the visit of Lorraine Rothman from the U.S.; the Auckland Medical Centre with its history of police raids, trials, arson, and its closing down after legislation, to be partially replaced by groups such as SOS that contrived to get women to Australia for abortions: the development of Health Centres (such as Hecate in Wellington), of the Wellington multi-media Women's Gallery, and of Backstreet theatre; United women's Conventions; and all kinds of protests. Particular analyses have been made of the effectiveness of activities and the lessons learned from them. Rival claims on women's energies are looked at critically, especially International Women's Year and cultural activities, which many prefer as being personally gratifying, to hard political toil.

Many aspects of ideological issues can be found as the arguments developed from initial simplistic theories/explanations and accompanying intervention to more mature theories related to situations and systemic oppression. There have been general debates on peren-

nial topics such as biology vs culture, reform vs revolution, violence vs non-violence, separatism vs equal-rights-feminism. Exclusion of men and our relationship to men has been an ongoing topic. Initially, the *Broadsheet* Collective accepted men, but excluded them from mid-'74. The acceptance of an embedded image of inferiority has been replaced by a new definition of equality: equality with men is looked at critically and replaced by the concept of sisterhood as powerful in active fight against the system and in viewing men as the enemy. Links are found between the oppression of women, economic events and developments, and racial oppression. Countervailing claims which elevate 'female values' may have two outcomes as Phillida Bunkle pointed out in an article, that we need to be wary of: glorification of stereotypic 'female' traits and activities on the one hand, or 'separatism', on the other.

Two sensitive issues are relationships to the Women's Movement of lesbians, and of Maori and Pacific Island women. To begin with, lesbianism was ignored; then it was actively accepted, but only in the aspect of sexual preference; finally, it was understood as political (radical) as well and as a source of self-pride. Maori women wrote very infrequently for *Broadsheet* until 1979. They found the Women's Liberation Movement 'all talk' and irrelevant to themselves because it is made up of white, middle-class women who don't need liberating; or repugnant because of genocidal threats for themselves in contraception, sterilisation and abortion. More recently, there have been clear articulation in articles written by Maori women in *Broadsheet* of Maori problems and activities. They act for solo mothers and prisoners, they do not just 'talk about oppressed women'. They are discriminated against as Maoris, not as women — despite some domestic violence, some can claim that they have equality with Maori men in their own culture; but they are against white females as much as against white males. Their priority is to fight for rights and self-determination of Maori women against white oppression of Maoris of both sexes by whites of both sexes.

The development of the Women's Liberation Movement has been characterised as: being induced by internal conflict to 'harmless liberal suggestions for action'; by lack of strong leadership; by lack of allies; by lack of theory and ideology leading to action; and by lack of information about the position of women in New Zealand. *Broadsheet* is doing more than its share. The major changes over the ten years described in *Broadsheet* are a move away from simplistic explanations and strategies to more mature understanding of the complexities of issues and the ambivalence of strategies; from narrow focus on white, middle-class women to all classes and all races; from being alone and in the forefront with radical ideas, to being part of a wide movement in which many of the once-radical ideas are now acceptable. In general there has been a development to greater understanding and greater tolerance. A major part of these changes can be attributed to the articles and comments in *Broadsheet*. No Women's Studies course that is concerned with New Zealand ideas and activities can ignore this major source for historical and current research.

Auckland Feminist Tutors for Women's Studies (acknowledgements to Claire-Louise McCurdy)

The first course of Women's Studies in Auckland consisted of eight 2-hour weekly sessions shared among six feminist tutors. Several students in early courses who had academic competence in areas such as law, history, sociology, literature, and anthropology went on to run new courses, not only in the WEA but also in the University Centre for Continuing Education and in Technical Institutes. In 1978, the realisation that demand for

Women's Studies courses could outstrip the supply of tutors led to the coming together of a group of feminists with specific skills and a range of teaching experience. They began by trying to define Women's Studies; but mostly they got on with practicalities. Everyone wanted more information in particular areas: law, history, art, etc. They shared articles, book titles, and contacts with resource people and organisations.

The first aim of Women's Studies was identified as that of consciousness raising, emphasising 'the personal is political'. This was reinforced by the teaching methods of Sylvia Ashton Warner and of Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, as well as by the student challenge to authoritarian methods and 'objectivity'. Because feminists were committed to a non-hierarchical way of functioning, there was a gap between Claire-Louise (because of her longest-established expertise) and the others. She solved the problem by encouraging each member to prepare background material for a topic of her choice. But frustration remained because of the different levels of consciousness and of commitment to feminism. The groups have varied a good deal in age, educational and marital status, sexual preference, occupation and income. Participation in the group proved personally destructive for some of the women. Therefore, it was decided to limit the groups to feminists so that there would be a framework for analysis to prevent distress and judgmental attitudes. The eighteen women who enrolled were divided into two groups to discuss, over ten weeks, the following topics: a definition of Women's Studies; the characteristics of a Women's Studies tutor; and the basic Women's Studies course. Claire-Louise found that one of the major responsibilities of any tutor is to establish patterns of behaviour for the group that gives every woman the right to be listened to. This helps them to lose their initial nervousness and defensiveness.

