
‘Te Kōpū’ is a collaborative exhibition showcasing the work of Natasha Te Arahori (Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāi Tūhoe), and Bethany Matai Edmunds (Ngāti Kurī). The collaborative works are paintings on upcycled native timber by Keating, and woven adornments by Edmunds, made from flowers and fibres harvested in the bush and the streets of Tāmaki Makaurau. In this exhibition the artists create a space in which atua wāhine — Māori goddesses — are depicted. As wāhine Māori, the artists are challenging the known creation narratives, often authored by non-Māori males, and in so doing creating a safe place from which reflection can take place. The exhibition also acknowledges the political legacy of the women who asserted their right to vote, and is part of the wider celebration of women’s suffrage.

For more on ‘Te Kōpū’ see <http://ondemand.facetv.co.nz/watch.php?vid=8580181a2>.

EDITOR
Nadia Gush

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Fiona Martin

EDITORIAL ADVISORY GROUP
Giselle Byrnes, Massey University Te Kunenga Ki Purehuroa, Palmerston North.
Catharine Coleborne, University of Newcastle, Australia.
Nadia Gush, University of Waikato Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, Hamilton.
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Bronwyn Labrum, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington.
Mark Smith, University of Waikato Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, Hamilton; Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust, Oamaru.
# 6.1 Feminism and Public History

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Timed to coincide with the 125th anniversary of women’s suffrage in Aotearoa New Zealand, NZJPH6 celebrates the women history-makers: the everyday suffragists who signed the petition and ‘made history’; the women working within the heritage industry who make history through exhibitions, public talks, symposia and publishing, and the women who complicate these endeavours by engaging in critical gender history. Submissions to NZJPH6 showcase a selection of ‘Suffrage 125’ projects, and reflect on the ways in which women make, and are made by, public history.

The image that graces the cover of this issue comes from ‘Te Kōpū’, an exhibition celebrating suffragists and atua wāhine. In ‘Te Kōpū’ Natasha Te Arahori Keating and Bethany Matai Edmunds draw on objects found in their Tāmaki Makaurau everyday environment to make powerful visual and spatial statements. Through the works that make up ‘Te Kōpū’ Keating and Edmunds present the ethereal weightiness of the everyday. The artists’ approach was shared by others curating Suffrage 125 commemorations this year, which have included finding the 1893 Suffrage Petition’s ‘everywoman’, and where women’s histories have been reconstructed through everyday suburban archaeological remains in post-quake Christchurch.

This issue of the NZJPH begins with Nancy Swarbrick’s discussion of the enormously important contribution to Aotearoa New Zealand publishing — and to women’s history — made by Bridget Williams and BWB Press. Jessica Douglas encourages us to rethink the significance of mid-century women artists in New Zealand, providing a considered discussion of Anne McCahon’s art that goes beyond the gendered language used to confine McCahon’s work at the time of its original reception. Nina Finigan discusses Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira’s substantial Suffrage 125 exhibition ‘Are we there yet?’, which Finigan co-curated. Finigan argues for the necessity of intersectional approaches to New Zealand history and museology, like those being so effectively embraced by the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Stefanie Lash presents the fantastic work undertaken by National Archives to research the biographies of previously unknown signatories to the 1893 Suffrage Petition. Participating in the project to research the biographies of all signatories to the 1893 Suffrage Petition, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga’s Christine Whybrew discusses Emily Phillips, a rural signatory to the 1893 Petition associated with a property on New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero. Archaeologists Katharine Watson and Maria Lillo
Editorial.

Berabeu discuss the Christchurch exhibition ‘Women Breaking the Rules’, and the unconventional Victorian women whose stories came to light through the research that shaped the exhibition. Joanna Cobley explores representations of Makea Takau Ariki, the Queen of Raratonga, through philatelic depictions, poetry, and regal performance. Nadia Gush reflects on the possibilities of telling histories of gender as affect.

Submissions to NZJPH6 speak to both the richness of New Zealand women’s history, and to the determination of the skilled professionals responsible for the researching, writing, publishing, curating, designing, and overall implementation. These are women who often embrace multiple, sometimes competing roles in addition to their work as curators, publishers, and researchers, and the editorial advisory board for the NZJPH have much respect for the work that is presented in the following pages.

In addition to commentaries from the field, Emma Bugden reviews the Te Uru exhibition ‘Leading Ladies’, Sara Butsworth reviews the fresh Te Papa Press publication *Women Now*, Nadia Gush reviews the recent Routledge publication *Gender and Heritage*, and Mark Smith reviews *Chosen Legacies*.

Nadia Gush, Editor.
For more than four decades, Bridget Williams has published a stream of influential books about New Zealand women’s history and perspectives. Landmark books include the Women in History collections (edited by Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant, 1986 and 1992); economic analyses of the value put on women’s work, beginning with Counting for Nothing (Marilyn Waring, 1988) and continuing with Prue Hyman’s Women and Economics (1994); and a major biographical reference work, The Book of New Zealand Women (edited by Charlotte Macdonald, Bridget Williams and Merimeri Penfold, 1990). Oral histories, including I Have in My Arms Both Ways (Adrienne Jansen, 1990) and Mothers and Daughters (Alison Gray, 1993), collections of women’s writing, such as My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates (edited by Charlotte Macdonald and Frances Porter, 1996), and critical essays, such as The Cartwright Papers (edited by Joanna Manning, 2010), have been interspersed with outstanding biographical works. Memoirs by poet Lauris Edmond (1989–1992) and by Pauline O’Regan (1986) stand beside biographies such as Born to New Zealand (Frances Porter, 1995), The Story of Suzanne Aubert (Jessie Munro, 2010) and Ngā Mōrehu — The Survivors (Gillian Chaplin and Judith Binney, 2011). Some of these books have been subsequently reprinted or issued as ebooks, and most are represented in BWB’s digital Women’s Studies Collection, available on a subscription basis to libraries and research institutions.

The impact of these titles may be seen in various ways. They feature significantly in the endnotes and bibliographies of scholarly works, extending the research base for future writers. They have also stocked the nation’s bookshops, often selling well beyond expectation. When women’s history was still an emerging subject in academia, the Women in History volumes were published to bring together current research — and these collections of scholarly essays sold through their initial, cautious print-runs, with the first volume reprinted. There was a surging demand for knowledge about the lives of New Zealand women, as the remarkable sales of The Book of New Zealand Women (over 12,000 copies) proved around the same time. Audiences at book events made the engagement with women’s writing manifest: Bridget recalls a Booksellers Conference in the 1980s when the Michael Fowler Centre was packed out with members of the public eager to hear authors such as Pauline O’Regan, and a countrywide author tour where women gathered in bookshops and libraries in rural towns listening intently as Lauris Edmond captured the
essence of mid-century life for New Zealand women. And the enthusiastic responses to Barbara Brookes’ talks over the two years following the publication in 2016 of her magisterial *A History of New Zealand Women* have echoed those of audiences two or three decades earlier.

Reviews also pinpointed the appeal of the books for readers. As Shelagh Cox wrote of *The Book of New Zealand Women*,

> In its compulsive sense of engagement it pushes forward the frontiers of feminist research in New Zealand… The best of the writers of these stories record what happened but also bring to life the feeling that went with events, often in sharp and moving glimpses.¹

Several of the books won national book awards (the 1990 Goodman Fielder Wattie Non-Fiction Award for *Born to New Zealand*, 1997 Montana Book of the Year for *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, and 2017 Ockham Awards Best Illustrated Non-Fiction book for *A History of New Zealand Women*). The significance of the publishing enterprise, too, has been noted. Leading historian Professor Erik Olssen observed in 2011 that Bridget Williams ‘pioneered publishing in women’s history in New Zealand and helped to create it as a field’.²

Bridget Williams began in publishing in the United Kingdom, where she worked as a research assistant for the formidable English professor Dame Helen Gardner before her first publishing experience as a junior editor at Oxford University Press. Arriving back in Wellington in 1976, she was employed first as an editor at OUP Wellington. Her education in New Zealand history really began through her work with W.H. Oliver on the first edition of the *Oxford History of New Zealand* (1981). Setting up the small independent publishing house Port Nicholson Press in 1981 was an early step toward business competence — a step that was supported by Wellington bookseller Roy Parsons, as one of the three partners in the enterprise (the other was designer Lindsay Missen). Bridget has always credited Roy as a mentor who taught her the essentials of owning and running a business. Another, earlier mentor was British publisher Carol O’Brien (OUP, Harvill, HarperCollins).

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² Letter from Erik Olssen to Creative New Zealand, 4 March 2011.
with whom discussions about publishing philosophy and editorial principles continued across the world over the years of their friendship. In 1985, Bridget sold the fledgling PNP to Allen & Unwin Australia, and became the managing director of Allen & Unwin New Zealand, producing books under the imprint Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press. In 1990 the parent company was sold in the United Kingdom, so she bought the New Zealand list and established Bridget Williams Books, which has continued, apart from a brief stint as a joint imprint with Auckland University Press, to the present day.

The late twentieth century saw several shifts in the publishing landscape — with multinational companies merging internationally, and independent presses springing out of these large firms, often to sell back into the international sector at a later stage. Women were surfacing into publishing leadership over this time — in management in the multinational sector (Karen Ferns, Joan McKenzie, Juliet Rogers), as independent publishers (Barbara Larsen, Ann Mallinson, Helen Benton), or at the university presses (Elizabeth Caffin, Wendy Harrex). Several, like Bridget Williams, moved between the different sectors. In the twenty-first century, the pace of change accelerated, with the global financial crisis and globalisation impacting along with the digital revolution. Bridget’s publishing philosophy was established early: at its simplest, this is a belief that ‘good books matter’. She expanded this in a recent interview as ‘a commitment to New Zealand, the significance of history, the place of the ‘marginal’ in the mainstream, the hidden voices of history finding their place in the present’.  

Publishing books about women’s experience clearly springs from this philosophy. As with all publishing, these books reflect the spirit of their times. Bridget’s awareness of the need for women’s publishing developed gradually, but was crystallising during a meeting with Patrick Gallagher of Allen & Unwin Australia at the time of the merger with Port Nicholson Press. Discussing publishing plans for the New Zealand branch, he remarked: ‘Of course, Bridget, women’s books don’t sell’. Bridget had a different view, and from that point ‘women’s books’ did indeed form part of the Allen & Unwin New Zealand list (as in fact they increasingly did at Allen & Unwin Australia). In New Zealand, an early venture into the field was Christine Dann’s history

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of the Women’s Liberation Movement. *Up from Under* (1985) proved a great success; the Wellington launch was an activist celebration, with purple balloons galore and Therese O’Connell’s women’s choir singing with a festive crowd. Afterwards, purple balloons drifted auspiciously across the city sky.

This was a period when much was happening for women in publishing — and for books about women’s issues. As Bridget recalls:

> My path through those times… was shaped by something that I will call, in shorthand, the ‘urgency of voice’. To find a place in which women might say what they saw, felt, believed, or knew — or indeed might discover what they saw, felt, believed or knew — this seemed imperative to me.4

As managing director, she had responsibility for making the publishing list fiscally viable — but it was important also to have some authority over New Zealand publishing decisions if new areas were to be opened up. Bridget recalls reading the typescript of Frances Porter’s *Born to New Zealand* over one Easter, and knowing immediately that she wanted to publish the book. It was the story of an ‘unknown woman’ — and an exceptional biography. *Born to New Zealand* sold well, to readers captivated by the narrative.

Bridget was also drawn to collaborate with other women working in the field: editors, typesetters, designers and booksellers. One outcome of this was the Listener Women’s Book Festival. This had its origins in a comment by a woman bookseller at Blackwell’s in Oxford, who remarked ‘if you put the books by women together, they walk out of the shop’.5 She was referring to the Feminist Book Fortnight, an initiative of the Women’s Press and Virago to challenge the idea that books about women were of limited interest to readers. Visiting Britain on a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 1984, Bridget talked with the Women’s Press about the British festival — and on her return began to canvass the idea with other women in the New Zealand book trade — Kitty Wishart at the University Bookshop in Auckland, Cathy Handley at London Bookshops in Wellington, Karen Ferns at Penguin, Helen Benton of Benton Ross, Wendy Harrex at the Women’s Press. The result was the nationwide

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4 Speech given by Bridget Williams at ‘Making Women Visible’ conference held to honour Barbara Brookes’s work, Otago University, February 2016.
5 Ibid.
EACCESSIONING AND MUSEUM ETHICS.
Nancy Swarbrick.

LWBF that ran annually from 1984 for nearly ten years, touring international and New Zealand writers. Booksellers, librarians and community groups collaborated in regional and urban centres, with Penny Hansen as the strategic national organiser. Women flocked to events, which were often packed out and sometimes over-subscribed (one woman made her way into a Marilyn Waring talk by brandishing knitting needles). Booksellers increasingly backed the festival, and by the end were vying for the privilege to sell at LWBF events. When the festival finally closed, the founding group felt that they had achieved their primary goals — women’s books were well represented in the country’s bookshops, their value recognised by booksellers and readers alike.

Bridget Williams identifies as a feminist: ‘for me feminism is the history we inherited from women who fought for things we have benefitted from; to move away from the definition denies the struggle.’ This outlook was shaped by her experiences as a young woman making her way in a publishing world where men held the senior positions, and as an independent publisher finding a foothold in the heady days of the 1980s. However, she says, the label ‘feminist publisher’ does not fit, as it implies her publishing focuses solely on books about women. The BWB list includes a range of other books that in different ways contribute to New Zealand’s history and culture. Titles such as Claudia Orange’s *The Treaty of Waitangi* (1987), the five volumes of *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (edited first by W.H. Oliver and later Claudia Orange, 1990–2000), *Encircled Lands: Te Urewera, 1820–1921* (Judith Binney, 2009) and the acclaimed *Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History* (Atholl Anderson, Judith Binney and Aroha Harris, 2014) have not only opened new intellectual spaces but also won some of the country’s most significant awards. They fit within the overarching philosophy of publishing books that explore the urgent: the unknown, untold or undervalued stories about New Zealand and its past. And they confirm Bridget’s belief that ‘New Zealanders will listen to difficult, challenging ideas.’

The surge of writing and publishing about women’s experience in the 1980s and 1990s reflected the generational shifts of that time. For a period around

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the turn of the century, it seemed perhaps that there was less imperative for writing or publishing on ‘women’s issues’, but today a new generation of feminist voices is taking the story forward — in blogs and online media as well as in print. The 125th anniversary of women’s suffrage in New Zealand has witnessed some powerful (and joyful) celebrations of women’s history — a history that encompasses so much more than simply winning the vote. But all the writing and research of the late twentieth century also contributed to a growing awareness of women’s experience as part of broader narratives — and that has continued through the publishing of the twenty-first century. In offering a new historical analysis of urban migration, for example, Melissa Matutina Williams’s *Panguru and the City* (2015) draws on the narratives of both men and women from Panguru.

At BWB today, the short-form BWB Texts series, published by Tom Rennie, gives younger women writers a voice, with titles such as *Why Science Is Sexist* (Nicola Gaston, 2015), *The Whole Intimate Mess: Motherhood, Politics and Women’s Writing* (Holly Walker, 2017), and *A Matter of Fact: Talking Truth in a Post-Truth World* (Jess Berentson-Shaw, 2018). Established writers also appear in the series, with Prue Hyman’s *Hopes Dashed: The Economics of Gender Inequality* (2017) bringing up to date her earlier work. The connections with the earlier publishing programme remain strong.

As a member of staff at the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography project for many years, I worked alongside the Allen & Unwin and BWB teams in the co-publishing relationships that produced the DNZB volumes. Shifting to an editorial role in book publishing, I came to work at BWB in 2016. This essay draws on the BWB archives and some interviews with Bridget Williams, to record the ways in which Bridget Williams’s publishing has, over the years, contributed to the emerging voices in women’s history, politics and biography. Bridget maintains that the range of books published always depends on what people are writing or want to write, and what people want to read. BWB’s list reflects that, and suggests there is every reason to believe that people will want to write and read good books about women and women’s experience in the years ahead.

