

Women's Lives, Feminism and the *New Zealand Journal of History*

In 1993, the *New Zealand Journal of History* (NZJH) released a special issue on women's political activities to mark the hundredth anniversary of women's suffrage. In her introduction Raewyn Dalziel discussed how much that issue was a result of its time: "The last two years have seen a quantum leap in women's history in New Zealand. The centennial of the franchise has been the occasion for conference papers, articles, collections of essays, monographs and multi-authored books. This could not have occurred, however, without years of research and writing on which historians could draw for the new work."¹ The special issue contained a sense of possibilities, of questions that were beginning to be asked and answered. In the 25 years since 1993, historians have continued to research and write about women's lives, but there have been no more leaps forward; if anything, progress has stalled.

It is now the 125th anniversary of women's suffrage and this article discusses how historians have written about women's lives in NZJH over the last 25 years. New Zealand history is wider than the NZJH and can be found in books, other academic journals, exhibitions, websites, government documents, and a range of other media. Analysing 25 years of NZJH only provides access to a specific subset of New Zealand historical work, but trends and tendencies in this subset are worth discussing, particularly because NZJH is a key site of scholarly debate about New Zealand history. This article starts by examining the 250 original articles that were published in NZJH, between the 1993 special issue and the end of 2017.² It demonstrates that only 10 per cent of articles written in NZJH focused on women's lives and another 20 per cent included women as historical actors. The second section of this article explores the development of the feminist movement in New Zealand and its effect on the way history has been written. The third section suggests that one way forward is to take inspiration from current feminist struggles. It discusses two case studies – pay equity claims for care workers and feminist organising in response to sexual violence. The article concludes by noting some of the reasons to be hopeful and outlining the benefits for the historical discipline from an increased discussion of women's lives in the next 25 years of NZJH.

Women's Lives in NZJH

¹ Raewyn Dalziel, 'Editorial', NZJH, 27, 2 (1993), p.125.

² Issue two of 2004 was a special issue dedicated to the work of Judith Binney. It contained eight articles by Binney reprinted from elsewhere. As I am examining the development of the historical approaches in NZJH since 1993, I have not included these reprinted articles in the discussion.

Women's lives are still discussed in NJZH much less than men's. 250 original articles have been published in NZJH since 1993 and just 22 articles had women's lives as their main subject. These articles discussed aspects of life that were exclusively or predominantly experienced by women: childbirth, sex work, domestic service, domesticity and some female-dominated occupations. There is little ambiguity about the focus of articles about women's lives. Titles such as 'From Family Helpmeet to Land Dispenser: Women Pharmacists' clearly communicate that women are the subject, and over half those 22 articles have 'women', or another gendered term, in the title.³ Articles about women are a small, discrete, subset of articles published in NZJH.

Identifying whether women's lives are the main subject of an article was a relatively easy task, classifying the remaining 228 articles was more challenging. Articles about men do not announce themselves as such; just five articles use the term 'men' or another gendered term in their title. In the article, 'Richard Seddon and Popular Opposition in New Zealand to the Introduction of Chinese Labour into the Transvaal', Richard Seddon's gender is clear, but careful reading is required to determine whether the article included popular opposition from women.⁴ I resolved this question by concentrating on how articles approached historical agency. I classified articles as including both men and women historical actors if both had substantial (but not necessarily equal) agency.⁵ More than one article published in NZJH in the last 25 years has almost entirely male actors, but then mentions 'Sidney and Beatrice Webb'.⁶ The difficulty of determining whether an article included women's experiences or entirely focused on men was a result of how often men's lives are treated as if they represent the population as a whole.

One hundred and twenty four articles contained entirely or predominantly male historical actors. More has been written about soldiers, rugby players and colonial administrators than mothers, netball players and clerical workers. In addition, historians have made greater claims for articles about men than articles about women. For example, David Murray argued that New Zealand had a rich and diverse musical culture and used for his case study an

³ Louise Shaw 'From Family Helpmeet to Lady Dispenser: Women Pharmacists 1881–1939', NZJH, 32, 1 (1998), pp.23–42

⁴ I concluded it did not, Jeremy Martens, 'Richard Seddon and Popular Opposition in New Zealand to the Introduction of Chinese Labour into the Transvaal, 1903-1904.' NZJH, 42, 1 (2008), pp. 176-195.

⁵ Six articles discussed agency at a population based level, primarily demographic articles, these are not included in the articles discussed in the previous or following paragraph.

⁶ Tony Taylor, 'Thomas Hunter and the campaign against eugenics', NZJH, 39, 2 (2005), p.196; Dominic Alessio, 'Promoting Paradise: Utopianism and National Identity in New Zealand', NZJH, 42, 1 (2008), p.26.

exhibition that only hired male musicians.⁷ Historians do not make similar arguments when writing about women. Just 51 articles contain significant discussion of both men and women as historical actors. Some were about romantic and sexual relationships between men and women.⁸ Others approached topics such as dance, protest or childhood in a way that included both men and women.⁹ The relatively small number of articles that discuss men and women in the same frame and the number of articles that frame their discussion as being about society as a whole, but only talk about men, underscores the overall imbalance in the discussion between men and women's lives in NZJH. In total, including the articles about women's lives, fewer than 30% of NZJH articles contained female historical actors.

Not all women are equally represented in NZJH. Of the 71 articles that included women historical actors, just 13 included Māori women historical actors. The 1993 special issue contained one article that focused on Māori women, Angela Ballara's 'Wahine Rangatira: Maori Women of Rank and their Role in the Women's Kotahitanga Movement of the 1890s'.¹⁰ No article since has focused on Māori women. Historians have written about Māori women as part of their hapu and iwi.¹¹ Other articles have discussed the relationship between Māori and Pākehā women, Māori women and the state and Māori women and Pākehā men.¹² Discussions of Māori women's lives in NZJH have uncovered important aspects of the past, but Pākehā women's lives have been discussed in more depth than Māori women's lives. Women who were neither Māori or Pākehā have only been discussed in migration histories.¹³

⁷ David Murray, 'Fitchett's Fallacy and Music at the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, Dunedin, 1889–1890', NZJH, 42, 1 (2008), pp.42–59.