Over the years of tutor-training, Claire-Louise has found that most students are very glad to abandon an authoritarian style of teaching; but they do have to feel confident with what will replace the familiar. Eight survived in the course, and used two N.Z. feminist manifestoes, and 'The Image of Women in Western Arts'. It is probable that a 3rd-year independent course, 'Feminism and Social Theory' will be added in 1983. In addition there are two 3rd-year courses, one in History and one in Philosophy ('Philosophy and the Women's Movement') which are in both Women's Studies and their respective departments. The aim is to make these five courses the nucleus of a Women's Studies major.

Claire-Louise withdrew from responsibility as soon as others volunteered to open up topics for discussion and to practice skills of opening and closing meetings. Remaining frustration was alleviated by the introduction of consensus decision-making and the analysis of positive and negative behaviours in groups. Looking back, she now thinks that what was crucial to their development as tutors was the opportunity for each to talk without interruption. They learnt to create the environment that developed confidence, purpose, and verbal skills.

Women's Studies, Victoria University of Wellington (acknowledgements to Phillida Bunkle, Women's Studies Co-ordinator)

There are two 2nd-year level, independent courses, 'Women in Society' and 'The Image of Women in Western Arts'. It is probable that a 3rd-year independent course, 'Feminism and Social Theory' will be added in 1983. In addition there are two 3rd-year courses, one in History and one in Philosophy ('Philosophy and the Women's Movement') which are in

both Women's Studies and their respective departments. The aim is to make these five courses the nucleus of a Women's Studies major.

Enrolments for all these courses have always been high. Last year, when enrolment ceilings were removed for the first time, the 2nd-year courses has 230 students. There are problems providing sufficient teaching for these numbers.

The staff consists of two half-time appointments, permanent and independent, in Women's Studies. Another position is expected to be added on the same basis soon. These positions have been created through redeployment of existing faculty. They started under the auspices of History, for three years; then under the Faculties of Arts and of Language and Literature, in a probationary way; but they are now independent. They have difficulties in finding tutors for their expanding numbers; and their budget is low. From the beginning the lecturing was shared, including contributions from male members. They have always had male students, but not male tutors. The Chairperson of the Committee on Women's Studies is a man, but this has never created difficulties.

It is the usual paradox that we have had more support from liberal men than from defensive or insecure women. This poses some problems when talking about redeployment, as we have to argue against the assumption that just any woman who happens to be underemployed will do.

'Women in Society' has two components: formal lectures which describe the development of the status of women in Pakeha (white) society and offer explanations for it; and tutorial work which is at the personal and individual level. The students have to make the links between these two components. The pedagogical challenge is how to enable them to do so. They are continually trying to develop more N.Z. content.

'The Image of Women in Western Arts' is popular, partly because it is comparative literature and partly because it is modern literature - both of which are ignored in very classic and rigid literature departments. The course also makes links between fiction and other art forms; and they are developing Australasian and Visual components. They use very little secondary material or established criticism.

The existing and proposed 3rd-year level courses (especially the one on the Women's Movement) develop the themes of the 2nd-year courses more theoretically. These Women's Studies courses developed from the collective initiative of women faculty members, as part of an 8-point Affirmative Action Plan that they devised.

'We had a good spread of ages and subjects and this was a great strength. We could not be said to be of a feminist type', and this was disarming — and probably disconcerting too. The first course was composed of contributions from whoever could make one, and this included men: from religious studies, sociology, history, education, and law. The role of the co-ordinator has been to make the course more coherent . . . ; to facilitate the team approach; and to develop the tutorial programme. We have invented the institutional structure suitable for such an innovation as we have going along, and now have one which suits our needs quite well. We have, however, had clashes with the institution now that retrenchment has become more of a threat . . . Now we are flourishing and clearly here to stay we pose more of a threat, especially to declining departments . . . We have experienced quite active harrassment for the first time this year, and general paranoia about the future growth of WS. Nevertheless, while our future *growth* may be in doubt what we have is firmly established and fairly secure.

Conclusion

It is impossible to generalise where there is such variety and such a range of areas. By way of conclusion I list the aspects which I have found most striking.

The response to the questionnaire, which was long and tiresome, was most stimulating. I wish to thank all those who filled it in. Their responses have confirmed my field research findings. All those involved are feminist (in a range of definitions), and energetically dedicated. They are aware that the term 'feminist' has an image that deters potential students. Their teaching methods, based on great respect for their students, are participatory. Their aims are for action. Observable changes are towards greater breadth and greater depth; and away from the imported abstractions and slogans of the mid-60s to empirical knowledge of New Zealand. There has been notable hospitality in institutions; but this is being lessened by government cuts. The threats to individuals and the implied loss of their invaluable services are lamentable; but Women's Studies is so lively that the tide cannot be reversed.

Notes

- ¹ *N.Z. Herald*, 2 November 1982, section 2, page 1.
- ² I agree. I was astonished at the number of responses.
- ³ Ritchie, page 7.
- ⁴ Ritchie, page 7.

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