Nancy Swarbrick was for many years managing editor at the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, and later at Te Ara. She is currently senior editor at Bridget Williams Books.
To discover the history of women and art is in part to account for the way art history is written. To expose its underlying values, its assumptions, its silences and its prejudices is also to understand that the way women artists are recorded and described is crucial to the definition of art and the artist in our society.¹

Rozsika Parker & Griselda Pollock

Annie Eleanor Hamblett (1915–1993), born in Mosgiel in the midst of World War One, is perhaps best known for being Colin McCahon’s wife.² Yet she was an artist in her own right, though very little is known about the works she produced. In 2016 I was involved in the research of ‘A Table of One’s Own: The Creative Life of Anne McCahon’, an exhibition which ran from 19 November 2016 to 12 February 2017 at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery. Occasioned by the ten-year anniversary of the McCahon House Museum, a museum and artists’ residency in the former McCahon home at 67 Ottitori Bay, Titirangi, I felt fortunate to be included in the exhibition process. I was the researcher, as I was concurrently completing my master’s thesis on Anne McCahon at the University of Auckland with Professor Linda Tyler as my supervisor. The purpose of both the show and the research from my thesis was to shine light on Anne McCahon’s important work — as both artist and support to husband Colin — and to reinstate her into New Zealand’s art historic canon.

Given that Hamblett was studying and first exhibiting in Dunedin in the 1930s and 1940s, it is surprising that she has not already been incorporated into histories of art which take a regionalist approach, since this place and period is regarded by many as the crucible of New Zealand’s modernism. She was a committed exhibiting artist, and her Dunedin works are extremely courageous, experimental, and gained critical acclaim. The works are in accord with the modern approach to form and colour that is now highly regarded by art historians — for this modernity is understood to have helped New Zealand

² To avoid confusion with her husband, and given that the majority of her artworks were produced before she was married, Anne is here referred to as ‘Hamblett’ and Colin as ‘McCahon’.
break away from its artistic roots in the English watercolour tradition. Hamblett incorporated in her work some of the advances in colour and form championed by influential international painters such as Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) and Henri Matisse (1869–1954). In contrast to her New Zealand peers — including Colin McCahon (1919–1987) and Toss Woollaston (1910–1998), who have prominent positions in the art historical canon — Hamblett has been ignored.

This is not because her works are any less significant or important, but because her output was short-lived (she exhibited only for about ten years), and societal expectations for a married woman circumscribed her career after she wed McCahon in 1942 (and had four children between 1943 and 1949). As a woman artist, her path was more difficult than Woollaston’s or McCahon’s, and her subject matter, often flower pieces and landscapes, were small in scale and domestic in their aspiration. She stopped painting in the mid-1940s due to family obligations and, aside from her irregular illustrative work, did not resume making art until she took up pottery in 1978.

Despite the meaningful contribution made by Hamblett to Dunedin’s regionalism, she has been unrecognised and ignored in New Zealand’s art history. There are no books dedicated to her practice, and she has been the subject of only one book chapter — ‘I did not want to be Mrs Colin’, in the 2005 compilation Between the Lives: Partners in Art. She receives only passing mention in a small handful of articles, and has no webpage in Te Ara, New Zealand’s online encyclopedia. Her work has rarely been exhibited since her early Dunedin painting days (c. 1934–1944) and she has only very recently been given her aforementioned first solo show at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery. As one commentator has remarked, ‘[t]o state the obvious, [the exhibition] has been a long time coming.’

This lack of recognition for Hamblett’s work is part of a pattern of behaviour in New Zealand’s art history: women artists have historically been — and continue to be — overlooked and undervalued. This is not because women artists’ work is necessarily of lesser quality than male artists’, but because

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4 Michele Hewitson, ‘For Better or Worse’, New Zealand Listener, 13 January 2017, p.32.
Jessica Douglas.

outdated and misogynist attitudes have clouded judgement and opinion. The key stakeholders in the New Zealand art scene in the 1930s and 1940s, during Hamblett’s exhibiting career — curators, artists, historians, writers and editors — were male. Because of this, women artists have had fewer opportunities and have been subjected to biased attitudes toward their abilities.

Art history has long been written from a male perspective, where women appear as a footnote; the creative woman turned into a marginalised wife or partner has become archetypal. New Zealand examples include Gil (1934– ) and Pat Hanly (1932–2004), and Edith ( ?–1987) and Toss Woollaston (1910–1988).5 Artistic partnerships have long been the subject of numerous books, including New Zealand examples such as Between the Lives: Partners in Art (2005) edited by Deborah Shepard, and American books such as Significant Others: Creativity and Intimate Partnership (1993) edited by Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron, and Dada’s Women (2009) by Ruth Hemus.

While it is clear that Hamblett has been written out of New Zealand’s art history, feminism provides an international theoretical frame that goes beyond our nation to help to explain why it is that women artists are typically sidelined — and it often comes down to language. Women artists have often been described as delicate, gentle and soft — all things supposedly associated with being female. Women critics even use these terms to describe women artists. In 1971, reviewing the work of American artist Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011), art critic Barbara Rose wrote: ‘[She] is essentially an intuitive and natural painter, and not an intellectual one’; Rose also described Frankenthaler’s work

5 Some international examples are Lee Krasner (1908–1984) and Jackson Pollock (1912–1956), Camille Claudel (1864–1943) and Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), Emmy Hennings (1885–1948) and Hugo Ball (1886–1927), and Sonia (1885–1979) and Robert Delaunay (1885–1941). Conversely, in recent years artist Jan Nigro MBE (1920–2012) has found more success in her artistic practice than her husband Angelo ‘Gerry’ Nigro (1919–1994). Though not held in the same reverence as artists such as Woollaston or Hanly, Jan Nigro continued to paint while her property developer husband’s artistic career dwindled. Waikato Museum held a significant retrospective exhibition on her work, titled ‘Out of the Bedroom and into the Lounge: Jan Nigro’, from 14 April to 22 July 2018. Another exception to the gender rule is Doris Lusk (1916–1990) and her success as a painter. She was fortunate in that her husband, Dermot Holland, supported her decision to keep painting, and she also worked, teaching pottery at the Risingholme Community Centre and painting at the School of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury. However, in comparison to her male counterparts such as McCahon and Woollaston, she is also less famous, and the resale value of her works at auction is significantly lower.
Jessica Douglas.

as ‘dreamy’, ‘floating’ and ‘fragile’. Feminists Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker adeptly critique Rose’s comments: ‘[C]ritical discourse resorted… to the feminine stereotypes and separate categories… Frankenthaler is thus associated with nature and distinguished from intellect and theory.’

Frankenthaler would pour paint onto her canvases on the floor to allow the paint to seep into them, without applying a paintbrush directly to the canvas. Jackson Pollock (1912–1956) worked in a similar fashion — he also laid his canvases on the floor, and would drip paint onto them without applying the brush directly. However, while Frankenthaler and her work are described as intuitive and fragile — words associated with being a woman — Pollock is perceived as fearless, simply because he was a man. Art historians Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk suggest that:

In effect, Frankenthaler is the female Abstract Expressionist exception that proves the rule of male genius. One might elaborate this example by speculating what would be the case if Frankenthaler’s and Jackson Pollock’s styles were reversed. The drip painting would no doubt be characterised as delicate, woven, lace-like, and the stained canvas as strongly composed, on a heroic scale, with heavy blocks of colour.

The gendering of painting language seen in relation to Frankenthaler and Pollock can be applied equally to Anne Hamblett and her husband, Colin McCahon (1919–1987). Throughout multiple issues of Art in New Zealand, McCahon’s work is considered strong, rich and experimental and therefore masculine, while Hamblett’s is delicate, charming and harmonious, which are feminine attributes. For example, in the December 1940 issue, in the ‘Art Notes’ section, the paintings of Anne Hamblett are described as ‘charming in their unusual and delicate colour’, whereas McCahon ‘displays a strong constructive element — so lacking in many artists’. Again, in the September 1942 issue, in the review of the Otago Art Society’s annual exhibition, Hamblett’s work is made to seem minor and designed merely to delight the eye: ‘two charming small prints’ (perhaps the linocuts Rose and Blue Lake, St.

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7 Parker and Pollock, Old Mistresses, p.146.
Bathans) and ‘also a novel pen and ink landscape drawing’ (likely to be of Pangatotara), whereas McCahon showed four paintings and is described as having ‘experimented in the use of black and white paint… with striking reality’.

His work is bolstered with dynamic descriptors, whereas hers is diminished. The following year, in the same publication — this time with the writer a woman artist herself, Wellington muralist Nancy Bolton (1913–2004) — McCahon is described as ‘experimentally one of the more interesting of the younger group’, while Hamblett (who is tied to McCahon as ‘his wife’, as opposed to being named an individual artist in her own right) has merely ‘done some interesting work too’. In a different section in the same issue, ‘Mrs C. McCahon’ (again, tied to her husband) is described as ‘an outstanding exponent of quietly-perfect harmonies of colour…. Her colour harmonies are absolutely marvellous’; McCahon, however, was considered ‘a painter in oils of rich dark colour schemes, strong in design and pattern values’. Hamblett’s work is ‘delightful’, ‘marvellous’ and ‘novel’, whereas her husband’s evinces a ‘striking reality’ and is ‘strong in design and pattern values’, the language of criticism mirroring societal expectations of the separation of traditional male and female roles into strength and sweetness.

However, if one uses Hatt and Klonk’s theory and compares works by Hamblett and McCahon from this period, it is easy to switch descriptions: Hamblett’s landscapes readily become strong, rich and experimental, while McCahon’s become delicate, charming and harmonious. If Hamblett had been male, perhaps she would have found the critical success rightly owed to her.

This idea of a feminine sensibility has contributed to the construction of women artists as ‘lesser than’ their male counterparts. Hatt and Klonk expertly sum this up: ‘Feminism has been particularly important for raising questions about spectatorship — how our looking at art is inflected by sex and gender’. This points to the idea of femininity as a cultural construct — not a natural
given. Much of Hamblett’s lack of recognition demonstrates the misogynist attitudes that prevailed during her exhibiting career in the 1930s and 1940s. These have stymied her acceptance into the canon of New Zealand’s modernist art history, both in her time and posthumously.

That Hamblett was a woman, and the wife of one of our nation’s foremost painters, confined her to social stereotypes and to an assumed role, which has deleteriously affected recognition of her work. Though she provided a typically female system of domestic support that nourished McCahon, it inhibited her own ambitions. Like many of her female counterparts, despite being overlooked in New Zealand’s art history, she was in fact influential for, and instrumental to, the shaping of New Zealand’s art, particularly of the modernist style and era. This is why it was of the utmost importance to present her work in the exhibition at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery. ‘A Table of One’s Own: The Creative Life of Anne McCahon’ reinforced this statement: that she was a key proponent in New Zealand’s art history. By presenting her work in this long-overdue show, Anne Hamblett found her rightful place in our nation’s history.

Jessica Douglas is based in London where she is the Editor for Barnebys, the number one global search engine for auction houses and galleries. She is also a freelance arts writer, and has previously worked at Gus Fisher Gallery, Objectspace and Art News New Zealand, and was the 2018 Marylyn Mayo intern at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. She holds an MA in art history from the University of Auckland.
Over the past two decades museums have come to understand that the ways visitors interact with the museological space are complex — not passive but active and participatory. As ‘new museological’ theories began to permeate the profession in the 1990s and the influential writings of people like Tony Bennett, Eileen Hooper-Greenhill and Ivan Karp became part of the literary canon of museum studies, we began to accept museums as politically charged spaces. This thinking has become embedded in the ways museums engage with the public and how they present history in exhibitions. But what happens when this lens is turned inward? How does the identity of the museum intersect with and impact on the ability to ‘do’ public history in these spaces? To explore these questions, memory institutions must be willing to put themselves in the narrative, to reject neutrality and analyse the ways in which they create, enable, and wield power. I propose that using an applied intersectional feminist methodology and centring ‘the archive’ provide useful frameworks to engage in this process.

**TALKING ABOUT INSTITUTIONAL POWER**

In July 2018, Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira opened the exhibition ‘Are We There Yet? Women and Equality in Aotearoa’. The exhibition used the 125th anniversary of the achievement of universal suffrage in Aotearoa as a springboard to look at gender equality and women’s rights over the intervening 125 years. Upon entering the space visitors were met by portraits of twenty women from the 1890s. Some are named: Brunetta Wendel, Mere Hene Patara, Emera Mair. Others are unnamed: Portrait of unidentified woman, Auckland; Unidentified portrait, young Māori woman; Portrait of an unidentified nurse, Avondale Lunatic Asylum. The intention behind this opening section was to locate the visitor in the 1890s and allow them to meet women of this time, face to face. From the outset the exhibition team (of which I was a part) wanted to push visitors to examine how and where they might fit in to this history; to at once be able to see themselves reflected in the exhibition and to also question and confront their own assumptions or biases.

Scattered among the portraits of women in the opening section of the exhibition are five empty frames. The interpretive object of this was to represent the missing — those whose histories were overlooked, marginalised, misinterpreted or simply not deemed significant enough to merit acquisition
into permanent collections. The empty frames also represented those ‘unidentified’ women on the exhibition’s walls — women whose portraits have been immortalised but their personhoods discarded. The label to accompany the empty frames read:

The portraits here only tell part of the history of women from the 1890s, and are a reflection of the colonial and male-dominated legacy inherited by Auckland Museum.

When we only have part of the story it becomes the whole story. With that in mind, we’ve interspersed empty frames among these portraits to acknowledge the limitations of our collections.\(^1\)

With this simple act the Museum became a part of the narrative. Organisational authority and neutrality were flipped to reveal one way in which historic, structural power dynamics play out and have long-term impact within the museological space.

**TURNING THE LENS INWARD — LET’S TALK ABOUT NEUTRALITY**

People think of museums as quiet spaces. They are not. They are loud. A museum’s storeroom echoes with the voices and histories of thousands — not just those who have been collected but also those who have done the collecting. These are not neutral voices and this is not a neutral history. It is a history defined by collecting, organising, classifying, displaying and interpreting the world according to Eurocentric understandings of value and power. How does this legacy impact the ways museums engage with and present history to our many publics? How do we allow these voices to speak not only about their individual histories but the collective one too? The history of ‘the collected’. At the most basic level, this legacy must be acknowledged however a persistent barrier to this is a belief in the concept of organisational neutrality and objectivity. Steps have been taken to dispel this notion, particularly by indigenous museum practitioners and scholars who have interrogated the museum and identified it as a site of colonial power which reaches through the generations. The work of Māori scholars like Linda

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Tuhiiwai Smith has been critical in helping reframe institutions as critical sites in colonial ‘regimes of truth’.2

This work of disrupting colonial paradigms must be continually built upon, and I argue that the archive, as a site of research and enquiry, requires that a critical eye be cast upon it from within the GLAM sector. Given that it is through archives that much of our understanding of history emerges, surely it is essential to examine how archives have been formed, how they wield power and how these factors might have wider ramifications on how we ‘do’ public history. I advocate that an intersectional feminist methodology might aid us to unpack, explore and critique the multiplicity of ways that power flows through and is indeed created by archives.

INTERSECTIONALITY: BOTH/ &

Explicated by African American academic Kimberlie Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality is a critical framework which recognises the interconnection of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group. To illustrate the fluidity of this paradigm, Crenshaw uses the metaphor of a traffic intersection:

Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them.3

Intersectionality critiques the ‘single axis framework’ through which modes of oppression are often discussed.4 Within this framework, oppression is viewed through either a lens of gender or race, not allowing room for multiple identities to intersect within one individual. Crenshaw’s argument was that both feminist and anti-racist movements diminish the experience of Black women who encounter both gendered and race-based discrimination. It is

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4 Ibid., p.140.
within this notion of ‘the intersect’ and the resulting analysis of power and oppression that I believe intersectionality could be helpful in a museum/archival context.