⁸ For example, Charlotte Greenhalgh 'Bush Cinderellas: Young New Zealanders and Romance at the Movies, 1919–1939', NZJH, 44, 1, pp.1–21; Jane Adams, 'The "Coital Factor": Medico-Legal Approaches Towards Sexual Incapacity and Infertile Marriages in Mid-Twentieth-Century New Zealand', NZJH, 50, 1 (2016), pp.88–108.

⁹ For example, Marianne Schultz, 'Phantom Limbs: Concert Dance in New Zealand from the 1930s to the 1980s', NZJH, 45, 2 (2011), pp.225–45; Cybèle Locke, 'Historical Consciousness and the Unemployed: Invoking Symbols from the Past to Protest a Cause', NZJH, 35, 1 (2001), pp.70–84; Rosemary Goodyear, 'Overworked Children? Child Labour in New Zealand, 1919–1939', NZJH, 40, 1 (2006), pp.75–90.

¹⁰ Angela Ballara, 'Wahine Rangatira: Maori Women of Rank and their Role in the Women's Kotahitanga Movement of the 1890s', NZJH, 27, 2 (1993).

¹¹ For example, Melissa Matutina Williams, 'Navigating The Waka Of Maori Community Development: Panguru, "the Maori Affairs" and Anthropology in the 1950s', NZJH, 49, 1 (2015), pp.78-104; Angela Wanhalla, "'My piece of land at Taieri": Boundary formation and contestation at the Taieri Native Reserve, 1844-1868', NZJH, 41, 1 (2007), pp.45-61.

¹² For example, Fiona Paisley, 'Performing New Zealand: Maori and Pakeha Delegates at the Pan-Pacific Women's Conference, Hawai'i, 1934', NZJH, 38, 1 (2004), pp.22-37. Bronwyn Labrum, "'Bringing families up to scratch": The Distinctive Workings of Maori State Welfare, 1944-1970', 36, 2 (2002), pp.161-184; Angela Wanhalla, 'Interracial sexual violence in 1860s New Zealand' NZJH, 45, 1 (2011), pp.71-84.

¹³ Rosalind McClean, "'How we prepare them in India": British diasporic imaginings and migration to New Zealand', NZJH, 37, 2 (2003), pp. 131-151; Geoffrey Moore, "Return Migration of Vietnamese Aucklanders", NZJH, 37, 2 (2003) pp.189-209.

In addition, disabled women, lesbians and trans women have not been directly discussed in the pages of NZJH. Women who are written about in NZJH tend to have more power than those who are not.

NZJH has lacked historiographical discussion of how to write about women's lives. There have been 13 special issues with a specific historiographical focus and 47 historiographical articles since 1993.¹⁴ A wide range of historiographical approaches have been addressed – environmental history, economic history, class and history, digital history – but very little discussion on gender or women's lives. Susan Moller Okin's keynote address, published in 1995, has been the only historiographical article that addressed how to write the history of women.¹⁵ In 2017, a themed issue responding to Raewyn Dalziel's article 'Colonial Helpmeet' contained implicit discussion about how to understand women's domestic lives and relationships.¹⁶ In the 22 years in between, historians occasionally discussed how gender might be understood, but only in passing. Peter Gibbons acknowledged that gender was a force in New Zealand history, but went no further.¹⁷ In his commentary on her work, Damon Salesa praised Judith Binney's understanding of gender: "Through the matrix of gender Binney has combined much of what is innovative about her work, connecting her concerns with narrative, colonialism, the religious and 'subjugated knowledge'."¹⁸ The brevity of these comments shows how little historiographical discussion there has been about how to write about women's lives in the most important site for historiographical debate for New Zealand history.

Articles that discuss women as historical agents are not evenly divided among different historical subdisciplines. The 1993 special issue was the second special issue dedicated to women, the first was four years earlier. In her editorial introduction to the 1989 special issue, Raewyn Dalziel outlined the situation of women's history at that time: "A good start has been made in some areas — immigration, social welfare, suffrage, for instance."¹⁹ While the NZJH has not published any material on suffrage since the hundredth anniversary, immigration and welfare remain two subjects where articles in NZJH reliably discuss women's lives. Articles

¹⁴ As my focus was on agency, I treated historiographical articles separately from the categories discussed in the previous paragraphs.

¹⁵ Susan Moller Okin, 'Gender and Relativism in Recent Feminist Historical Scholarship', NZJH, 29, 2 (1995), pp. 211-225.

¹⁶ NZJH, 51, 1 (2017).

¹⁷ Peter Gibbons, 'The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History', NZJH, 37, 1 (2003), pp.38–49.

¹⁸ Damon Salesa, 'Korero: A Reflection on the Work of Judith Binney', NZJH, 38, 2 (2004), p.288.

¹⁹ Raewyn Dalziel, 'Editorial', NZJH, 23, 1 (1989), p.3.

on immigration do not usually discuss male immigrants as the default and instead regularly include both named individual women and compare women and men in their analysis.²⁰ The methodology and approaches of immigration history have developed to include both women and men. Welfare history includes women because women tend to be both the givers and receivers of welfare in New Zealand. Welfare is unusual in that it is an area of New Zealand life that has been dominated by women and also the subject of sustained historical discussion.²¹

If the historical sub-disciplines that most thoroughly integrate women's experiences have not changed since 1989, then it can be tempting to assume that the problem of men as the default within the historical discipline is intractable. However, examining two other sub-disciplines, religious history and cultural history, suggests that historians choose whether or not women's experiences are included as part of history. Articles in NZJH that discuss religious history reliably include women as historical actors and include information about women's lives.²² Given that church hierarchies have the same history of being dominated by men as political, sporting and cultural institutions, the inclusion of women in religious history shows that studies of male dominated institutions do not have to treat men as the default. In contrast, cultural history in NZJH has tended focused on the experiences of men, even though, theoretically, there is a lot of potential for the study of both male and female historical actors. Studies of cultural production have tended to focus on men.²³ In the last 25 years there have been 15 articles that consider the wider cultural implications of one man's life, and only three that afford women the same treatment. Cultural historians have tended to choose to write about men and religious historians have tended to choose to write about both women and men. The decision to not write about women's lives has been a choice historians made, not a natural result of the past itself.

²⁰ For example, Rebecca Lenihan, "'Jocks'-of-all-trades: Genealogical Methods, Occupational Profiles and New Zealand's Scots, 1840–1920', NZJH, 46, 2 (2012), pp.157–85; Jane McCabe, 'Working the Permit System: Anglo-Indian Immigration to New Zealand, 1920–1940', NZJH, 48, 2 (2014), pp.27–49.

²¹ For example, Bronwyn Labrum, "'Bringing families up to scratch": The Distinctive Workings of the Maori State Welfare, 1944–1970', NZJH, 36, 2 (2002), pp.161–84; Margaret Tennant, 'Two to Tango: The Partnership between Charity and the Welfare State in New Zealand 1940–1970', NZJH, 42, 1 (2008), pp.1–21.,

²² For example, Alison Clarke, 'Churchgoing in New Zealand, 1874–1926: How "Mediocre" was it', NZJH, 47, 2 (2013), pp.106–35; Geoffrey Troughton, 'Religion, Churches and Childhood in New Zealand c. 1900–1940', NZJH, 40, 1 (2006), pp.39–56.

²³ For example, Tony Ballantyne, 'Thinking Local: Knowledge, Sociability and Community in Gore's Intellectual Life, 1875–1914', NZJH, 44, 2 (2010), pp.138–56; Rosi Crane, 'A "Strange Fauna": T.J. Parker (1850–1897) and the Creation of Zoological Knowledge in Otago', NZJH, 49, 2 (2015), pp.60–80.

Another indication that historians choose whether or not to write about women's lives is that men and women make different choices. Very few men have written about women in the pages of NZJH. Of the 22 articles that focus on women, just one was written by a man.²⁴ Of the 151 articles written by men, only 21 included female historical actors. The vast majority of the material that focus on women in NZJH is written by women, as is the majority of the material that discusses both male and female historical actors. In comparison, female historians regularly write about men's lives: a third of the 108 articles written by women contained only or predominantly male actors.

The fact that men tend not to write about women in NZJH is particularly significant, because sixty percent of the authors of articles published in NZJH between 1994 and 2017 were men.²⁵ This year, there has been international discussion about the dominance of male authors in historical journals. In the May 2018 issue of *Irish Historical Studies* all peer-reviewed, commissioned and review articles were written by men.²⁶ Every book reviewed in the April 2018 issue of *American Historical Review* issue was written by a man (and follow-up research uncovered that of the previous 100 books reviewed in that journal 29 were written by women and 71 by men).²⁷ The male dominance of these issues was noted on social media and there the journals in questions have responded on their blogs. Both the *Irish Historical Review* and *Past and Present* have indicated that that fewer articles were submitted by women than by men and suggested a higher rate of acceptance among articles submitted by women.²⁸ *Past and Present* used research into the historical profession in the UK to indicate that this difference cannot be explained by gender imbalance in the profession. While a number of different theories could explain the gender imbalance of material submitted, further research would be appreciated. *American Historical Review* has undertaken to do that research.²⁹ If the pattern of submission identified by other journals holds true at NZJH, change at NZJH itself would not address the gender imbalance of authors – wider disciplinary, employment and social change would be needed.

²⁴ Peter Franks, 'The Employment Contracts Act and the Demise of the New Zealand Clerical Workers Union', NZJH, 28, 2 (1994), pp.194–210.

²⁵ I determined the gender of authors by a combination of personal knowledge and examination of University websites. There was just one author whose gender I could not identify. I acknowledge that this methodology is limited and author's reporting their gender would generate more data, but I think the pattern that emerges is robust enough to be worth discussing.

²⁶ Irish Historical Studies editors, 'Irish Historical Studies and Gender Balance', 20 June 2018: <http://blog.journals.cambridge.org/2018/06/20/irish-historical-studies-and-gender-balance/>

²⁷ 'From the editor's desk: all apologies', *American Historical Review*, 123, 3 (2018), pp. xiv–xvii.

²⁸ Irish Historical Studies editors; Anna Bayman, 'Gender Bias: Past & Present', *Past & Present* Blog, 24 November 2016: <http://pastandpresent.org.uk/gender-bias-past-present/>

²⁹ 'From the editor's desk'.

While the question of how to address gender imbalance in historical publication must await further research, its impact on New Zealand historiography can be identified now. Men rarely write about women and so therefore the fact more articles by men than by women are published in NZJH is a contributor to the imbalance of whose lives are discussed. At the time of the 1993 special issue, there was still considerable hope that theoretical innovation might offer a way to address these problems. In the late 1980s, Joan Scott suggested that the study of gender would disrupt the way history was written and provide opportunities for feminist organisation.³⁰ Twenty-five years later, the historical productivity of studying gender can be seen in NZJH, but it is also clear studying gender has not transformed history as its early proponents hoped.³¹ In 1993, historians were talking about how they might change the historical discipline so that men were no longer treated as the default. In the face of such an immovable discipline, the problem of the dominance of men's lives within NZJH seems intractable. However, the way women's lives were written about in NZJH by 1993 was significantly different from the early years of that journal. Therefore one starting point is to think historically and ask what caused significant change between 1967 and 1993.

The history of the women's liberation movement and the development of women's history

Historical interest in women was part of NZJH from the beginning, but women's history as a discipline developed as a result of the women's liberation movement. Although 'Venus and the Lonely Kiwi: The War Effort of Miss Ettie A. Rout' was the lead article in the second issue of NZJH,³² there were few female historical actors, apart from Queen Victoria, in the pages of NZJH until Patricia Grimshaw's article on the movement for women's suffrage in 1970.³³ The same year women in Auckland and Wellington formed the first women's liberation groups.³⁴ In 1973, Raewyn Dalziel opened her review of *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand*:

³⁰ Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *The American Historical Review*, 91, 5 (1986), pp.1073-4.