Objects, including archival objects, implicitly reject ‘single-axis’ readings:

Objects speak the language of primary processes. They are analogous [sic]. Like dreams they do not know the word ‘not’. Objects say ‘also’ rather than ‘not’. Like dreams they heap images on top of each other. They say ‘both/and’. These multitudes of images may contradict each other and the sum total may be paradoxical. But objects do not carry negation.5

Objects heap images on top of each other. They also heap meanings on top of each other. And what is an archive other than an assemblage of objects whose very value lies in their meaning? Each is imbued with layers of meaning by their makers and then by those who acquired, arranged and described them — not a static process but one that changes, and continues to change once the object is inside the archive. A single object can have multiple lives and simultaneous interpretations. To see neutrality in this is to be wilfully blind to history.

Adherence to institutional neutrality renders archives (and those who work with them) as inactive and passive, relieving them of responsibility and accountability. Reframing the archive through an intersectional feminist lens rejects this apolitical status and instead reimagines the archive itself as an identity. This allows us to reconsider the archive not as a passive repository but as an active participant in the ‘real world’.

The recent work of Nicole Robert is helpful in understanding intersectionality as an analytical tool in a museum context. For Robert, intersectionality highlights

the importance of analysing the institutions and social structures which shape and regulate identities. An applied intersectional approach within

museums requires reflecting critically on the structures and systems that museum professionals rely upon to shape their work.\textsuperscript{6}

For Robert, the organisation is itself a fundamental part of the analysis of power and identity: ‘The foundation of applied intersectional theory in museums... is in this analysis of cultural structures and the ways that those structures shape our understandings of the world’.\textsuperscript{7}

**ARCHIVES, POWER & INTERSECTIONALITY**

Intersectional theory requires us to acknowledge that power is inherent in the archive. It is the power to retain, the power to discard and consequently the power to partially control knowledge, narrative and public memory as well as the value systems that underpin them. Archival scholars Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook have outlined the problems that arise when power is unacknowledged within the archive:

When power is denied, overlooked, or unchallenged, it is misleading at best and dangerous at worst. Power recognised becomes power that can be questioned, made accountable and open to transparent dialogue and enriched understanding.\textsuperscript{8}

Schwartz and Cook highlight the need for those working within archives to challenge this, to confront the ‘naturalisation’ of archival practice and acknowledge how collections and organisations reflect historical, structural power dynamics:

Archives have always been about power, whether it is the power of the state, the church, the corporation, the family, the public, or the individual. Archives have the power to privilege and to marginalise. They can be a tool of hegemony; they can be a tool of resistance.\textsuperscript{9}

Indeed the entire process from what, how, who is collected, to how records are described and accessed are all ways in which the power of the institution holds command over the future interpretation and dissemination of the

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., p.2.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p.13.
collected (and uncollected) knowledge. This dynamic tension between the past and the present, the remembered and the excluded, must be constantly interrogated. As Swedish author and activist Sven Lindqvist articulated, the ability to control memory has consequences: ‘History is still paying dividends. History is still conferring power on people’.10

Closer to home, scholars like Tony Ballantyne have critiqued the concept of archival neutrality and concluded that in the context of colonial archives,

it is increasingly difficult to view the archive as a store of transparent sources from which histories that recover a total image of… the past might be assembled… This shift in understanding the archive also reflects a growing awareness of its power, as we are increasingly sensitive to not only its central role in the day-to-day function of empire, but also the symbolic weight it carried in the broader cultural and political projects of imperialism.11

Archives are indeed one of these ‘projects’. And so if the first step is to acknowledge, the next is to challenge.

**APPLIED INTERSECTIONALITY IN THE ARCHIVE**

An intersectional feminist approach to archival practice could provide a method to identify how archives are both creators and enablers of hegemonic power structures and also a way to question and dismantle this. A recent collaboration between Auckland Museum and two playwrights demonstrates this in action. In 2017, Saraid Cameron and Amelia Reynolds approached the Museum looking for inspiration for a new production, wanting to explore narratives relating to intergenerational expressions of feminism, power and resistance from within the Museum’s collection. After some discussion, Saraid and Amelia decided to focus on the New Zealand Women’s Archive (NZWA). Donated to Auckland Museum in 1961 by Levin librarian Enid Roberts, the NZWA consists of nearly five thousand records about New Zealand women. Comprised mainly of biographies and newspaper clippings, Roberts began

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11 Tony Ballantyne, ‘Rereading the Archive and Opening up the Nation-State: Colonial Knowledge in South Asia (and Beyond)’, in *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and Through the Nation*, ed. by Antoinette Burton (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p.102.
assembling the archive in 1955 after learning about the Women’s Rights Collection at Harvard University’s Radcliffe College. Robert’s hope was that the NZWA ‘might add enthusiasm and inspire women to make ventures in new avenues,’ adding that, ‘I do so want Women’s Archives to really help women of NZ to play an active part in the building of our nation’.12

Through Saraid and Amelia’s play, Cult Show: The Revitalisation of the New Zealand Women’s Archive, the NZWA was reframed through an intersectional lens. Its legacy is honoured, as it should be, but it is also interrogated. The creation and acquisition of the NZWA was itself a form of resistance but when viewed through an intersectional lens it is also understood to wield a form of hegemonic power. Questions about who is present and who is missing from the NZWA provided a platform for Saraid and Amelia to explore contemporary feminist politics, framing the NZWA not just as a resource relating to women’s history but as a site where divergent threads of power intersect.

This kind of intersectional analysis can help us understand how historic and contemporary forms of power flow through our organisations from the inside out. In some small way, this was one of the objectives of ‘Are We There Yet?’ Those empty frames, representative of histories we do not hold, acted as a tool to help us weave our own organisational histories into a much larger tapestry. They also acted as a symbolic touchpoint during the exhibition development process, reminding us to always question and interrogate institutional legacies, systems and structures, the power they hold and create, and how they both enable and restrict our ability to ‘do’ public history. Such touchpoints must become business-as-usual in our daily work in archives and museums; not just interpretive tools in exhibition spaces but as ways of working centred around transparency and cognisance of organisational histories and the dynamic forces that enable us to create, wield, support and challenge power structures.

12 Enid Roberts to Enid Evans, circa 1961, Enid Roberts Papers, MS-1040, Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Auckland.
CONCLUSION

The examples above are just two of many projects that took place during the Suffrage 125 anniversary. Each fostered an exploration of how cultural organisations and collections intersect with history, positioning them not as neutral resources or spaces for public history to play out upon and within but as complex identities in their own right — identities (particularly the archive) whose histories are central to the field of public history. In a recent plea to New Zealanders to engage with the history of Aotearoa, historian Vincent O’Malley wrote, ‘[w]e need to know, understand and own our history’. For O’Malley, recognising the reverberations of history is critical to understanding contemporary society. Memory institutions must also take up this challenge. They must turn the lens inward and use intersectional methodologies to critically examine their histories. Doing so will open up new ways of thinking about how divergent threads of historic and contemporary power are simultaneously created, reinforced, and challenged within our cultural organisations.

Nina Finigan is the Curator Manuscripts at Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. She is interested in concepts of identity, memory and representation in museums and understanding museums and their collections as politically charged sites of power and resistance.

The project to identify and describe the signatories of the 1893 Women’s Suffrage Petition began as part of the interpretive work for the ‘He Tohu’ exhibition, which opened in May 2017. ‘He Tohu’ is a permanent exhibition of three of Aotearoa’s most highly visible public archives: He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirene — the 1835 Declaration of Independence; Te Tiriti o Waitangi (all nine signed sheets); and the ‘monster’ petition itself — the 1893 Women’s Suffrage Petition. ‘He Tohu’ will be in place for at least twenty-five years.

A common feature of these documents is that they were each signed by our forebears. This makes them immediately relatable, however in order for visitors to fully understand the documents, it is necessary that they know something about the signatories. For He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi a short biography was researched and written for all signatories and witnesses: 655 in total. These biographies built on and furthered the research of historians, archivists and biographers of decades past. When it came to the comparatively little-studied Women’s Suffrage Petition, a new approach was needed. This new approach is outlined in this report. Hundreds of biographies were researched and written by contributors, ranging from the inexperienced to the veteran archivists and historians. The individual stories, attempting to sum up an entire life in about two hundred words, are funny, touching, tragic and illuminating. This continuing project contributes to an emerging picture of late nineteenth-century society life, and society for women.

HISTORY & CONTEXT OF THE WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE PETITION

The 1893 Women’s Suffrage Petition was the third of the great petitions in support of female enfranchisement presented to the New Zealand House of Representatives, organised by the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. The story of New Zealand women winning the vote is well known, and the petition that accompanied the second reading of the Electoral Bill in the House on 28 July 1893 was the instrument of change that supported the legislation.

At the time of its presentation to the House, the Petition was recorded as including 25,520 names. Along with another twelve smaller petitions that were sent in to the Legislative Department in support of the franchise, the total
number of signatories was almost thirty-two thousand. The oft-quoted figure of 25% of the adult female population of the time was about right.

After 1893, the Petition was retained in the records of the Legislative Council, and kept in the Parliamentary basement. The Petition was transferred to Archives New Zealand, then the National Archives, in 1985. At the suffrage centenary in 1993, the Petition received renewed attention.

BEGINNINGS OF THE BIOGRAPHY PROJECT

In its archival context, work on determining and preserving the original order of the Petition, along with identifying its signatories and the areas in which they signed, has been ongoing for several decades.

The first full list of the Petition’s signatories was created by archivists and genealogical researchers in a card index for the centenary of enfranchisement in 1993. This card index cross-references individual signatories with the original microform page on which the petition was reproduced, and it formed the basis of the modern web database that lists signatory information in the original name and location signed fields, as well as the archivist-assigned metadata of suburb, city and region, to enhance the search features of the finding aid. Each time the database has had a major update to suit the new technology, refinements and corrections have been made. Careful conservation treatment has uncovered previously hidden signatures, and clarifications that have added or removed inscriptions have slightly changed the total tally of signatures: currently 23,969.1

The Petition was reproduced on microfiche in the early 1990s, and digitised to preservation standard in 2012. In 2016, a year out from the opening of ‘He Tohu’, the list of people who signed the Petition and their locations was well-described, and the images of signatures on the Petition were easy to access in

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1 This is the number of signatures on the Petition as it was transferred to Archives New Zealand in 1985 and following the most recent data capture exercise in 2016–2017. It is not known whether the figure of 25,520, widely publicised at the time of the Petition’s creation and subsequently, was accurate or an estimate. Likewise, the twelve smaller petitions have not survived, so an accurate tally of those signatures is not possible.
very high resolution. What was missing was any indication of who the signatories actually were.

In comparison, the majority of the rangatira who signed He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti were well known. They were aristocratic chiefs at the apex of society, wielding power and status. Most were male. Many are able to be traced extensively through time, either through their interactions with government in the public record, generating their own writings and records, or appearing in other primary sources. Many lived into the later decades of the nineteenth century, playing key roles in this country’s historical events. There are portraits and photographs of dozens of these eminent men and women.

The Petition, with its twenty-five thousand or so signatories, presented much more biographically dark matter. Because visitors could interrogate the individual sheets of He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and read biographies of any individual therein, it was a reasonable expectation that they would be able to do something similar on the Petition — within reason, given limited curatorial resources and the timeframe to opening.

Initial forays into the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography and published works brought up biographies of about sixty suffragists. These women were generally well known for their place at the forefront of the first wave of feminism in colonial New Zealand. These are the famous suffragists: the office holders in the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, franchise leagues and other organisations that supported suffrage; as well as those who are recognised for other reasons, such as being the first woman university graduate, parliamentary reporter, or high-ranking public servant. Several appear as supporting players in the stories of the famous men in their lives. This was a good start, but not good enough.

By judicious googling of such terms as ‘grandmother signed 1893 Suffrage Petition’, our exhibition development company, Story Inc., discovered another eighty or so genealogist-written pieces of research and biography on personal and local history sites. These genealogists generously gave their permission for this research to be adapted and re-used.
An achievable and time-bound goal needed to be set. The geographical, demographic and sheet-number spread of the existing biographies was analysed: the results were uneven. The 140 biographies consisted mainly of women who, though inspirational, had achieved extraordinary feats and were therefore probably not representative of the general population. Urban centres, particularly Christchurch and Dunedin, were over-represented (even allowing for the significant concentration of signatories on the Petition from these locations). A decision was made to aim for one biography per sheet of the Petition; 546 in total. With 140 existing biographies gathered, about four hundred biographies remained to be produced in just under one year. The curatorial staff of ‘He Tohu’ numbered two — reinforcements were needed.

Dozens of archivists, librarians, genealogists, Wellington Girls’ College history students, the interested public and ‘He Tohu’ exhibition staff volunteered to produce biographies. The results were magnificent. With a goal to open ‘He Tohu’ with 546 biographies — at least one per sheet — on opening day no fewer than 802 biographies were loaded into the exhibition’s content management system, ready for visitors to find through browsing or searching. These included about 660 new works on women not previously researched. At the time of writing, there are now just over one thousand entries.

RESEARCH METHODS

An initial approach was favoured that sought to quickly identify and describe many women. Researchers were instructed to check a list of easily accessible reliable resources with the aim of discovering basic biographical information. Resources included:

- New Zealand’s Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Records database
- digitised shipping lists, military personnel files and probate records held at Archives New Zealand
- common personal identity records held at Archives New Zealand, such as coronial inquests and Intention to Marry records
- council and church databases of burial records
- family and organisation papers held at the Alexander Turnbull Library, and other ATL family history resources
DEACCESSIONING AND MUSEUM ETHICS.

Stefanie Lash.

- newspaper accounts and personal notices, digitised in the National Library’s Papers Past database
- overseas databases of archival institutions such as the Public Records Office of Victoria’s shipping list database and the United Kingdom’s The National Archives (TNA) online finding aid
- databases of good repute based on primary sources such as the United Kingdom’s FreeBMD and digitised and indexed parish records
- careful use of genealogical databases such as Ancestry, FindMyPast and FamilySearch
- careful use of published genealogical and local history research

BIOGRAPHICAL FINDINGS

No formal statistical analysis of the signatories has been done. These observations should therefore be treated as an initial impression only.

Almost all of the women researched were Pākehā, and predominantly of British origin, with a ratio of about 3:1 English to Scottish, Irish and Welsh. They were working class and middle class women, with birth dates ranging from the 1810s to the 1870s. Many of the younger women in their 20s and 30s had been born in New Zealand. Other nationalities are represented mainly in locations of organised settlement, such as the Scandinavian settlers in the Manawatū. Only seven Māori women have been identified so far — nearly all signing with Pākehā names — and only one Chinese woman.

While most women worked in their own homes, some also had paid work. Many were teachers, including some women who continued to teach after marriage and having children, and some who became department heads and headmistresses. Especially after being widowed, women let out rooms in their own houses or ran boarding houses, becoming landladies. Milliners, drapers and other skill-based occupations pop up fairly regularly — including two rare lady taxidermists — and there are an abundance of domestic servants and women working in retail and textile labour. Pioneering representatives of occupations such as journalism, law and medicine are represented.
There is also evidence of widespread participation in unpaid social labour in the form of service on church, school and political committees. Prior to gaining universal suffrage, these were women’s main outlets for political participation and activism, and women volunteers continued (and continue) to drive social changes in this way.

Although most women married and had children — including a considerable number with more than six children — there were also many spinsters. Women remained living in the nuclear family for longer, and it was common for siblings and parts of a larger family to continue to live together. Some of our adolescent researchers were surprised at the relatively late ages of first marriage, having had a preconception that women were ‘married off’ very young. They were also surprised to discover that if widowed or abandoned, women tended to marry again quickly, often for pragmatic reasons in a period that predated the advent of the welfare state.

The infant mortality rate was high, with large numbers of signatories having lost one or more of their children. Likewise, the younger generation of women who signed the Petition became the mothers of the servicemen of World War One. Frequently their names appear as supporting actors in the records of their sons, where they are listed as the next of kin on military personnel files, or in the death notices of servicemen killed on service.

None of this information is new or surprising when understood in context. Perhaps the one conclusion that may be drawn from the summary analysis of signatories is that — as is to be expected of a petition that captured the signatures of 24.8% of the total adult female population of the day — the women researched so far reinforce that which is already known about the makeup of New Zealand society in the 1890s. Anyone could be a suffragist, it seems.

MISTAKES & FRUSTRATIONS

This is a crowd-sourced project, contributed to by researchers of many levels of ability and archival experience. Researchers are instructed to rely heavily on primary sources where available, and to judge secondary sources such as family trees very carefully. Most submissions have been fact-checked by an archivist.
The wealth of information available to be gathered by a wide cross-section of researchers has been satisfying.

There have, of course, been some clangers. One beautiful biography was constructed around an unfortunate case of mistaken identity, with a woman in Christchurch being confused with a famous female mountaineer from Taranaki. One woman was erroneously labelled a bigamist, a sensational conclusion drawn from a dubious online marriage registry record. It seems inevitable that further errors will be discovered in the existing research, and more made in new research — but the biography ingest process is set up to catch obvious mistakes, and such errors can be quickly corrected in the digital databases holding the biographies.

As well as outright errors, there are the usual frustrations of researching historical women of any period, even an era so comparatively close to us and as well documented as the late nineteenth century. Women had not yet gained many of the individual rights they enjoy today, and as such, their appearance in the public record is generally limited to certain circumstances — usually ones with negative impacts on personal lives, for example, death by suspicious circumstances resulting in a coronial inquest; bankruptcy or insolvency; divorce, civil or criminal proceedings by or against them; and so on. Frequently, other basic life information such as data related to birth, marriage and death needs to be navigated with knowledge of the men in the women’s lives in order to find them. Locating women in records in which many other people appear — such as immigration, school and employment records — is difficult if records are unindexed. Such records seldom offer insight into the woman’s personality, her achievements, her aspirations, disappointments, mannerisms or habits.

A FEMINIST RECLAMATION

Despite its challenges, the project to identify and describe the signatories of the Women’s Suffrage Petition remains an outstanding feminist exercise. Issues debated in the academy — the application of feminist theory to biography and the feminist deconstruction of biography as a genre — are grappled with both consciously and unconsciously by many researchers. Because the researchers and writers for this project are from a very wide range
of walks of life, including those who likely do not identify as feminists, the discourse created by this project was less academically engaged. The feminist value of this project lies as much in the lessons researchers are learning about the social context in which the signatories of the Petition operated as it does in the biographical facts that are uncovered. Looking at reasons why signatories may have supported the suffrage campaign gives insights into the state of women’s rights in the here and now, as well as in 1893. At the most basic level, even the naming and indexing of the signatories of the Petition is a feminist reclamation. Being able to search a database online or in ‘He Tohu’ for the women who signed this petition tells visitors: they are here — they matter — they created this world for us.

It is our hope that over the coming years and decades we will continue to build on this knowledge of the signatories to the 1893 Petition, as historians and biographers have been able to do for He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Perhaps in our lifetimes we will see the dream realised: a biographical story on each of our 23,969 suffragists.

Stefanie Lash was the Lead Curator for ‘He Tohu’ and is a senior archivist at Archives New Zealand.
As part of the ‘Suffrage 125’ commemorations in Aotearoa New Zealand, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga is contributing to the nationwide project seeking to compile information on signatories to the 1893 women’s suffrage petition database. As Aotearoa New Zealand’s leading national historic heritage agency, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga has over five thousand historic places entered on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero. Our participation in the women’s suffrage project involves researching and writing biographies for signatories to the petition who were associated with places on the List.

By connecting the stories of women’s suffrage signatories with records of property ownership and occupation, it is possible to reconstruct life histories and uncover the impulses that drove these women to call for change. This is, however, not an easy task. The stories of Aotearoa New Zealand’s historic places have typically highlighted male involvement, so associating female suffrage signatories with their place of occupation is difficult. Further complicating this research, property ownership and occupation was commonly recorded in the husband’s name, by which women were also often identified in public. Because signatories to the 1893 Women’s Suffrage Petition provided an address along with their signature, the petition provides a rare opportunity to associate Victorian women with the places they lived, shopped or socialised.

Although the stories of Aotearoa New Zealand’s historic places are usually shaped by male legacy, women’s lives are often central to the stories of domestic buildings in particular, and primary source evidence for records of occupation tend to relate to women’s lives — for instance birth notices, newspaper advertisements for boarders, servants, nannies or governesses or social news. Urban women are easier to trace in these newspaper sources. This is likely to be due to their greater engagement in public life such as involvement with churches, schools, clubs and social events. By contrast rural women’s lives are more isolated and harder to locate.

This paper will follow my research as I sought — and found — a subject to research in the pages of the petition for South Canterbury: ‘Mrs Phillips’. This

was a randomly selected subject whose story unravelled to form a journey through historic places of Canterbury and through a life of contrasting independence and advantage, extreme hardship and extraordinary wealth. In the commentary that follows I demonstrate how a signature on a petition can open up forgotten stories and enhance our understanding of place.

FINDING MRS PHILLIPS

A woman identified only as ‘Mrs Phillips’ signed the 1893 suffrage petition in Waimate.\(^2\) The electoral roll for the Waitaki District of 1893 identified one married woman by the name of Mrs Phillips registering in the town of Waimate: Clara Phillips, a widow.\(^3\) In 1911 Clara lived on Princes Street, a rural road on the outskirts of Waimate and lived there until the 1940s.\(^4\) She died in Waimate in 1951. Little more can be recovered on the life of this particular Mrs Phillips.

I then performed a simple search on Papers Past for ‘Mrs Phillips’, limited to South Canterbury newspapers. This search revealed a much larger story, and a much more likely candidate. In 1892 this ‘Mrs Phillips’ had been granted a \textit{decree nisi} in the action against her husband for divorce.\(^5\) In 1912 the \textit{Waimate Daily Advertiser} reported that ‘Mrs Phillips’, formerly of Waimate, had visited from Christchurch and her ‘superb car’ was drawing much attention.\(^6\) The following year the same newspaper reported that her large residence was under construction on the hill overlooking Waimate.\(^7\) It occurred to me that a woman of such demonstrable independence was likely to have signed the suffrage petition.

Returning to the Waitaki District Electoral Roll of 1893, I again identified a Mrs Phillips: Emily Phillips, a housekeeper of Waikakahi, approximately

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 230.
\(^3\) New Zealand Electoral Roll (Waitaki), 1893, p.48 [accessed via Ancestry.com, 4 September 2018].
\(^4\) New Zealand Electoral Roll (Temuka), 1911, p.93; New Zealand Electoral Roll (Waimate), 1946, p.189 [accessed via Ancestry.com, 4 September 2018].
\(^5\) ‘Interprovincial’, Timaru Herald, 15 September 1892, p.3.
\(^6\) ‘Personal’, Waimate Daily Advertiser, 9 September 1912, p.3.
\(^7\) Waimate Daily Advertiser, 14 July 1913, p.3.
fifteen kilometres south of Waimate.\footnote{New Zealand Electoral Roll (Waitaki), 1893, p.48 [accessed via Ancestry.com, 4 September 2018].} Could a housekeeper afford the superb car described in 1912? The obituary for Emily Phillips of Waimate, published in the \textit{Temuka Leader} in May 1921, revealed that she had been the housekeeper for the late Allan McLean of Waikakahi Station and Holly Lea, Christchurch.\footnote{‘Personal’, \textit{Temuka Leader}, 31 May 1921, p.3.} Following McLean’s death she received from his estate an income of \£3,000 per annum, which converts to approximately \$500,000 per annum in the value of today’s New Zealand dollar.\footnote{Reserve Bank of New Zealand Te Pūtea Matua, ‘Inflation Calculator’, <https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/monetary-policy/inflation-calculator> [accessed 16 August 2018].} That was enough for a car.

In 1900 Emily Phillips was charged in the Magistrates Court with failing to support her destitute husband under the \textit{Destitute Persons Act 1894}.\footnote{‘A Maintenance Case’, \textit{Star}, 12 June 1900, p.3.} James Charles Phillips requested financial support from Mrs Phillips to supplement his pension and presented evidence to support his claim on her personal income. He stated that Mrs Phillips had been Allan McLean’s housekeeper for thirty years (therefore since 1870). He claimed that she had property in Nelson (which was found to be incorrect) and stated that ‘[h]e had seen her driving in carriage on several occasions and also riding a bicycle, but he did not know whether these were her own property’.\footnote{Ibid.}

Mrs Phillips gave evidence in effect denying the statements of J. C. Phillips. She had been married to the complainant thirty-nine years ago, and had been separated from him for a period of thirty-five years. She earned her own living as a housekeeper before entering Mr McLean’s employment. For the duration of her employment with McLean, Emily Phillips stated that ‘she had received no remuneration for her services. Her employer paid for all the necessaries she required’.\footnote{Ibid.} Given that the evidence provided did not prove that Mrs Phillips possessed any personal wealth or property, the judge declined to make an order under the Act.

\footnote{Ibid.}
Christine Whybrew.

Mrs Phillips was housekeeper for McLean at ‘The Valley’, the homestead for Waikakahi Station.14 The homestead of twenty-one rooms, including large servant quarters, was built by McLean in 1874.15 Under the Land Settlement Act 1894, Julius Vogel’s Liberal government acquired powers to compulsorily purchase land for closer settlement.16 McLean’s Waikakahi Station, comprising forty-eight thousand acres of land, was purchased by the government in 1899 for £320,000. Despite McLean’s reluctance to sell his estate, Waikakahi was the first property sold to the Crown and subdivided for closer settlement.

With the proceeds from the sale of Waikakahi, McLean erected another prominent Canterbury landmark, Holly Lea, or ‘McLean’s Mansion’ in Christchurch.17 Designed by Robert William England, of prominent architectural and building firm the England Brothers, Holly Lea was built from kauri and was the largest timber house in Christchurch, containing fifty-three rooms. Mrs Phillips continued as McLean’s housekeeper at Holly Lea where she helped furnish the house and led his domestic staff.18 Following McLean’s death in 1907, Holly Lea was bequeathed to the Allan McLean Institute to provide a ‘home for women of education and refinement in reduced or straitened circumstances’.19 However, his will provided for Emily Phillips to occupy the house during her lifetime and she lived there until 1913, when she returned to Waimate.

Using her income from McLean’s estate, Mrs Phillips commissioned Timaru architect James Turnbull to design a house for her, Te Kiteroa, situated on a prominent hill overlooking Waimate (see figure 1).20 She purchased the land in 1913 and was the sole owner on the certificate of title, upon which she was

18 Wilson, p.43.
19 ‘McLean’s Mansion’.
20 Te Kiteroa, c. 1940s, C.E Clarke photograph, ref. 1767, Waimate Museum & Archives.
described as a ‘widow’. 21 The auction sale notice published following her death in 1921 described the property as comprising eighteen acres, a ‘luxuriously appointed two-storey residence of 14 rooms, exclusive of offices and two up-to-date cottages for gardener and chauffeur’. 22 The advertisement further set the property apart from other local rural residences:

The property is one of the finest country residences in Canterbury — no expense having been spared in building and laying out, and is specially suitable for a convalescent home, educational establishment, or other institution. 23

Figure 1. Te Kiteroa, c. 1940s, commissioned by Mrs Phillips and designed by James Turnbull.

Who was Emily Phillips and how did the course of her life enable such extraordinary opportunity? Genealogical research shows that she was born

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21 Certificate of title, CB180/65, Canterbury Land District (Land Information New Zealand).
23 Ibid.
Christine Whybrew.

Emily Balme in London in 1837 and married James Charles Phillips in 1861, in London. Her father was Paul Balme, a pipe maker of Mile End, London. At the time of their marriage, J. C. Phillips was a storekeeper of New Zealand. He was in business with his brother, Henry Vincent Phillips, in Nelson and J. C. Phillips transferred the business to him in October 1860 when he returned to England. Further searches in the Nelson newspapers show that in 1858 Charles Balme married Emma Phillips in Nelson. Genealogical research confirms that Charles was the brother of Emily Balme and Emma the sister of J. C. Phillips. This may indicate that the marriage between Emily Balme and J. C. Phillips was one of convenience.

Mr and Mrs Phillips returned to Nelson in 1862 where J. C. Phillips resumed trading as a storekeeper. He built a new stone building for his business premises in 1869, but by 1870 was insolvent. Charles Balme was an engineer in Nelson, but he was also insolvent in 1867 and later died in Dunedin in 1883. His widow, Emma Balme, signed the 1893 suffrage petition in Port Chalmers. Newspaper searches show no record of Mrs Phillips in connection with her husband, or her brother and sister-in-law.

Most information about Emily Phillips’ life may be garnered from her probate, following her death in Waimate in 1921. In her will she bequeathed £100 each to her cook and chauffeur and £200 for rebuilding St Augustine’s Anglican Church at Waimate (where the foundation stone for a new building

30 ‘In the Supreme Court of New Zealand, Middle District’, *Nelson Evening Mail*, 26 January 1867, p.3.
was laid, but the rebuilding never occurred). The residue of her estate was worth approximately $500,000 (in today’s currency), plus the value of assets. The balance of estate was left to George Balme of London, Minnie Moore of Nelson, and Emma Atkinson of Essex, presumed to be a nephew and nieces.

Accompanying Mrs Phillips’ probate was an inventory of her estate, containing thirteen pages that describe her household and personal effects (see figure 2). This document is unusual for its length and detail, demonstrating her life of wealth and luxury. Her household contents included diamond jewellery, a large quantity of wines and alcoholic spirits (for example sixteen dozen bottles of champagne and nineteen pints of Angostura bitters), an extensive wardrobe of clothing (mostly black), a large quantity of fine china, glassware and artworks, as well as linen, carpets and furniture. She also owned a Cadillac limousine.

Te Kiteroa was purchased by William David Napier of Dunedin, who operated the property as a guest house and health resort. In the 1940s the property was acquired by the Canterbury Branch of the Women’s Division of the Farmers’ Union (WDFU), which had been founded by Rose, Lady Hall, an active proponent of the women’s suffrage movement. The house was operated by the WDFU as a holiday and rest home for country housekeepers and farmers’ wives. It continued as a residential education facility for the WDFU and the Country Women’s Institute until at least the 1980s.

This postscript to Emily Phillips’ story shows the indirect legacy of her, and Allan McLean’s, concern for the care of women in independent circumstances. Mrs Phillips was remembered in Waimate for her ‘large and frequent’ benefactions. Allan McLean was also remembered for his generosity towards those in need and his loyalty as an employer. Even as a relatively independent woman Mrs Phillips’ opportunities in life were enabled by male

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36 Vance, p.116.
37 ‘Personal’, Temuka Leader, 31 May 1921, p.3.
38 ‘Mr Allan McLean’, Press, 14 November 1907, p.7; Wilson, p.43; Crawford.
Christine Whybrew.

relationships — her father, her brother, her husband and her employer. Biographies of Allan McLean often make mention of Mrs Phillips, but only in the context of the supporting role she played his life and his benevolence towards her.³⁹

³⁹ Wilson, p.43; Crawford.
Mrs Phillips’ story illustrates the life of a rural working woman in nineteenth-century Aotearoa New Zealand, accessed today through the inscription of a name on the 1893 suffrage petition. Through tracing her own biography and movements in life we gain an understanding of her personal experiences. While hers was a life of unusual privilege and opportunity, this demonstrates how researching signatories to the petition can enhance our understanding of the previously silent stories of ordinary women’s lives.

Christine Whybrew is Area Manager Canterbury/West Coast for Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. Following her early career in New Zealand museums and art galleries she graduated from the University of Otago in 2010 with her PhD on the Burton Brothers photographic studio. Christine has worked for Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga since 2009, where she enjoys discovering and sharing the stories of historic places and archaeology.
The theme for the 2018 Christchurch Beca Heritage Week was ‘Strength from Struggle — Remembering our courageous communities’, with a focus on, amongst other things, the anniversary of women’s suffrage. As soon as the theme was announced, we knew straight away that we wanted to curate an exhibition focused on women. As archaeologists, we are both fascinated by the role of women in the past. Further, through our work in post-earthquake Christchurch we have become very interested in the women who did not quite fit the stereotypes and societal norms of the day — in other words, women who broke the rules. This post-earthquake work has involved archaeological monitoring, excavation and recording on thousands of potential archaeological sites in and around Christchurch as part of demolition, repair and rebuild work in the city. This work has brought to light the stories of the women who are the focus of the exhibition. One of the things that intrigued us about these women was that, once we started looking, they were more common than we had originally thought. And if we, as scholars of the past, were surprised by this, presumably others less familiar with Christchurch’s history would also be, and revealing the depth and diversity of women’s experiences in the past seemed important.