³¹ For example, Elspeth Knewstubb, 'The Models of Home?: Influences on Medical Practice at Ashburn Hall, Dunedin, 1882-1910', NZJH, 46, 1 (2012), pp.3-20.

³² P.S. O'Connor, 'Venus and the Lonely Kiwi: the War Effort of Miss Ettie A. Rout', NZJH, 1, 2 (1967), pp.1-32.

³³ Patricia Grimshaw, 'Politicians and Suffragettes: Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, 1891-1893', NZJH, 4, 2 (1970), pp.160-77.

³⁴ Jennie Roberts to Therese O'Connell, 7 July 1970, Christine Dann Papers, Box 1, MS 211, MacMillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

1972 WAS a good year for New Zealand feminists. It began with the visit of Germaine Greer, saw the publication of a book of New Zealand's suffrage movement, and finished with the passing of an equal pay bill. That Patricia Grimshaw's book, *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand*, a scholarly piece of historical research, should have reached the best seller lists is a reflection of the interest in women's history generated by the women's liberation movement.³⁵

Dalziel specifically connects the growth of the women's liberation movement, its successes, and increasing interest in women's history.

The women involved in the 1970s women's liberation movement were actively interested in their own history. In 1975, the Dunedin Collective for Woman (DCW) researched and developed a *Herstory* exhibition. The women involved were discovering aspects of women's lives in the past that had not been available before: "During our research, each of us in our particular sphere has found so much about women which we had never been taught."³⁶ The following year, the DCW put out the first *Herstory Diary*, which included biographies, photographs, recipes, and songs and was a significant step forward in the historiography of women's lives in New Zealand.³⁷ Academic historians were part of the women's liberation movement and central in movement-based projects that explored women's history. Andrée Lévesque was a founding member of the DCW and taught history at the University of Otago.³⁸ She was involved in the *Herstory* projects and also published significant material about women's history in feminist magazine *Broadsheet*.³⁹ The women's liberation movement was a productive source for new forms of women's history that overlapped and fed into academic histories of women.

The symbiotic relationship between the women's liberation movement and women's history can be seen in the 1989 and 1993 special issues of NZJH. In both issues authors make reference to the feminist movement that had developed since the 1970s. Jane Malthus

³⁵ Raewyn Dalziel, 'Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, by Patricia Grimshaw', NZJH, 7, 2 (1973), p.201.

³⁶ Dunedin Collective for Woman, *Herstory Diary 1977*, Dunedin, 1976, p.3.

³⁷ Dunedin Collective for Woman.

³⁸ Andrée Lévesque, interview with Grace Millar, 25 January 2001, DCW Reunion Oral History Project, author's possession.

³⁹ Andrée Lévesque, 'Grandmother Took Ergot: An Historical Perspective on Abortion in New Zealand [1897–1937], Part 1: The Abortionists', *Broadsheet*, 43, October 1976, pp.18–22; Andrée Lévesque, 'Grandmother Took Ergot: An Historical Perspective on Abortion in New Zealand [1897–1937], Part 2: The Women', *Broadsheet*, 44, November 1976, pp.26–31.

compared nineteenth-century dress reformers to 1970s feminists.⁴⁰ Deborah Montgomerie evaluated women's workforce participation during the World War II against its potential to change women's lives and argued that it did not reach that potential.⁴¹ Angela Ballara ended her paper about Wāhine Māori leaders in the Kotahitanga movement, by making connections with patterns of Wāhine Māori leadership in the twentieth century.⁴²

The 1990s and early 2000s were a time of stagnation for feminism in New Zealand. Many of the forms of organising that had grown out of the women's liberation movement were no longer sustainable. The United Women's Conventions were central to the women's liberation movement in the 1970s and the last one was held in 1979.⁴³ Services started by the women's liberation movement, such as women's refuges and rape crisis support centres, have had a continual life, but other initiatives stopped one by one. For example, *Broadsheet* ceased publishing in 1996.⁴⁴ The 1990s were also a time of much wider social and economic change. In 1991, the incoming National government stripped the welfare state and dismantled employment protections, both of which had a significant effect on women's lives and their ability to organise. For example, the Clerical Workers' Union, particularly the Wellington branch, had been a place where women organised around issues such as equal pay and sexual harassment.⁴⁵ The highly regulated structure of trade unionism that existed prior to 1991 allowed feminist women to create a base within the union movement. The Clerical Workers' Union was closed abruptly, just before Christmas 1991; its closure de-unionised 20,000 clerical workers.⁴⁶ While articles in the 1993 special issue reference the wider historical context of the women's liberation movement, none mention the more immediate political context.⁴⁷

There was some irony in producing a special issue on women in politics in 1993, because neo-liberal changes by successive governments had put huge pressure on the structures that

⁴⁰ Jane Malthus, "'Bifurcated and Not Ashamed": Late Nineteenth-Century Dress Reformers in New Zealand', *NZJH*, 23, 1 (1989), p.45.

⁴¹ Deborah Montgomerie, 'The Limitations of Wartime Change: Women War Workers in New Zealand', *NZJH*, 23, 1 (1989), pp.69, 86.

⁴² Ballara.

⁴³ *United Women's Convention 1979*, Hamilton, 1979.

⁴⁴ *Broadsheet*, Winter/Hoteke (1997).

⁴⁵ Therese O'Connell interview with Grace Millar, Wellington Clerical Workers Oral History Project, 2 May 2016, author's possession.

⁴⁶ Peter Franks, 'The Employment Contracts Act and the Demise of the New Zealand Clerical Workers Union', *NZJH*, 28, 2 (1994), p.194.

⁴⁷ Two following special issues, one on welfare and one on the award system did acknowledge these changes. Erik Olssen, 'Editorial', *NZJH*, 28, 2, (1994), p.121; Linda Bryder and Margaret Tennant, 'Introduction', *NZJH*, 32, 2, (1998), p.89.

supported women's political life. The institutional focus of the 1993 special issue very much reflected the way the women's liberation movement had organised. In the 1970s and early 1980s, feminists started a wide range of projects: groups, newsletters, magazines and conventions.⁴⁸ Historical study of women's lives reflected the women's liberation movement's institutional focus, particularly during suffrage year when the historical branch published *Women together: A history of women's organisations in New Zealand: Ngā rōpū wāhine o te motu*, edited by Anne Else.⁴⁹ The questions asked, the people studied when marking the 100th anniversary of the suffrage movement reflected the feminist organising of the women's liberation movement.

1993 did not just mark a change in focus for New Zealand women's history; it marked a highpoint. Unknown to those writing, the hundredth anniversary of women's suffrage was the culmination of what had happened in the previous 20 years, not the beginning of something new. The six articles published in this one special issue were a quarter of the total number of articles that focused on women until the special issue in response to Dalziel's in 2017. By 1993, feminist historians had achieved a lot, but they had not succeeded in dismantling the idea that the default historical subject was male. The feminist movement and women's history have been on a similar trajectory. The 1970s and 1980s was a time of fruitful generation that involved building new institutions and theoretical approaches. In both cases the years since 1993 have seen a slight decline. Feminism did not disappear, women's ambitions for a different world did not disappear, nor did historians' interest in women's lives, but the productive energy from the women's liberation movement was not sustainable forever.

The close relationship between the history of women and the women's liberation movement offers a way forward for future research. If the history of women's lives has been most productive in the past when historians have taken inspiration from feminist movements, then there could be strength in taking inspiration from current feminist activism. The NZJH supports the idea that history is often most vibrant when it develops in parallel with aspects of society where discussion and change are happening. Historical discussion of colonisation within NZJH has been interwoven with decades of Māori resistance and responses from both

⁴⁸ Christine Dann, *Up From Under: Women and Liberation in New Zealand, 1970–1985*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1985.

⁴⁹ Anne Else, ed. *Women Together: A History of Women's Organisations in New Zealand: Ngā Rōpū Wāhine o te Motu*, Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 1993.

Pākehā and the state.⁵⁰ Likewise historiographical discussion on transnational history and environmental history reflect wider concerns about globalisation and the environment.⁵¹

When considering how to further develop historical study of women's lives, the ways women are currently organising and the changes they are fighting for in the present is an important starting point.

Feminism in the Twenty-First Century and the potential for women's history

The last decade has seen new feminist forms of organising that offer possibilities for those interested in women's history. In 2017, high school feminist groups in Wellington organised a large protest at parliament against sexual violence; this action was possible because of feminist activism over the previous decade.⁵² New communication technology has changed feminist discussion and organising. Towards the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, a New Zealand feminist blogging network began to develop.⁵³ New Zealand feminists have organised in new social media spaces. Feminist Facebook pages have thousands of likes and feminist Facebook groups have thousands of members.⁵⁴ In 2011, Julia Schuster interviewed New Zealand feminists and found that feminists under 35 considered the internet central to their political activism.⁵⁵ However, there has not been the same level of fruitful cross-pollination between feminist activism and women's history that there was in the 1970s. The women's liberation movement was driven by an urgent need to uncover a history that had been hidden. History has not been as important to recent feminist movements, which means avenues for historical work inspired by current feminist organising could be fruitfully developed. This section will consider two particular case studies of prominent feminist activism: pay equity in the care industry and responses to sexual violence.

In February 2018, Kristine Bartlett was awarded the title 'New Zealander of the Year' for her role in fighting for pay equity for aged care workers. In 2012, Bartlett was an aged care

⁵⁰ For example, Judith Binney and Deborah Montgomerie, 'Editorial Introduction', NZJH, 31, 1 (1997), pp.3–5.

⁵¹ Paul Star, 'New Zealand's Changing Natural History: Evidence from Dunedin 1868–1875', NZJH, 32, 1 (1998), pp.59–69; Lyndon Fraser, 'Editorial Introduction: Migration Histories and Writing the Nation', NZJH, 43, 2 (2009), p.119.

⁵² 'Hundreds join protest against rape culture in NZ', *Radio New Zealand*, 13 March 2017: www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/326507/we-will-not-put-up-with-rape-culture-any-longer

⁵³ The Hand Mirror was formed in 2008 and lists dozens of blogs on its blog roll: *The Hand Mirror*: www.thehandmirror.blogspot.co.nz

⁵⁴ For example: 'Feminist Mothers' www.facebook.com/groups/feministmothersaotearoa/ and 'Wellington Young Feminists' www.facebook.com/wellingtonyoungfeminists/

⁵⁵ Julia Schuster, 'Why the personal remained political: comparing second and third wave perspectives on everyday feminism', *Social Movement Studies*, 16, 6 (2017), pp.647–59.

worker in Lower Hutt and her union (then Service and Food Workers' Union now E Tu!) brought a pay equity test case in her name. They argued that aged care workers had been paid less because the industry was dominated by women and that this unequal treatment was forbidden by the 1972 Equal Pay Act.⁵⁶ Over the next few years a number of hearings concentrated on the legal question about the use of the 1972 Equal Pay Act in industries dominated by women. After several legal victories, the union entered into negotiations with government and employers. In April 2017, E Tu! and the government reached a settlement that provided a substantial pay increase for aged care workers.⁵⁷ Kristine Bartlett's case was a significant feminist victory in the decades-long fight for pay equity, both for the legal precedent it set and because low-paid women workers won a significant pay rise.