It is generally held that women in the nineteenth century were meant to satisfy the Victorian ideology of domesticity. By the mid-nineteenth century, when home and workplace were often no longer combined in the same space, a stringent division of female and male roles became the ideal, particularly for middle class women. Women were to be confined to the private space, encouraged to be mothers, wives and domestic servants. In contrast, men were supposedly the economic mainstay of the household, active in the ‘real world’ and were much more likely to wield formal power.

These prevailing Victorian stereotypes subsequently came to colour much historical and archaeological research where both disciplines interpreted the past

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1 The events of Beca Heritage Week 2018 are listed on <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/whats-on/>.
through the gaze of the hegemonic middle class, western white male.\textsuperscript{3} The predominant masculine standpoint has focused on men and their achievements for many decades, while women and their activities have gone unnoticed and neglected.\textsuperscript{4} Since the 1980s, a growing body of historical research has focused on the role of women in Aotearoa New Zealand society.\textsuperscript{5} Archaeological studies that look at the role of women in nineteenth-century Aotearoa New Zealand are far fewer.\textsuperscript{6} It would be fair to say that matters have been compounded by the fact that women can be elusive in both the archaeological and the historical record, and this at times complicated our research for the exhibition ‘Women Breaking the Rules’.

As archaeologists, we attempt to learn about people’s lives through the material culture they owned and used. This is rarely an easy matter, and even associating an artefact with a particular gender is not as simple as it might seem. While archaeologists tend to see the archaeological record as less biased than the historical record, being less deliberately curated, it is more the case that the biases are different. While the creation of the archaeological record is not biased by gender, the absence of certain types of artefacts can be telling. For example, one of the women in our exhibition, Elizabeth Robinson, was the first registered female chemist in New Zealand.\textsuperscript{7} No trace of Elizabeth has been found in the

\textsuperscript{3} María Cruz Berrocal, ‘Feminismo, Teoría y Práctica de una Arqueología Científica’, \textit{Trabajos de Prehistoria}, 66, 2 (2009), pp.25–43.


archaeological record thus far, in spite of the fact that chemists of the day typically bottled their products in their own personally branded bottles. Did Elizabeth choose not to have bottles branded with her name? Did she use only her surname, or her husband’s name? It is possible that Elizabeth chose one of these options to ‘hide’ the fact that she was a woman. Alternatively, it is also possible that we just have not yet found any of her personally branded bottles.

When it comes to historical sources, women can be just as hard to find as in the archaeological record. In newspapers women were typically only referred to as ‘Mrs…’, possibly with the inclusion of an initial, which was often her husband’s rather than her own. Moreover, women simply did not appear in street directories unless they were the head of the household, or ran and advertised a business.\(^8\) Ironically enough, the occasion when someone’s full name was most likely to appear in the newspaper was when they fell foul of the law.

Despite these difficulties, archaeology and history have revealed the lives and activities of six Christchurch women who, in one way or another, broke the rules of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century society. These women are Fanny Cole, prohibitionist; Elizabeth Robinson, chemist; Sarah Gault, dressmaker; Elizabeth Smith, caterer; Caroline Rantin, timber and coal merchant; and Mary Portelli, petty criminal. Regrettably, we have been unable to identity a Māori woman to include in our exhibition — we simply have not been able to find a Māori woman who was living on a site in Christchurch in the mid- to late nineteenth century. We consider here the lives of Sarah Gault and Fanny Cole, women who through the combined techniques of archaeological and historical research may be seen to have ‘broken the rules’ in late nineteenth-century Christchurch.

Fanny Buttery Cole was born in England in 1860 and arrived in New Zealand in 1880.\(^9\) She worked as a teacher at the Brookside and East Oxford schools

\(^8\) The work of Catherine Bishop has identified the myriad ways in which those women who ran businesses are hidden to historians due to, for example, trading under their husband’s name or simply not advertising their businesses in newspapers. Catherine Bishop, ‘Commerce Was a Woman: Women in Business in Colonial Sydney and Wellington’ (unpublished PhD thesis: Australian National University, 2012), pp.63–71.

\(^9\) She arrived in New Zealand with her siblings. Her parents, Charles and Fanny Holder, were both Methodist preachers and activists. Barbara Brookes, Women’s Suffrage Petition 1893 (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2017).
until she married Herbert Cole in 1884. Then, Fanny become wife and later, mother of two daughters: Marguerite Lilian and Eleanor Charlotte. By 1893, the Cole family purchased a section on River Road, Christchurch, where they built their house, a typical late nineteenth-century villa. How the archaeology and history revealed Fanny was fascinating. While recording the house and monitoring its demolition, we found a few artefacts in the attic space, including a card with the stamp: ‘W.C.T.U., Christchurch, 129 Manchester Street’. An otherwise trivial piece of paper made this formidable woman visible and her political voice audible. Fanny Cole was a prohibitionist, president of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union in the 1890s and early 1900s, and a stout activist for women’s rights. As temperance worker, she campaigned against the evils of alcohol and gambling, but also advocated for female prisoners’ rights and the importance of educating young people, among other social matters.

Fanny audaciously broke the rules by becoming influential in the public sphere. Fanny pushed forward the confines of female exclusion from politics and formal power. When she died on 25 May 1913, her funeral was attended by numerous local and national politicians. The eulogy delivered by the Reverend Leonard M. Isitt praised her as a public figure, but also for keeping her duties as mistress of her home. Hence, Fanny stands almost between two worlds. She was an example of those women who shaped their lives beyond the boundaries of Victorian society.

Mrs Sarah Gault was an Irish dressmaker who arrived in Lyttelton in April 1883 with her parents and siblings. An Alexander Gault arrived with her, but it is not clear whether he was her husband or her son, and he seems to disappear from the record after this single appearance. By the time Sarah appears in the street directories (1887), she is clearly the head of the household and there is no

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11 Fanny Cole signed the 1893 suffrage petition. The Women’s Suffrage Petition Te Petihana Whakamana Pōti Wahine 1893, pp.61, 65.
13 ‘Death of Mrs Cole’, Northern Advocate, 26 May 1913, p.3.
14 ‘The Late Mrs H. Cole’, Star, 29 May 1913, p.4.
Within a year of arrival Sarah had set herself up as a dressmaker and, by September 1885 was renting the house in Gloucester Street, Christchurch, that brought her to our attention. It is almost completely certain that Sarah was running her business from her house, as she would do later in the decade and as was common practice for dressmakers at the time. Running a business from home meant that a woman could look after the home at the same time, particularly if there were children to take care of — no evidence has been found to suggest that Sarah had children, although the possibility cannot be discounted. The house that Sarah rented in 1885 was a small, perfectly respectable bay villa just on the outskirts of central Christchurch. Not only was Sarah almost certainly operating her business from this house, it is also possible that her elderly parents were living with her, as they were when they died in 1890 and 1900. Sarah’s business was both large enough and successful enough for her to take on apprentices and improvers. The house is likely to have been busy and full, particularly with Sarah’s customers coming and going.

Sarah broke the rules in a number of ways: by living without her husband (although she may have been a widow), by running a business (albeit one that was socially acceptable for a working or lower middle class woman to run) and also quite literally when she was charged (more than once) with breaching employment laws. So, what does her house — through the methods of buildings archaeology — tell us about her rule breaking? In almost all respects this house, built in c.1883, was the model middle class house, with its fan and sidelights around the front door, its rusticated weatherboards, a neatly decorative bay window, decorative bargeboards, finial, ceiling roses, hall arch

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17 ‘Business Announcements’, Star, 21 April 1884, p.2; ‘Late Advertisements’, Star, 3 September 1885, p.2.
19 Bishop, ‘Commerce’, p.128.
22 ‘Late Advertisements’, Star, 3 September 1885, p.2.
24 Bishop, ‘Commerce’, p.95.
and plinth blocks on the door architraves. These decorative features, too, meant
that it was just a little bit fancier than a working class house. There was one
thing that distinguished it from the middle class bay villa: its size. It was all just
a little bit smaller than its middle class equivalent, as exemplified by the fact that
it had pairs of sash windows, rather than triples. All of this suggests that Sarah
had deliberately rented a house that would appeal to the style and tastes of the
middle class customers she no doubt hoped to attract, customers who would
hopefully spend a little bit more on their dresses than working class women
might. The nature of the house may have also spoken to the nature of the
respectable dresses that Sarah might have made for her customers.

Even though Fanny Cole and Sarah Gault ‘broke the rules’, their lives were still
circumscribed by both societal standards and economic pressures — Sarah ran
a business that fitted within the norms of what was expected for a woman in
the Victorian era, while Fanny maintained an image as a mother, wife and dutiful
mistress of her home. Like the other women in our exhibition, and so many
women in nineteenth-century New Zealand, they pushed the boundaries of
what was accepted and respectable, whilst working within the confines of that
society. By slowly pushing these boundaries, women would come to change
society as a whole.

Katharine Watson is a PhD student at the University of Canterbury, where
she is studying how Christchurch’s nineteenth-century residents used
houses to ‘get on’ in the world.

Maria Lillo Bernabeu is an Artefact Specialist at Underground Overground
Archaeology Ltd, Christchurch. She has studied at the Universitat d’Alacant
in Spain. Between 2010 and 2014 her work focused on cataloguing and
analysing the women represented in the rock art of the Mediterranean basin
on the Iberian Peninsula. Her field of research includes Gender Archaeology
and its application to the study and interpretation of the past, making visible
women and their practices through material culture.
Joanna Cobley.

CENTRING THE OTHER/FRAMING MAKEA

History remembers regal heroines due to their inherited status, while their life achievements are usually framed as those of an ‘honorary man’, ‘a singular exception to the norm’ and, on occasion, as ‘better than a man’.1 Historians charged with the task of writing women’s histories find that historical evidence surrounding women’s worlds and lived experiences are often either invisible or derived from second-hand accounts, which helps to generate a legacy of misconceptions, legends and mythologies.2 In this commentary I reflect on how both these historiographical aspects relate to a South Pacific regal heroine, Makea Takau Ariki, Queen of Rarotonga from 1871 until her death in 1911.3 As a researcher with an interest in public history and intangible heritage, I found that feminist historian Antonia Fraser’s tropes of the ‘honorary man’, the ‘singular exception’ and sometimes ‘better than a man’ simultaneously existed alongside Makea’s position as an indigenous woman, something which became apparent through my readings of Makea in the public record and reinforced by historians. Makea Takau Ariki was an exceptional nineteenth-century South Polynesian woman leader who ensured the protection of the Cook Islands group during a period when the Pacific had economic and geopolitical importance to colonial New Zealand.

THE CULT OF QUEEN VICTORIA

When Makea became Ariki in 1871 she immediately proclaimed herself Queen of Rarotonga. Historians and contemporary observers believe that Makea was inspired by Queen Victoria, who used naval power to expand the British Empire and secure crucial trade routes.4 Makea hoped that as a British

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2 For example, in his introduction Michael Evans argued that the dearth of historical evidence on regal heroine Eleanor of Aquitaine has meant that biographers have also included speculation and myths in their analysis. Evans described the phenomena as ‘Eleanorian Exceptionalism’. See Michael R. Evans, *Inventing Eleanor: The Medieval World and Post-Medieval Image of Eleanor of Aquitaine* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), p.1.
3 An Ariki is an inherited chiefly title, granted to the first-born of high-ranked social elites, which gives them the right to govern.
4 Richard Gilson, *The Cook Islands 1820–1950*, ed. Ron Crocombe (New Zealand; Fiji: Victoria University Press in association with the Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1980); see also Dick Scott, *Years of the POOH-BAH: A Cook Islands History*
Protectorate, Rarotonga and the other islands in the Cook Island Group would be safeguarded from other imperial interests by Queen Victoria’s Royal Navy, and that this would also help boost their economy. Since Tahiti and the Marquesas became French Protectorates in 1843, followed by New Caledonia in 1853, French interest in the Cook Islands increased so the Ariki — and Queen Makea in particular — lobbied Britain for annexation (this was achieved in 1888).5

The act of self-proclaimed Queenship helped women feel powerful. Feminist historian Katie Pickles neatly demonstrates Queen Victoria’s womanly power in her work on the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), a Canadian women’s organisation founded in 1900. Pickles notes how IODE members drew self-confidence for their imperial projects from Queen Victoria.6 For example, on Victoria Day members imitated and dressed up as Queen Victoria, and in doing so experienced the aura of Queen Victoria’s royal status and feminine authority. Further, as a way to inculcate and educate others about Queen Victoria’s virtues and powers, political dignities, business leaders and children were involved in IODE festivities.

Makea deliberately performed rituals associated with the powers of office that evoked Queen Victoria.7 A number of other elite nineteenth-century South Pacific women similarly adopted the title ‘Queen’, such as Aimata Pōmare IV Vahine, Tahiti’s longest reigning Queen from 1827–1877.8 During the last decades of the nineteenth century, four of the five high-ranking Rarotongan Ariki were women, and all, including Makea, adopted the title and status of

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6 Katie Pickles, Female Imperialism and National Identity: Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

7 Through an Act of Parliament, with the support of Prime Minister Disraeli, Queen Victoria more or less self-proclaimed the title ‘Impress of India’, Thomson, Queen Victoria, pp.17, 128–131.

Queen. Makea’s nearby South Pacific contemporaries included the Rarotongan-born Tui Ariki, known through marriage as the Queen of Samoa, and Lavinia Veiongo Fotu, Queen consort of Tonga from 1899 to 1902. These South Pacific Queens invented new court traditions, co-created with the European outsider (trader, colonial agent, politician, and tourist) and other South Pacific leaders. These South Pacific Queens built European-styled palaces, and greeted their guests with food, cultural performances and gifts. They did this so that those wielding power would recognise their authority.  

MAKEA, ‘NATIVE WOMAN’/‘HONORARY MAN’

Makea, like other regal heroines who operated in the public sphere of economics, governance, security and trade, was treated as an ‘honorary man’. These heroines’ portraits appeared on postage stamps, both as a symbol of their geographic power and to generate revenue. In Makea’s case, subtle differences are noted. Makea was part of a collective of ruling elites, not a supreme ruler. At times the other Ariki were envious of Makea’s symbolic power as ‘Head Ariki’ of the Cook Island group. For example, in the lead-up to the Federated Cook Islands second postal stamp issue in 1893, the British Resident, Frederick J. Moss, wrote and urged the New Zealand government to hasten the commission. Moss explained to the then New Zealand Premier, the Hon. John Ballance, that even though the vote had been 10: 2 in agreement that Makea’s image would be on the stamp, some jealousy had emerged within the ruling Ariki (see figure 1). Makea’s race also created difference. For instance the stamp designer, Alfred Cousins, had instructions not to make the

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9 The names of the Ariki are hard to trace. One New Zealand newspaper mentioned two other Queens reigning on the Island of Rarotonga, Marepa and Mary Anna; see ‘Queen Makea of Rarotonga’, New Zealand Herald, 17 October 1885, p.4.
11 Fraser, The Warrior Queens.
Queen of Rarotonga’s likeness ‘look too dark’. And a year after her death, Mr Vivian C. Gossett reminded *Montreal Philatelist* readers that Makea was not a real queen, but self-proclaimed. Gossett qualified Makea’s importance in terms of her ‘mythical’ hereditary status — her ancestors were among the first settlers of Rarotonga and her family narrative linked back to ancient Hawaiki.

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Poole, *The Stamps of Cook Islands*, p.12.
Gossett’s narrative clearly positioned the honorary Makea as an exotic, native queen.