Kristine Barlett's case was one of a number of recent court cases where plaintiffs pushed to have caregiving work, which is predominantly done by women, defined as work with value. In 2007, Philip Dickson and the Service and Food Workers' Union lodged legal proceedings claiming that careworkers who slept at their jobs were working and should be paid at least the minimum wage.⁵⁸ At that time, caregivers who stayed overnight were paid a set sum less than the minimum wage, because their employers claimed that sleeping was not work. In 2011, after successive legal victories, the government, employers and union settled and ensured that caregivers were paid the minimum wage while they slept.⁵⁹ In 2012, the Service and Food Workers Union also took a claim on behalf of members who provided care in people's homes and were not paid for the travel time between different clients. Again, after successful legal pressure, the union reached a settlement with the government.⁶⁰ Not all these cases have been led by unions. Ministry of Health policy explicitly ruled out paying family members for their work caring for disabled adults. From the year 2000, family members of disabled adults have successfully challenged this policy in the Human Rights Tribunal and other courts. They argued that the Ministry of Health's policy was contrary to the Human Rights Act, because it

⁵⁶ Coalition for Equal Value, Equal Pay, *Kristine Bartlett and Service & Food Workers Union vs. Terranova Homes & Care Ltd*, Factsheet, 23 April 2017, www.cevepnz.org.nz/What's%20happening/Bartlett%20vs%20Terranova.htm

⁵⁷ Council of Trade Unions, 'Historic Day as Caregivers Offered Equal Pay Settlement', Press Release, 18 April 2017: www.union.org.nz/historic-day-as-caregivers-offered-equal-pay-settlement/

⁵⁸ *Idea Services Limited vs Phillip William Dickson*, Appeal Court Judgement, 17 February 2011, CA405/2010: www.employmentcourt.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Decisions/2011-NZCA-14-CA405-2010-Idea-Services-Ltd-v-Dickson.pdf?SubsiteID=1

⁵⁹ *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates* (NZPD), 26 September 2011, 676, p.21471.

⁶⁰ NZPD, 13 October 2015, 709, p.7142.

discriminated against people on the basis of their family status.⁶¹ Each of these examples involved using legal pressure and collective organisation to demand that care work, predominantly done by women in home and home-like settings, was treated as work.

The Kristine Barlett case stands at the intersection of the history of women's paid work and the history of domestic work and has implications for both. New Zealand historians have made important claims for the history of domestic work. In 1977, Raewyn Dalziel's ground-breaking article 'The Colonial Helpmeet: Women's Role and the Vote in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand' argued that the organisation of domestic work in New Zealand helped explain New Zealand's political history.⁶² Charlotte Macdonald and Katie Pickles have both placed the history of domestic service in New Zealand within the history of empire.⁶³ On the 30th anniversary of the publication of Raewyn Dalziel's article, a special issue responding to her article examined questions of domesticity and labour. Two articles discussed the conditions under which Kristine Bartlett's predecessors had done care work.⁶⁴ The existing historiography could be built upon; there are still substantial gaps in the history of domestic work in New Zealand. Historians are already discussing the racial aspects of domestic labour, bringing this discussion into the post-war period and beyond would bring attention to non-white women workers.⁶⁵ Study of unpaid domestic work in the twentieth century has focused on ideology and regulation and there has been little work exploring the impact of domestic work on society.⁶⁶ The legal fights over the status of domestic care work demonstrated very clearly that it has a history, much of which has not yet been written. Workers' sustained efforts to use the courts to rule that domestic work is work could provide an impetus for

⁶¹ Cases related to this issue are still being litigated: 'Caregivers going to court for disabled care pay', *Radio New Zealand*, 7 March 2018: www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/351944/caregivers-going-to-court-for-disabled-care-pay

⁶² Raewyn Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet: Women's Role and the Vote in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', *NZJH*, 11, 2 (1977), pp.112–23.

⁶³ Katie Pickles, 'Empire Settlement and Single British Women as New Zealand Domestic Servants during the 1920s', *NZJH*, 35, 1 (2001), pp.22–44; Charlotte Macdonald, 'Why Was there No Answer to the 'Servant Problem'? Paid Domestic Work and the Making of a White New Zealand', *NZJH*, 51, 1 (2017), pp.7–35.

⁶⁴ Macdonald; Margaret Tennant and Lesley Courtney, "'The Karitane': The Rise and Fall of a Semi-Profession for Women', *NZJH*, 51, 1 (2017), pp.113–34.

⁶⁵ In addition to the articles by Macdonald and Pickles, relevant work has also been written outside *NZJH*, for example, Rosemary Anderson, 'The origins of Cook Island migration to New Zealand, 1920–1950', MA Thesis, University of Otago, 2015.

⁶⁶ This tendency also holds for pre-1993 studies of Twentieth Century domesticity. For example, Erik Olssen, 'Truby King and the Plunket Society: An Analysis of a Prescriptive Ideology', *NZJH*, 15, 1 (1981), pp.3–23; Ian Carter 'Most Important Industry: How the New Zealand State got Interested in Rural Women', *NZJH*, 20, 1 (1986), pp.27–43; Melanie Nolan, "'Politics Swept Under a Domestic Carpet'?: Fracturing Domesticity and the Male Breadwinner Wage Women's Economic Citizenship 1920s–1940s', *NZJH*, 27, 2 (1993), pp.199–217; Louise Shaw and Barbara Brookes, 'Constructing Homes: Gender and Advertising in "Home and Building" 1936–1970' *NZJH*, 33, 2 (1999), pp.200–220.

further historiographical discussion that built on existing study of domestic work in New Zealand.

Kristine Bartlett's case could have a significant impact on the New Zealand historical profession's writing about women's paid work. The argument that care work was underpaid because it has predominantly been done by women workers was a historical argument. Other groups of workers that want to sustain a similar argument before a tribunal, court of law, or in negotiations with government, will require historical evidence. The success of Kristine Bartlett's case marked the beginning and not the end of legal discussions about the history of women's work. School support staff, hospital administrators, midwives, retail workers and other workers in women-dominated industries will all have an opportunity to obtain a significant pay rise if they can make the same case and document their history. The work of the Waitangi Tribunal means that New Zealand historians have played a range of roles in legal proceedings. The tribunal has profoundly influenced the way New Zealand historians work, as has been discussed in some depth in NZJH.⁶⁷ Over the last 25 years, historians who have written about women's work have tended to write about professional and semi-professional women in the health and charity sectors.⁶⁸ If workers in industries dominated by women make equal pay claims over the next decade that would significantly expand what we know about women's paid work. Internationally the implications of historians' involvement in legal disputes over equal pay have been complex.⁶⁹ In New Zealand, further legal attention to the history of women's work, and historians' reaction to those cases, could produce exciting historiographical developments.

In October 2017, *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker* both published articles describing Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein's history of sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.⁷⁰ In the months that followed, the responses snowballed: people talked publicly about sexual harassment and abuse, and men who had perpetrated abuse lost positions of power. It

⁶⁷ For example, Paul McHugh, 'Law, History and the Treaty of Waitangi', NZJH, 31, 1 (1997), pp.38–57; Jim McAloon, 'By Which Standards? History and the Waitangi Tribunal', NZJH, 40, 2 (2006), pp.194–213.

⁶⁸ For example, Shaw; Margaret Tennant, 'Charity in Uniform: The Voluntary Aid Detachments of the New Zealand Red Cross', NZJH, 50, 2 (2016), pp.1–25. Cybèle Locke's work is an exception: Cybèle Locke, *Workers in the Margins: Union Radicals in Post-War New Zealand*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2012.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Ruth Milkman, 'Women's History and the Sears Case', *Feminist Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), pp.375–400.

⁷⁰ Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, 'Harvey Weinstein Paid Off Sexual Harassment Accusers for Decades', *New York Times*, 5 October 2017: www.nytimes.com/2017/10/05/us/harvey-weinstein-harassment-allegations.html; Ronan Farrow, 'From Aggressive Overtures to Sexual Assault: Harvey Weinstein's Accusers Tell Their Stories' *New Yorker*, 23 October 2017: www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/from-aggressive-overtures-to-sexual-assault-harvey-weinsteins-accusers-tell-their-stories

is far too early for historical consideration of this movement, but historians interested in women's lives can still learn from, and undertake research informed by, what has happened. In New Zealand, current discussions come in the context of high profile media coverage of the treatment of sexual violence by police and the courts, influenced by informally organised feminist action. In 2004, Louise Nicholas appeared on the front page of the *Evening Post* under the headline 'Police Raped Me'.⁷¹ She waived her right to anonymity to tell her story of sexual abuse and exploitation by three police officers: Clint Rickards, Bob Schollum and Brad Shipton. Years of court cases followed, each of which received significant public attention and discussion.⁷² In 2007, feminists organised protests at short notice in the aftermath of the same men's acquittal of raping another woman.⁷³ Another very public debate on sex and consent happened in 2013, when 3 News revealed that a group of young men, who referred to themselves as 'Roast Busters', had boasted on social media of sexual coercion. John Tamihere and Willie Jackson minimised the young men's actions on their popular talk-back radio show and were the target of sustained criticism.⁷⁴ Within two weeks of the case breaking, nationwide demonstrations were organised around the country.⁷⁵ A year later, similar short notice demonstrations were organised after the police decided that no further actions would be taken.⁷⁶ Then, in March 2017, media reported on a Facebook group where high school students at an all boys' school normalised the act of raping a young woman who was unconscious. High school feminist groups from nearby schools organised a large demonstration within a week.⁷⁷ In New Zealand in the ten years leading up to October 2017, there were regular high-profile media discussions of sexual violence. The response to the media coverage included informally organised, but significant, feminist protest that contested both the police, court and media's definition of and response to sexual violence.

Recent feminist activism could enrich historical work on sexual assault and relationships between men and women. Angela Wanhalla's 'Interracial Sexual Violence in 1860s New

⁷¹ Philip Kitchin, 'Police Raped Me', *Dominion Post*, 31 January 2004, p.1.

⁷² Louise Nicholas with Philip Kitchin, *Louise Nicholas: My Story*, Random House New Zealand, Wellington, 2007.

⁷³ 'Action against police rapists – Wellington', *Aotearoa Indymedia Centre*, 1 March 2007: archive.indymedia.org.nz/article/73230/action-against-police-rapists-wellington.html

⁷⁴ Mava Enoka, 'Two years on from Roast Busters', *The Wireless*, 14 September 2015: thewireless.co.nz/articles/two-years-on-from-the-roast-busters

⁷⁵ 'Roast Busters: Protests today aim to "bust rape culture"', *New Zealand Herald*, 16 November 2013: www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11158233

⁷⁶ '200 at Auckland anti-rape protest', *Radio New Zealand*, 22 November 2014: www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/260006/200-at-auckland-anti-rape-protest

⁷⁷ 'Hundreds join protest against rape culture in NZ', *Radio New Zealand*, 13 March 2017: www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/326507/'we-will-not-put-up-with-rape-culture-any-longer'

Zealand' is the only NZJH article that focused on sexual assault.⁷⁸ Wanhalla examined cases that reached the courts and were reported in the press. The historiography of how sexual violence was, or was not, classified as criminal is most well developed in the colonial period.⁷⁹ Studying sexual violence this way reveals a lot about how a society perceives, punishes and discusses sexual crimes. However, as feminists fighting to change the current culture of sexual violence make clear, the vast majority of sexual violence is never reported to the police, let alone tried in a court of law and discussed in the media.⁸⁰ By contesting the actions of the police, courts and media, feminists have revealed how much sexual violence is hidden and have also claimed that these assaults are important; this work could be used further develop New Zealand history.

Recent changes to communication have played an important part of discussions about sexual violence. The actions of the teenage boys involved in 'Roast Busters' and in the high school Facebook group became a public scandal because conversations over social media left a record that was accessible by a wide audience.⁸¹ The visibility of what other people were saying on Twitter played an important role in the Hollywood sexual abuse scandal.⁸² In New Zealand, short notice protests that were organised using social media showed the existence of informal networks.⁸³ It will be some time before historians of the current era fully analyse the implications of social media. However, in the meantime, historians can, and have, responded to changes in technology and communications, by thinking about the past in new ways. In January 2000, Robert Darnton gave a presidential address to the American Historical Association in which he suggested that historians could be inspired by the transformation of communication, and discussed how information spread in eighteenth-century Paris as an example.⁸⁴ For historians studying women's lives, one of the most interesting aspects of

⁷⁸ Angela Wanhalla, 'Interracial Sexual Violence in 1860s New Zealand', 45, 1, NZJH (2011) 71–84. Other articles mention sexual assault in passing: Tobias Harper, "'Amen, Amen!'" Christianity, Society and Visions of the Future in 1920s, NZJH, 42, 2 (2008), p.139; Sarah Carr, 'Regulating Sexuality in Early Otago, NZJH, 50, 1 (2016), pp.30–46.