MAKEA’S EXCEPTIONALISM

Regal heroines are portrayed as ‘singular exceptions to the norm’ to explain their right to rule. And even though five Ariki collectively governed Rarotonga during Makea’s reign, historians squarely frame Makea as exceptional. For example, Gilson claimed that in addition to her economic power as the Ariki of the largest and most prosperous island in the Cook Island Group, Makea’s extraordinary ‘force of personality’ helped elevate her to ‘Head Ariki’ and with it the symbolic position as sovereign authority.\(^{16}\)

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s colonial New Zealand’s imperial aspirations in the South Pacific amplified and so too did the significance of Makea’s honorary role as Queen of Rarotonga. In 1885 John L. Kelly led an Auckland Chamber of Commerce delegation to Rarotonga. Kelly imagined Auckland as the manufacturing centre for Cook Island produce. He also promoted the idea of the South Pacific as a tourist destination in his rather celebratory poem titled ‘Lovely Rarotonga’. Perhaps as a salute to Edmund Spenser’s epic poem first published in 1590, Kelly situated Makea as a Faerie Queene:

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\begin{align*}
\text{And she who rules this fairy scene —} \\
\text{Makea — loved and loving Queen —} \\
\text{Peaceful and just her reign has been} \\
\text{In lovely Rarotonga!} \\
\text{May she be spared for many a day} \\
\text{To reign in Awarua Bay,} \\
\text{While Commerce thrives beneath her sway} \\
\text{In fertile Rarotonga!}\text{\textend{quote}}
\end{align*}
\]

Leveraging her position as ‘Head Ariki’, in October 1885 Makea boarded the New Zealand government-subsidised postal steamer the Janet Nicol and headed to Auckland where she planned to meet politicians, manufacturers and iwi

\(^{16}\) Gilson, *The Cook Islands 1820–1950*, p.51; see also Scott, *Years of the POOH-BAH*, p.50. One source states that Makea was appointed as Head Ariki in 1888; see ‘Makea Nui (Chiefly Title)’, <http://members.iinet.net.au/~royalty/states/cookislands/makeanui.html>.

\(^{17}\) Kelly cited in Scott, *Years of the POOH-BAH*, p.42.
leaders and lobby for annexation, trade opportunities and seek funds to improve the Islands’ infrastructure. New Zealand newspapers widely reported Makea’s visit. The *Timaru Herald* wrote that the Queen of Rarotonga arrived ‘unannounced’ with her entourage, which included ‘maids of honor’, described as ‘fair specimens… of the island kingdom’, the Prince consort, and Enoka, ‘the Keeper of the Royal Mats’. The Mayor of Auckland, William Waddel (1883–1886), ‘hosted the regal guests’ and organised events and tours. Makea strategically acknowledged the ancestral links between the Cook Island and New Zealand Māori, and met Ngāi Whātua leader Paora Tuhaere. The Hon. John Ballance, Minister of Native Affairs, also met Makea. In his November 1885 Report Ballance observed that the Cook Island Ariki would formally request the British Crown for protection, and if necessary, annexation to New Zealand (completed in 1901, see figure 2). Makea and Ballance both stressed the importance of the Cook Islands collective and autonomous rule to continue following annexation.

New Zealand newspapers published details regarding the Queen’s appearance and behaviour. The *Herald* published a portrait of Makea and described her as ‘a fine, intelligent, portly woman of 45 years of age’. Historian Dick Scott believed that publishing her portrait was unusual for the time. The *Timaru Herald* described the Queen, who attended a business function, as ‘elegantly attired in a royal robe of black velvet’. Ballance also commented on the Queen’s intellect and ‘civilised’ dress in his Ministerial Report. Accounts of Makea noted that she did not speak English and worked through an interpreter. Yet Makea could understand and write English very well, as was

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21 ‘Queen Makea of Rarotonga’, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 October, 1885.
22 Scott, *Years of the POOH-BAH*, p.40.
evident in her petitions to the British Crown and correspondence with the colonial New Zealand government.  

Figure 2. Governor-General Lord Ranfurly reads the annexation proclamation to Queen Makea, 1901.

MAKEA, THE ‘BETTER MAN’

Women and men could inherit the Ariki title, yet as ‘Head Ariki’ and chief of the largest island in the Cook Islands group, Makea embodied the ‘better man’ status. This becomes apparent through comparison with her husband Ngamaru Rongotini Ariki, paramount chief of Atiu, Mauke and Mitiaro, three small islands in the Southern Cook Islands group. Edward Reeves, an English

26 Fraser, *The Warrior Queens.*
steamboat traveller who visited the Queen at Para O Tane palace, described the Prince consort as like a ‘drone attendant on a queen bee’. 27

The arrival of the European foreigners marked a rupture point in traditional Cook Island society and an opportunity for South Pacific regal heroines such as Makea to emerge. From the early 1820s John and Mary Williams of the London Missionary Society (LMS), assisted by Tahitian converts, introduced Christianity and other European influences to the Cook Island people. Whaling and sealing gangs also expanded into the South Pacific. Diseases followed. Epidemics of dysentery, whooping cough, mumps, influenza and measles led to rapid population decline. In addition, with over seven hundred Cook Island men lost through slavery, combined with deaths caused by natural disasters, by the end of the nineteenth century the population had collapsed from an estimated seven thousand to fewer than two thousand. 28 Contemporary observers and historians believe that the sudden male shortage contributed to a change in the status of Cook Island women and, for members of the elite class, this meant that the succession of the Ariki title could be inherited by a woman in her own right. 29

When the Premier of New Zealand, the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, visited Makea at her Rarotongan palace, he was the ‘lesser man’, as Seddon’s May 1900 South Pacific tour on the steamer S.S. Tutanekai was partly on doctor’s orders. 30 Seddon was also in Rarotonga to formalise New Zealand’s annexation of the Cook Island Group. Makea ‘the greater man’ honoured Seddon and his entourage appropriately, with a feast and cultural performances. In recognition of his status and as part of the ritual, Makea gifted Seddon some woven mats, which signified wealth and social status within Pacific women’s culture. Evidence of these finely-woven gifts have yet to emerge; if they do exist their provenance may not have been sufficiently

30 Edward Tregear, The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon’s (the Premier of New Zealand) visit to Tonga, Fiji, Savage Island and the Cook Islands, May 1900 (Wellington: John Mackay, Government Printers, 1900). Allegedly written by Eugene McCarthy.
Joanna Cobley.

documented. However Makea, the Queen of Rarotonga, captured the occasion for public memory and posed for photographs with her Prince consort, Ngamaru, Seddon, and the New Zealand Premier’s wife, Louisa (see figure 3).

![Figure 3. The Prince consort, Lousia Seddon, Makea, and the New Zealand Premier Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, 1900. Photographer: Frederick Sears.](image)

**CONCLUDING NOTES**

Regal heroines are remembered due to their highborn status, yet few studies have been published on South Pacific regal heroines. South Pacific women leaders existed historically, and how they have been portrayed is both

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31 Email correspondence from Jean Mason, Manager/Curator, Cook Islands Library & Museum Society (November and December, 2017).
fascinating and varied. 33 As Ariki of the largest island in the Cooks Makea had economic and symbolic power, and successfully operated in the public sphere of governance, commerce, security and trade as an ‘honorary man; a ‘better man’ than her contemporaries. Despite Makea’s hereditary status, her extraordinary presence and her ceremonial functions as Queen, attitudes of white racial superiority permeated through the historical documents, and provided justification for the paternalistic rhetoric in speeches made by businessmen, travellers and politicians whom Makea entertained at Para O Tane Palace. In these accounts Makea was always constructed as a native woman first and foremost; yet she was a pragmatic and skilful negotiator who collaborated within a collective of sometime jealous Ariki to achieve her goals.

Joanna Cobley is Researcher Development Coordinator for Research & Innovation and Adjunct Senior Fellow in History at the University of Canterbury. She writes about women, food, cultural heritage and teaching and learning.

33 Tominiko, ‘Women leaders of the Pacific’, NewsHub, 10 June 2012.
The 125th anniversary of women’s suffrage provides an opportunity for Aotearoa New Zealand’s heritage institutions and public historians alike to ‘check in’ regarding the presence of women within curatorial and collecting practices, historical research and resulting narratives; to ask along with Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira’s women’s suffrage commemorative exhibition, ‘are we there yet?’. But ‘there’ is a moveable feast, an aspirational horizon that keeps pulling away as we step closer. One way of interpreting this mirage of destination might be to suggest that we can never get ‘there’ because we-as-women will always have glass ceilings, new inequalities and inequities — or at least new ways of experiencing them — which requires enduring vigilance. In addition to this however, the collective ‘we’ is as elusive as a shared feminist destination, as intersectional feminists were quick to point out. The female subject may exist, as Kimberle Crenshaw informed us in 1989, at the intersection of distinct oppressions, but the subject is also moving, through space, and also through time.\(^1\) As historians, we are aware that women signing the suffrage petition did not construct being female, at the same intersection of oppressions and in the same ways that women asserting their rights to abortions may have constructed being female over half a century later. We know that gender is socially and culturally constructed, that it changes through time and varies across cultures, and if we are historians of gender, then these variations are the subject of our research. As long as gender exists externally, then we can trace its outline in archival (and archaeological) remains — corporeal bodies that were gendered at birth, the associated documentation that turned appearance into predictive terrain for femininity or masculinity, the photographs or clothing that visually and materially represented them, or the public discourses that shaped gender from medical textbooks to popular philosophy, or gendered performances in sport and leisure, language, custom, documented in print, image, or oral tradition. We can write histories of New Zealand women, because we know what it is to be a New Zealand woman, and we know where to find her. However she is harder to find when gender is affect more than it is embodiment.

The academic pursuit of gender as a category of analysis has long privileged embodied subjectivity, with the ‘turn to the body’ shaping the way historians analysed their male and female historical subjects from at least the 1990s. Caroline Daley’s work on Eugene Sandow is a case in point for New Zealand historiography. In 2005 Michael Roper advocated for the revival of a subjective gender history that drew a tighter lead from psychoanalysis than Joan Scott, in her ‘Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis’, had intended for the field. Roper speaks of a subjective black hole within gender histories that look for codes of (in his case) masculinity, political documents, and other historical traces that originated externally to the people under consideration. While we write histories about gendered discourses and tangible remains, we are quiet about what it felt like — for Roper — to be masculine. Roper argued that a better way to understand gendered subjectivity was — as it had been for Daley — through the body, and also through ‘the practices of daily life in which emotional relations are embedded’. Contributions to a special issue of the journal Textile: Cloth and Culture on emotional textiles demonstrate the ways in which the history of emotions can successfully be told through material culture, from christening garments to the act of sewing. Similarly edited collections like Willemijn Ruberg and Kristine Steenbergh’s Sexed Sentiments: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Gender and Emotion, show the ways in which emotions are gendered. But what happens when gender itself is framed as an emotion? And how might public historians tell the story of gender as affect?

**TRANSGENDER AS AFFECT**

During 2018, Suffrage 125 commemorations were criticised for their tendency to exclude transgender women from celebratory narratives and celebratory
spaces. While debates raged in social media, the Women’s Studies Association Paekorora conference ‘Feminist Engagements in Aotearoa: 125 Years of Suffrage and Beyond’ became the forum through which that organisation enacted a constitutional change to see ‘gender expression’ and ‘gender identity’ acknowledged as intersectional oppressions. Still others argued that the move to describe the achievements of 1893 in terms of ‘universal suffrage’ dislodged women from their place in a very small and seldom illuminated patch of sunlight.

Through donning the mantle of exclusion, transgender activists and spokespeople implicitly highlighted the ways in which everyday historical research reinscribes the body with what are disproportionately Western, and arguably colonial, gender norms. As the literature signalled above indicates, in many ways Western historians do shape their narratives of gender around the histories of bodies, where even the history of an emotion is likely to be found residing in a christening garment, or other objective thing. In turn, what provides narrative cohesion to the history of women’s suffrage is that at heart it is the history of suffrage as granted to bodies that did not have sufficiently convincing genitals to have been designated male at birth. In the past these bodies were treated differently to those that could be identified as male, and it is the history of these bodies that was until the 1970s and 1980s seldom told. In the past these bodies were discursively constructed as women’s bodies, and as such a particular gendered terrain exists, to be recovered, celebrated, and commemorated. But this is in itself an endeavour that re-maps the historical body with the gendered landmarks of the past. Two corporeal genders after all, were integral to the success of white settler colonialism as it descended upon the Pacific, where strategic and targeted procreation required sexes defined by their corporeal differences. Conversely, contemporary transgender activists work to recognise gender as affect, where feeling masculine, feminine, or something else, is much more significant than whether or not a body can be visually distinguished as ‘one or the other’ from external appearances. While

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7 The Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira exhibition ‘Are we there yet?’ is notable in its inclusion of transgender and queer women.
perceiving gender as affect may not be the answer for a postcolonial history of
gender, it is one way of moving beyond the corporeality of gender, and engaging
analytically with what I see as the associated persistence of white settler
colonialism (and similar hegemonies) in historical accounts of women. Just as
importantly, framing gender as affect is a way of rewriting an inclusive,
intersectional history of gender that cuts through diverse bodies to tell us more
about the past than we currently know.

How might we tell a history of feeling-like-a-woman, or the feeling of
femininity? It is possible to infer that one way of feeling like a woman was to
feel like a suffragist, but did suffragists generally feel feminine? When women
became eligible voters in 1893, the Electoral Act that made it possible included
the explication that the definition of ‘person’ now included ‘women’. Female
suffragists were aware that they were moving into a male sphere, but did they
feel like men as they gained recognition of legal personhood? Did they feel like
men prior? By default we might look for evidence of performances of
masculinity: dress reformers with their corset-free bodies and biped clothing for
example. In starting to dress more like men, suffragists must have felt less
feminine — or differently feminine — or more masculine — or something else.
With a focus on gender as corporeality, the female dress-reformer can be
construed as transgressing gender boundaries, moving from corseted femininity,
to corset-free masculinity. But did she actually feel gender differently inside a
pair of pants? Or did it just feel different?

**GENDER & SEXUALITY AS AFFECT**

I have spoken elsewhere of the corporeality of gender and sexuality at the heart
deprivations of lesbian heritage in Aotearoa New Zealand.9 The Auckland-
based Charlotte Museum Trust commemorates lesbianism through a collection
of art that utilises vulvic imagery, and a collection of objects that align lesbian
cultural origins with the wide-hipped, heavy-breasted goddess figurines

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9 See Nadia Gush, ‘The Heritage Smorgasbord: Constructing Identity at the Charlotte
Museum’, in *History Making a Difference: New Approaches*, ed. by Katie Pickles, Lyndon Fraser,
Marguerite Hill, Sarah Murray, Greg Ryan (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2017),
pp.148–164.
purported to present ancient matrilineal societies. While the Charlotte Museum’s collection extends beyond these particular examples, both vulvic art and goddess figurines construct lesbianism unequivocally in terms of bodies, providing an apparently objective, incontrovertible core for lesbian culture and heritage. The lesbian bodies celebrated by the museum are not easily differentiated from other bodies with vulvae, wide hips or heavy breasts, and it is possible to argue that the characteristic presentation of these bodies — and not the bodies themselves — is what situates them as identifiably lesbian culture and heritage. However, be it bodies or modes of presentation, what remains within the Charlotte Museum is a paradigm whereby lesbian sexuality and gender are presented as corporeal phenomena. If the Charlotte Museum is right to present lesbianism as a corporeal history, then there is research to be done to determine how, and why, lesbian identity and expression manifested corporeally from — for argument’s sake — the 1960s onwards in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is also the case that the history of gender and sexuality as affect has barely begun to be told in this country, and there is much still to be said about the history of feeling-like-a-lesbian, or feeling-like-a-woman. If gender — and also sexuality — is experienced subjectively, then historians must look at sources in ways that allow affective stories to be told.

As part of an oral history project concerning lesbian social life in the 1980s I interviewed a number of women who — as the Charlotte Museum displays would lead us to expect — described their experiences of that decade in ways that allow for a corporeal analysis. Women talked of assessing the physical appearance of peers to determine if a person was sufficiently lesbian, others described feeling like they were ‘in drag’ on the occasions when they wore frocks. These descriptions can be interpreted as evidence for the corporeality of lesbian feminist identity where dresses were shunned in favour of trousers and shirts. However there is a history of gender as affect residing within the feeling of being in drag. And if we can begin to understand the possibilities of gender

as affect in the 1980s, we can begin to wonder about what it felt like to be a woman wearing trousers in the 1890s as well.