⁷⁹ In addition to Wanhalla's article see: Erin Cozens, "'Our Particular Abhorrence of These Particular Crimes': Sexual Violence and Colonial Legal Discourse in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1840–1855', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 24, 3, (2015), pp. 378-401; Sarah Carr, 'Preserving Decency: The Regulation of Sexual Behaviour in Early Otago 1848-1867', PhD, University of Otago, 2014.

⁸⁰ For an example of a New Zealand organisation making this argument see: Statistics, *Rape Prevention Education*: rpe.co.nz/information/statistics/

⁸¹ Enoka.

⁸² Nadia Khomani, '#MeToo: How a Hashtag Became a Rallying Cry against Sexual Harassment', *The Guardian*, 20 October 2017: www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/20/women-worldwide-use-hashtag-metoo-against-sexual-harassment

⁸³ 'Stop Rape Now! Wellington Organising Meeting': www.facebook.com/events/730636953631852/

⁸⁴ Robert Darnton, 'An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris', *American Historical Review*, 105, 1 (2000), pp.1–35.

current discussions of sexual violence is the importance of women's talk on social media. Melanie Tebbutt wrote an excellent history of gossip in the 1980s, but although her work has been widely cited, it has not been built on as it could be.⁸⁵ The visibility of women's talk in the current era (and ease with which it can be key word searched and embedded) could invigorate historians of women's lives and open up new ways of understanding women's speech in the past.

A history inspired by the current feminist movement would not need to be triumphalist or see women's roles as positive. Historians could also give more consideration to women's participation in structures of power, particularly colonisation. Kristyn Harman's 2014 article "Making Shift": Mary Ann Hodgkinson and Hybrid Domesticity in Early Colonial New Zealand' took the important step of exploring the role of women's domestic work in the colonisation of New Zealand.⁸⁶ Her argument is useful in itself, but also for the gap that it exposes; according to articles in NZJH, colonisation was a project almost exclusively undertaken by men. At the 2016 conference to celebrate the work of Barbara Brookes, Melissa Williams used her keynote address to tell a story of her family's encounter with a white neighbour in Auckland.⁸⁷ She challenged the audience to consider how Pākehā neighbours responded to Māori urban migration. Williams' own research has explored how Māori women (and men) lived when they moved to the city, but no historian has studied how Pākehā women reacted.⁸⁸ Listening to Williams' address, I realised that my work had predominantly been on Pākehā working-class families in the 1950s, but that I did not know how I would approach answering her question. To understand how Pākehā women responded to Māori urban migration would require historiographical discussion and methodological innovation. Kristine Bartlett's equal pay case and feminist activism against sexual violence may seem like very different historical questions, but the approaches discussed could help answer Williams's question. Understanding of Pākehā women's domestic work in the 1950s would help understand urban Pākehā communities. Methodological developments that

⁸⁵ Melanie Tebbutt, *Women's Talk: A Social History of 'Gossip' in Working-Class Neighbourhoods, 1880-1960*, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1995.

⁸⁶ Kristyn Harman, 'Making Shift: Mary Ann Hodgkinson and Hybrid Domesticity in Early Colonial New Zealand', NZJH, 48, 1 (2014), pp.30-50.

⁸⁷ Melissa Matutina Williams, 'Wāhine Māori and the Pākehā Women Next Door: Listening to Stories from the other Side of the Fence', Keynote Address, *Making Women Visible: A Conference in Honour of Barbara Brookes*, 16 February 2016.

⁸⁸ Melissa Matutina Williams, *Panguru and the City: Kāinga Tahi, Kāinga Rua: an Urban Migration History*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2015.

acknowledged the importance of women's talk would enable historians to explore the response of Pākehā women to their Māori neighbours.

Conclusion

In her introduction to the 1993 special issue on women and politics Raewyn Dalziel wrote: "This is no time however to sit back; there are many things we don't know, others that we don't understand and probably much we need to re-interpret. Women's history has a full agenda in the foreseeable future."⁸⁹ The contributors to that issue might have been surprised that over the next 25 years the NZJH would publish just 22 articles that focused on women's lives. While more is known, understood and has been re-interpreted, the fundamental problem that historians of women's lives make conclusions about women and historians of men's lives make conclusions about people remains.

Current feminist activity in New Zealand would not inspire anyone to write a special journal on political institutions. In 2018, feminists in New Zealand are much less likely to create formal organisations and much more reliant on informal networks. Feminism now looks very different from the women's liberation movement and therefore it could contribute to a different sort of historiography. This article has examined two case studies to explore how New Zealand history could be opened up by historians inspired by current feminist organising, but these case studies are just a beginning. Trans people are organising and articulating their life experiences and this could lead to exciting new approaches to history.

In 2018, there are reasons to be optimistic about historical discussion of women's lives in New Zealand. Barbara Brookes' *A History of New Zealand Women* is a substantial contribution to the historiography and one of its strengths is how many different women's lives it discusses.⁹⁰ There are also positive signs of change in what is published within NZJH. There were 10 NZJH articles published in 2017 and just one was predominantly or entirely about male historical actors. The last all male authored issue of NZJH was 2013 and between 2013-2017 almost fifty per cent of articles were written by women (all other three year periods have a much more significant gender imbalance). Both of these trends are partly due to the special issue dedicated to Raewyn Dalziel's work and therefore show the value of encouraging historiographical discussion about women's lives. Historiographical discussion

⁸⁹ Raewyn Dalziel, 'Editorial', NZJH, 27, 2 (1993), pp.125-6.

⁹⁰ Barbara Brookes, *A History of New Zealand Women*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2016.

and inspiration from current feminist organising could ensure that what we see at the moment is a trend and not a blip. The work of writing about women's lives is vital and the most important point of early women's history is still true: women's lives matter, they are not segregated off into a corner of no influence on anyone or anything else; a history corpus that ignores what women do and treat men as the default is misrepresenting the world.