Histories and historians often presume that corporeality and gender go hand in hand, and while it may not always be possible to know how someone felt, it is possible to acknowledge that gender expression and gender identity will always have had the potential to cut through corporeality, and also to intersect with other oppressions. In turn if we tell histories of women that rely on the corporeality of gender for their internal coherency, then we privilege the paradigms for gender that accompanied the hegemony of oppressions from that time, failing to critically engage with gender as a category of analysis, or with the past in its messy entirety. While Suffrage 125 commemorations are demonstrating that there is plenty still to be said about the history of women in Aotearoa New Zealand, it is important to step beyond the corporeality of gender in such depictions, to question colonial legacies in gender, and to find ways to tell histories of gender as more than just the history of bodies.

Nadia Gush is currently working on a project investigating the social lives of lesbians, gay, bi-sexual, and queer women living in Aotearoa New Zealand during the 1980s. She is an honorary research associate at the University of Waikato.
In keeping with the theme suggested by its title, ‘Leading Ladies’, a survey exhibition held at Titirangi’s Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Art Gallery, shone a spotlight on early female ceramic practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand. The exhibition, curated by ceramics historian Moyra Elliott, presented a welcome introduction to a generation of makers frequently overlooked by recent craft histories.

Four of the five women showcased in this exhibition — Elizabeth Matheson, Olive Jones, Briar Gardner and Elizabeth Lissaman — were recognised during their lifetimes as pivotal in the local development of ceramics. They were makers, but also catalysts for a broader scene, working actively to promote pottery to others at a time when the medium was first coming to public awareness. Through this exhibition Elliott details how Jones and Matheson, for example, presented a pottery demonstration together for six months at the 1940 New Zealand Centennial Exhibition, providing many visitors with their first exposure to ceramics. Part of a later generation of makers, Len Castle was famously inspired to take up ceramics at age ten when he saw Olive Jones undertaking a pottery demonstration while he was attending the Auckland Easter show.1

The exhibition frames early- to mid-twentieth-century making in terms of the Arts and Crafts movement, which mobilised artists and artisans in reaction to industrialisation. While the movement originated in the United Kingdom, it quickly spread through colonial networks. Elliott notes in her wall text that Arts and Crafts philosophy was a prominent force when New Zealand art schools first opened in the late nineteenth century. However, although an Arts and Crafts influence is clearly visible within the exhibition, several of the women can also be positioned within Modernism, which began to have effect in New Zealand art and architecture from the late 1930s onwards.2 This is most apparent in the work of the fifth woman included in ‘Leading Ladies’ — Minnie F. White — known primarily as a painter and often overshadowed by her cousin, the better-known artist Lois White. Because of this, Elliott’s modest showcase of six of White’s striking art deco jugs and vases came as a

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bit of a surprise. White is included in the exhibition on the basis of curatorial
discovery of these six vases in two private collections. According to art
historian Linda Tyler, White’s clay work was designed in conjunction with a
range of related textiles for the home. White was among a number of artists
active in the 1930s who supplemented their income with pottery, which she
had first learnt at the Arts and Crafts-influenced Elam School of Art in 1910.
However the simple, angular forms and abstract designs evoke Art Deco and
emphasise its association with Cubism. Elliott suggests in the accompanying
wall texts that White may have been exposed to new ideas of modernism by
sharing studio space with other artists in the 1930s, and encountering younger
practitioners. Her aesthetic here feels fresh and dynamic, discernibly bolder
and more abstract than in her paintings, raising the possibility that she found a
freedom in craft that was missing in the higher stakes arena of painting.

If White was the star of the show for this reviewer, there was much to enjoy
elsewhere. No dates are provided for any of the work, but the majority of the
pieces seem to echo the potters’ prime periods of making, from the 1920s to
the 1950s. The installation on a series of boxed shelves emphasises the
domestic and intimate nature of the pottery. It is a simple device but effective,
although as a reviewer has noted elsewhere it does mean viewing the works
from a single angle.

The rest of the work fits more clearly within the Arts and Crafts realm,
although Gardner and Jones perhaps also bridge the gap to Modernism with
their more stripped-back design aesthetic. Elizabeth Lissaman’s dainty pieces
feature whimsical slip decorations of animals frolicking across plates and
vases. They appear the most dated of all the work, almost pedestrian to
temporary tastes, but still charming. Lissaman is now the subject of a long
overdue monograph publication positioning her as a major early figure. Like
Lissaman, Elizabeth Matheson’s ‘flower frogs’ — small animals with holes

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3 ‘From the collection: Minnie F. White, Australian Landscape, c.1950’,
<https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/creative/about/art-collection-and-galleries/university-
art-collection/Minnie%20F.%20White,%20Australian%20Landscape,%201950.pdf>.
Emma Bugden.

enabling flower display — might appear twee to the contemporary viewer, but would have resonated with buyers of the time.

Briar Gardner’s extraordinary skill as a colourist is apparent, and the wall text reveals her enthusiasm for glaze experimentation, often combining multiple glazes in a single piece. In a remarkable pairing, the fleshy pink streaks of one flower vase contrasted sumptuously with the inky blue of the vase alongside it. Gardner’s forms are more sculptural than those of Lissaman and Matheson, with a wider range of shapes and a pleasing weighting and relationship between bottoms and tops, bases and lips. Olive Jones, too, is shown to be a sublime colourist, with a particular strength in integrating decoration into the object’s form, rather than tacking it on.

Accompanying the wall of pots is an equally dominant wall of text panels, which, in size and graphic style, take a museological rather than white-cube approach, with photos of each maker embedded into the panels. If I were to criticise the exhibition it would be on the grounds that the scale of these panels rather shouts at the viewer. Arguably, though, the content is worth shouting about and I enjoyed reading the texts. Alongside the pots and the texts, there is a DVD with rare footage of Briar Gardner demonstrating the full cycle of potting, from clay preparation to unpacking the fired kiln.

If four of these makers are founding members of the ceramics scene in New Zealand, pivotal to its development, do they need rediscovery? The answer is clearly yes. It is true that Matheson, Lissaman, Gardner and Jones were noted at the time, and have continued to be acknowledged through small exhibitions and brochure catalogues over the years. However, their visibility has been obscured by the second wave of ceramic pioneers in New Zealand, boosted first by the rise of public gallery curation and latterly by the secondary market as the forum for establishing a craft history.

This second wave of makers — such as Len Castle, Mirek Smisek and Barry Brickell — gave prominence to the anglo-oriental tradition (Shoji Hamada by way of Bernard Leach) and quickly became embedded as the new pioneers of New Zealand pottery. This narrative was founded on the notion of the solo practitioner, often based outside the city, creating a practice literally grounded in the potter’s site. Such a narrative, of course, runs counter to the experience
of many women potters, who might be living in the suburbs, perhaps with a husband and family, and for whom making must be juggled alongside the demands of home life. It is significant then that, as Elliott points out, at least three of the five women profiled here remained single throughout their lives.

Elliot and Damian Skinner’s book, *Cone Ten Down: Studio Pottery in New Zealand, 1945–1980* is a significant counterweight to the anglo-oriental narrative which has dominated public gallery exhibitions in recent years, and this exhibition may be read as an extension of the book’s thesis. It is notable that ‘Leading Ladies’ not only focuses on women’s work, but takes the form of a survey rather than a series of individual monographs. This decision shows an understanding of the wider context and conditions — social and artistic — within which the work was produced. What remains is an opportunity for more sustained research, including publications, on each maker. The exhibition, while providing elements of visual and biographical information, foregrounds a bigger question around pioneering female practitioners.

In that sense, ‘Leading Ladies’ aims to undertake two key roles, the first reclamatory and the second reformist. The first reinstates lost histories, seeking to rebalance the ledger with the value of Gardner, Matheson, Lissamann and Jones in the development of New Zealand ceramics. Beyond that it seeks to create a new narrative, by foregrounding the work of White, a practitioner whose impact on the ceramics scene at the time was negligible, but whose importance now as a maker of merit, argues the exhibition, should be reconsidered. The survey format enables such comparative shifts in perception, where five discreet showcases would not.

As such, the exhibition is speculative as well as informative, with White acting as proxy for the larger notion of unknown makers, acutely signaled by the wall text heading: ‘There were more…’. Further evidence of what we do not know is supplied with the intriguing image of an unknown female potter demonstrating at the wheel, accompanied by a caption which notes it was ‘reproduced in the Official Record of the New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition, Dunedin, 1925–1926’. The strength of the show is

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not just in what it presents, but what it suggests about the gaps in our histories, and the need for further, ongoing work by historians and curators.

Emma Bugden is co-founder and editor of Small Bore Books, archive publishing for art and design, and is currently a PhD candidate at Victoria University of Wellington.
Deborah Conway’s 1991 album *String of Pearls* was a soundtrack to my nascent feminism — and undergraduate degree — in the early 1990s. Like the title track of Conway’s album, Bronwyn Labrum’s edited collection *Women Now: The Legacy of Female Suffrage* reminds me of my mother. One of the strongest women I have ever known, my mother has given me her own string of pearls, and Labrum’s book offers a similar gift to all readers in 2018. *Women Now* is a delightful book. The chapters truly are pearls; stories begun with grit, then strung together to form something beautiful and unique, yet shared and shareable. Objects from Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa’s collection focus each chapter and bind the book as a whole. Beginning with the cover of ‘The Franchise Report’ of 1893 (published in Invercargill for the Women’s Christian Temperance Union), the authors then thread their ideas through badges and tea-towels, a postage stamp, the Pill, posters, and poi, and culminate in discourse on a ‘pussy hat’. These things are simultaneously the seeds of ideas, and also their fruit. And of course, small things are never as small or as peripheral as they seem, and the personal is never strictly private — or isolated. This book demonstrates that it is our connections as people to other people that keep us from disappearing: strings of pearls that exist between activisms and lives spoken and lives past and lives present and lives, above all, lived. This is a book anchored in real experiences and ongoing realities, and the pleasure and pain that is both collective and personal.

For a book that stresses the importance of women collectively, presenting a multiplicity of voices, the cover design seems incongruous. It is white and on one side depicts a solitary, apparently white, youthful woman. Heroism is a trait that has traditionally only been attributed to woman, not women, whereas the everyman can by virtue of his gender always be a hero. The collective actions of women have historically often been downplayed, if not downright ignored. The actions of those women we remember are deemed to be ‘exceptional’ for their gender, which is another way of marginalising the courage and capacity of women. That the ‘everywoman’ depicted on the cover is white by default is problematic. That she is young is perhaps a nod to what she inherits from the women who have come before — but that she is on her own is at odds with the collective activism of women and the exchanges between contributors and previous generations that take place on the pages within. *Women Now* uses objects through which to refract the stories and trajectories of women’s lives. The book itself is an object — and the cover matters.
The first book in Te Papa Press’ ‘Thinking about…’ series, Labrum has pulled together a wonderful edited collection. This series links to the museum’s aspiration to be a ‘safe place for difficult conversations’. All of the chapters are engaging, accessible, and definitely provocative of conversation(s). Labrum’s own introduction is a skilful insertion of this small but important book, not only into commemorative places and spaces, but into wider contemporary concerns, events, politics, protests and discussions.

Barbara Brookes begins her contribution to the collection posing interesting questions about Kate Sheppard’s ‘Franchise Report of 1893’. The biblical power of patriarchy is upended in the chapter’s title ‘The Power of the Word’. The power of word of mouth has always been important for women, and here we see it linked to the power of the pamphlet. The ‘Franchise Report’ is also important as material evidence of further work and knowledge that gaining the vote was the beginning, rather than the end of struggles for women’s equality. In the following chapter Sue Bradford uses Frances Parker’s ‘Women’s Social and Political Union Medal for Valour’ to draw attention to the lengths to which women have had to go in the past in their attempts to gain social and political equality. Women’s lives and livelihoods have been risked in ways that would be much more celebrated if a part of, for example, the ANZAC canon. Bradford’s chapter may also be read as an ongoing call to arms to deal with the inequalities bequeathed to us by years of neoliberalism, with impacts on education, housing and the environment. Her comments on Materia Turei’s 2017 vilification are particularly poignant.1

This segues neatly into Morgan Godfery’s chapter on Pākehā artist Margaret Butler’s envisioning of the New Zealand nation as a Māori woman. Through Butler’s sculpture, La Nouvelle Zélande, possibilities for reorienting our perspectives on the past, the present and the future become apparent. For Godfrey, ‘La Nouvelle Zélande is asking what it might mean to look upon the country not as men do but as Māori women do’.2 We can reorient our perspectives on time and on history and on meaning through Te Ao Māori, as within Te Ao Māori women are both the beginning and the end.

2 Ibid., p.58.
A 1968 postage stamp commemorates the 75th anniversary, not of women’s suffrage, but of ‘universal’ suffrage as is pointedly discussed by Sandra Coney. The image is ‘redolent of order and calm’ and perpetuates the early twentieth-century myth that women had not fought hard for the right to vote, but had simply been gifted the privilege by benevolent men. The 1968 commemorations also seem like an attempt to minimise the struggles of the ‘second wave’ of feminists, which parallels Coney’s own life and struggles as a young mother determined to attend university. In the following chapter, ‘Playing with Fire’, Fiona Kidman considers social mores, sex, and the ramifications of women’s access (or lack thereof) to reliable contraception and safe abortion. Writing this review in late October 2018, Kidman’s chapter holds particular resonance, as the Law Commission is currently handing down its report on proposed changes to law that would make abortion a health issue, not a legal issue.

The idea that ‘Women can do anything’ in a world where many workplaces enshrine the structural privileges of men in the workplace, is an often barely-camouflaged trap. Holly Walker discusses her painful journey when, as an MP, she gave birth to her first child and suddenly ‘discovered [her] limits’. What Walker’s chapter poignantly explores is whether the limits were her own, or whether they were the limits and limitations of parliament as a work place. Walker never shies from her own conflicting ideas around women ‘having it all’ and worries about what she will tell her own daughter.

In ‘At the Forefront’ Ben Shrader interprets the 1981 Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand through a less sophisticated analytic framework than I would have liked. Drawing on a badge that reads ‘Women Against the Tour’, Shrader discusses the young women in his orbit who were involved in protests and activism. This chapter is not weak of itself, but is the weakest link in the collection. Although not lacking in passion, perhaps the need for more nuanced constructions of masculinity, and political activism, could have been more explicitly stated.

Golriz Ghahraman muses on the absurdity of the ongoing discrimination people face in the workplace, where a pay gap is synonymous with a penis gap — as is evidenced by the satirical tea towel produced by the New Zealand

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3 Ibid., p.100.
Clerical Workers’ Union in 1985. Ghahraman unpicks the pressure put on women and girls by an ‘assumption of equality’, which is even more strained by the ‘lived experience for women of colour, including migrant, Pasifika and Māori women’ where the gap becomes an abyss.4

Megan Whelan’s humour stands out in her chapter which begins with a poster (and a tea towel) before considering the issues of heroism, gender and public statuary. Whelan wears a purple camellia tattoo because ‘we are so bad at commemorating the women who shaped our nation’ — and she is right, unless that woman is Queen Victoria.5 The giggles that precede and overlay the issues of commemoration central to this chapter do nothing to diminish the importance of Whelan’s discussion, and like much comedy, instead serve to provide depth and shade.

Tina Makeriti’s discourse on poi as a transmitter of movement and stories — and above all agency — is as transfixing as listening to the sound of poi in motion. The embodied realities of racial mythologies are raw and powerfully told in this short piece where Makeriti moves from poi, to Parihaka, and back to poi again. Shining though this chapter is one of the most important assertions of this collection: ‘[I]t is the stories we believe ourselves that matter. The stories we give light to, the stories we refuse’; one of the most heartfelt and important refusals is that of a purely binary narrative.6

The currency of women’s activism is realised in Charlotte Macdonald’s musings on the $10 note, which has, since 1991, featured Kate Sheppard’s likeness. While Sheppard’s visage upon currency is homage to her historical importance, Macdonald observes that it also serves as a reminder of the ‘long and continuing search for women’s economic independence and equality in Aotearoa New Zealand’.7

Grace Taylor, poet and performer, rounds the collection off with her musings on the ‘pussy hat’. This chapter is resistance in the writing and the reading. It is a poignant critique of the boxes that any ‘ism’ puts us in, but also of the dominance of white middle-class ideologies on discourses of activism and

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4 Ibid., p.127.
5 Ibid., p.142.
6 Ibid., p.161.
7 Ibid., p.171.
equality. As Taylor reflects, ‘a pink pussy hat as the symbol of empowerment to elevate women’s rights and the commodification of our body parts speaks of exclusivity to me’. Rather than ‘feminism’ as a label, Taylor instead shifts her focus to how she can ‘honour and empower [herself] as a woman and mother in ways that also empower others’: with connections and caring and compassion.

I cannot isolate a favourite chapter in this collection. Each one sang to me of connected truths and ongoing work. I thoroughly recommend Women Now as a text undergraduates can dip in and out of, teachers can assign either in parts or as a whole to generate and engage with vital conversations, and just purely as a pleasure to read. It is reminiscent of Conway’s song, and makes me feel the weight of the world on my shoulders, while also reminding me that I have my (mother’s) string of pearls.

Sara Buttsworth is a Senior Tutor in history at the University of Auckland, and has specific interests in issues relating to gender and popular representation. She coordinates two courses for the Tertiary Foundations Certificate, and in 2019 will be co-convenor of the first year course in the Arts Scholars Programme.

8 Ibid., p.188.
9 Ibid., p.196.
Nadia Gush.

Gender and Heritage: Performance, Place and Politics, is an international publication presenting the work of geographically diverse authors. Coinciding with ‘Suffrage 125’ celebrations and the accompanying (if short-lived) rise in attention given to women’s history within the heritage sector, this publication is particularly pertinent for Aotearoa New Zealand historians. Gender and Heritage prompts heritage professionals to safeguard gender within historical narratives, displays, and collections. Acting as introduction, the substantial literature review that launches the edited collection establishes that gender is the fundamental critique of the modern era, albeit one that has been engaged with by heritage industries only with reluctance. Unswayed by this lack of interest in the field at large, Ross J. Wilson observes that this affords critical gender heritage studies the advantage of speaking from a liminal space, where it is capable of disrupting norms, and of creating change. For those working in Aotearoa New Zealand, this collection becomes a reminder that women’s and gender history must continue beyond Suffrage 125 commemorations, where an otherwise short-lived exhibition might instead create a legacy through subsequent women’s and gender-based histories moving forward. For local practitioners, this collection encourages us to ask: why stop now?

Following Wilson’s introduction, the collection is divided into three substantive sections, beginning with the sub-theme of ‘Performance’. In ‘Johanna, Moa and I’m every lesbian’, Bodil Axelsson and David Ludvigsson consider three heritage walks in Norrköping’s industrial area, and the walks’ respective presentations of gender, sexuality, and class. The authors observe that walks which do not specifically foreground sexuality or class implicitly create heterosexual space which smooths out class differences and oppressions. In chapter three Cristina Clopot and Máiréad Nic Craith draw out the tensions between patriarchal traditions and the renegotiation of women’s heritage roles within those traditions, demonstrating the tension between contemporary gender politics and historical accuracies. This is followed by Anneli Palmsköld and Johanna Rosenqvist’s chapter on the history of crochet as a craft undertaken outside of heritagisation processes in Sweden, where the authors draw on Judith Butler’s theory of performative gender to consider the active making of craftwork, and the making of crochet in particular. In chapter five Smilla Ebeling highlights the ways in which heteronormativity is reproduced in natural history displays, with a focus on four regional museums.
The second section of this edited collection unfurls beneath the subheading of ‘Place’, beginning with an exploration of gender as embedded within founding heritage, in the case of the *Mayflower*’s journey from Plymouth, England, to Plymouth Massachusetts. In this chapter Anna Scott usefully compares the ways in which heritage is constructed in both sites, focussing on the masculine narrative embedded in the term ‘Pilgrim fathers’ as it is used in England. Scott notes that there is much more to be done, especially in terms of the discourses accompanying the tourist industry, when it comes to re-introducing women, and critical gender analysis, into pilgrim histories. In ‘The Fleshyness of Absence’ Arndís Bergsdóttir and Sigurjón Baldur Hafsateinsson reflect on the ‘hidden man’s penis’ at the Phallological Museum of Iceland. From a perspective of feminist museology the authors argue for an absence that is not positioned as the opposite of presence, nor as something that must be filled, but rather as presence in its own right, like an invisible human. Chapter eight analyses the Three Dikgosi Monument in Botswana as an example of hegemonic masculinity, demonstrating that social and cultural norms create the possibilities for gendered heritage so much so that a monument to the Three Dikgosi wives would not be possible. Unfortunately this and the subsequent chapter made it into print with a number of typographical and grammatical errors which at times resulted in text that was difficult to follow.

In chapter nine Viv Golding offers a theoretically dense discussion of creolising feminist pedagogy in relation to collaborative work undertaken at Pitt Rivers Museum. In chapter ten, Joni Lariat advocates for the use of feminist standpoint theory and anti-racist queer studies while exploring the divergences between archival history and lived heritage with regard to cultural heritage in Sabang, Indonesia.

‘Politics’, the last substantive section of the book, begins with Astrid von Rosen, Monica Sand and Marsha Meskimmon reflecting on their collaborative research project concerning the Gothenburg dance group ‘Rubicon’. In this chapter the authors draw attention to the ways in which intangible heritage — like dance — benefit from multi-modal, multi-disciplinary methods, which are for example, dialogic in nature. Also in this section Janet Blake considers the intersections between gender and international law with regard to UNESCO’s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Blake reminds us that gender is a dynamic social and cultural phenomenon that gains meaning through context, asserting that the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage requires the safeguarding of the gender diversity associated with those
diverse heritages. In a chapter that documents the experiences of women working at the American Sparrows Point Steel Mill, Michelle L. Stefano demonstrates the pride and resilience that form the narrative of these workers, acknowledging that working-class histories are seldom well-told within official heritage sites.

The third section of the book also contains the chapter that I found to be the most thought-provoking for an Aotearoa New Zealand audience — Joanne Sayner and Rhiannon Mason’s ‘Gendering ‘the other Germany’’ — as well as the only chapter that takes New Zealand as a case study — Andrew Gorman-Murray and Scott McKinnon’s “Does it matter?”. In ‘Gendering ‘the other Germany” Sayner and Mason analyse the way gender is present, and presented, at the Berlin Memorial Centre, with particular focus on the permanent exhibition ‘Resistance against National Socialism’. This chapter reminds curators who might be primarily concerned with racialised narratives of horror and grief, that gender is an equally powerful mechanism for understanding methods and knowledges of historical resistance. While the exhibition at the centre of this chapter is criticised for limited acknowledgment of women’s participation in resistance, the chapter itself — like others in this collection — acknowledges the significance of women as supporters of male action, while simultaneously reminding us that narratives must be written in ways that do not marginalise women’s contributions to broader historical changes. I wondered as I read this, if the principle of elevating supporting roles might shape future efforts to commemorate women’s suffrage in Aotearoa New Zealand, where the female suffragist and her ‘brothers’, both metaphorical and literal, might be positioned equitably in historical commemorations, resulting in a representation of suffrage as neither gift nor fight, but something else, something beyond the traditional paradigm of exchange.

While I could see fruitful dialogue between ‘Gendering ‘the other Germany’” and heritage practice in Aotearoa New Zealand, I struggled with “Does it matter?” where Gorman-Murray and McKinnon draw on research undertaken towards a project concerning the ‘LGBT experiences of disasters in Australia
For a chapter in a collection that foregrounds gender, this was unexpectedly loose in its gender analysis/gender framework, somehow presuming that ‘queer’ was a satisfactorily gender-based catch-all, that there was no need to differentiate between the experiences of lesbians, transpeople, and gay men, all of whom equally form the subjects of the chapter without further gendered distinction. As someone familiar with the ‘queer heritage’ of Christchurch, and the ‘queer memories’ of the 1980s, I was surprised to see the focus was disproportionately on Christchurch’s lost urban heritage, thereby centring the (male) sex clubs and gay bars prominent in the 1980s and 1990s over and above the city’s lost suburban heritage; the domestic houses from which queer women might have congregated in the 1980s, not to mention the now-restored Ilam Homestead with its Parker-Hulme infamy. There was no sense in which these alternate scales of queer spatial heritage were explained as unexpected absences from the participant narratives.

In the concluding chapter, Wera Grahn identifies what is required for museums to successfully incorporate gender into displays, including a supportive management team and curators with qualifications in gender-related areas. Grahn also draws on the Swedish Research Council’s recommendations for the inclusion of gender in funding applications to identify the seven levels of gender awareness in museum exhibitions, where ‘gender blindness’ is ranked at the first level, and ‘a gender/intersectional focus’ takes out the top spot. For anyone wishing to raise the level of gender awareness in their own institution’s exhibitions, this concluding chapter acts as a handy guide.

Against the backdrop of the 125 Suffrage celebrations it is easy to imagine that New Zealand is one of the regions at the global forefront of gender-based museology. However the glow of 1893 will fade. A concerted effort must be made by Aotearoa New Zealand public historians to continue to centre the ‘liminality’ of gender within their heritage practices. Engaging with issues raised by this book will be a good place to start.

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Linde Egberts’ *Chosen Legacies: Heritage in Regional Identity* is of particular interest to anyone using the past and negotiating group identity creation — especially heritage professionals, heritage institutions, artists, intellectuals, tourism boards, architects and spatial designers, local and regional governments. As Egberts’ book provides material from regions and sources previously only readily available in Dutch and German, *Chosen Legacies* is especially useful for those of us situated within the Anglosphere. I recommend this text to academics and politicians engaging with the construction of regional identity.

Through three different forms of analysis, using four different European regions as case studies, Egberts successfully analyses how heritage functions in the construction of identity on a regional level. Her work is impressive, thoughtful, offering a multi-perspectival analysis of the role of heritage in regional identity. At a deeper level this book is about how the use of the past shapes the future — how selectiveness and what to study and what to emphasise and what to interpret are political choices, and inevitably involve appropriation, legitimation and provide direction for future action. I was very definitely reminded of Croce’s dictum, as well as Orwell. ¹

*Chosen Legacies* has five chapters. The first provides the conceptual basis of the work through useful historiographies of region, identity, heritage, history and memory. Egberts includes here a concise critique of Pierre Nora et al’s antidemodernist contribution to discussions around heritage resulting in ‘confusion regarding the meaning of both terms [history and memory] rather than making their distinction workable’.² Egberts characterises her own approach to heritage as ‘moderately structuralist’ while recognising that ‘authenticity and a strong connection to the past are important as without them heritage could

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¹ Often rendered as ‘All history is contemporary history’ and an argument for the relevance of each history in its moment, this translation of Croce’s dictum comes closest with ‘past fact does not answer to a past interest, but to a present interest’, ‘every true history is contemporary history’ and ‘contemporaneity is not the characteristic of a class of histories… but an intrinsic characteristic of every history’. Benedetto Croce, ‘History and Chronicle’, in *History: Its Theory and Practice*, trans. by Douglas Ainslie (New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), pp.12–13; ‘Who controls the past ran the Party slogan, ‘controls the future; who controls the present controls the past’. George Orwell, 1984, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1999), p.30.

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not exist in any meaningful way. And above all although heritage is constructed in the present it has a history of its own.\(^3\)

The second chapter of this text, ‘Early Medieval Heritage in Present-day European Regions’, is a case study of the use of early medieval heritage in two current European regions — Euregio Meuse-Rhine and Alsace. In this chapter Egberts emphasises how history and heritage are often the sites where authority and power relations are constructed and maintained, noting that *Chosen Legacies* is itself such a site. The Euregio Meuse-Rhine case is a deconstruction of the efforts being made and emphasises political legitimisation of present goals of European community especially in light of the appropriation of Charlemagne. The second case is an assessment of the contemporary role of early medieval heritage in three locations within Alsace. This case illuminates perhaps a situation where some regional identity creation efforts have not been that successful. This case also illuminates the far more successful history of heritage in this location for the purpose of legitimisation — appropriators have frequently rooted their position of power in history ‘by referring to [an often Roman] self-chosen predecessor…. Consequently early mediaeval heritage always includes some use of the past in the past’.\(^4\) This ongoing re-use of the same pieces of the past for different purposes at different times is fascinating in itself, and does reinforce Egberts’ points about the political and contemporary nature of heritage efforts.

The third chapter, ‘Battlefields of Competing Heritage’, analyses ‘canons’ — concise histories ‘often initiated and funded by public authorities’ for the Arnhem-Nijmegen region.\(^5\) This ‘region’ is a very recent creation, only receiving its name in 2006, and efforts to unite it have encountered strong resistance — in part due to the long tradition of the cities of Arnhem and Nijmegen defining themselves against each other. Potted histories of the region and its branding efforts are included in the chapter. The most significant findings from this chapter are around the concept of authenticity — what counts as authentic? The notions of (1) a sense of authentic experience (represented by local petitioners who wanted to see the Valkhof tower of Barbarossa reconstructed — it had been destroyed by the local

\(^3\) Ibid., p.33.
\(^4\) Italics in original. Ibid., p.82.
\(^5\) Ibid., p.90.
government in 1796) and (2) superficial reference to the past (real estate developers who loved the promotional opportunity) were set against (3) authenticity in place, material and the multiple layers of the past (as emphasised by heritage experts). The tower was rebuilt. The third chapter also includes a deeper understanding of the role of othering in identity creation — ‘ordering by bordering’ and how heritage is deployed to reinforce aspirations and define identity.

The fourth chapter, ‘Dynamics of Memory in the Post-industrial Era’, examines memory and industrial heritage in the Ruhr — specifically the Ruhr’s more than five decades of reaction to the ‘sudden death of its heavy industry from 1960’. This chapter in particular demonstrates Egberts’ skill in weaving literature into each case, for some frankly brilliant application of existing theory. Situating the use of heritage and modern mythmaking in identity creation and the *alltagsgeschichte* (history of everyday life) found in the Ruhr in the memory turn of the late twentieth century (the Ruhr might be one of the places this has been most intensely embodied — by 1992 the Ruhr had almost 150 museums), Egberts draws out the complexities around protecting against development versus protecting for development. This is significant. It is something of an article of faith among New Zealanders working to preserve built heritage that the preservation of heritage buildings requires that they be used. Buildings that are ‘lived in’, live. However, one’s position on this issue comes back to one’s philosophy and Egberts manages to present the complex and contradictory way specific events in the Ruhr have been remembered in order to illuminate not just the memory turn, but far more importantly the whole purpose of heritage and history. Through this examination of the instrumental use of the understandings provided by scholarship, this chapter underlines how often the practice of history and heritage have been about the present — specifically ruling, running or at least surviving the present and the future. For much of its history, the study of ‘history’ has been a part of elite education, and heritage has been part of identity creation and self-actualisation — and in this case Egberts demonstrates how that has actually happened at a regional level in a setting that cuts across class, ethnicity and education.
The fifth chapter, ‘Creation Stories, Golden Ages and Shared Traumas’, would be of particular use to authoritarians in general and more hopefully those of us intent on resisting them. It presents the findings of the study: something of a ‘how to’ guide for the construction of identities through stories, symbols, space and othering — concluding that regional identities are constructs but can only be sustainable when inhabitants integrate them into their lives. Egberts outlines what she has learned about how to use heritage, and how very political it inevitably is — given that the selectivity inherent in any work involves appropriation, legitimation and the direction of future action whether one intends it or not. Egberts states that ultimately heritage, along with disciplines such as spatial planning and design, is about shaping the future. This is of particular significance for historians because history is also such a discipline, and it is the authenticity that history can provide that can either legitimise or challenge any heritage effort.

Mark Smith is Operations Manager at Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust.