



NZJPH 7

NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HISTORY

TWENTYTWENTY

COVER IMAGE

Leafa Wilson/Olga Krause *Ich Heisse Olga Krause, Deutsche Kuenstlerin* 2005
Poster print (detail). Image reproduced in full below.



The life-long work of performance artist Leafa Wilson/Olga Krause began in 2005. These propagandist poster-styled works are loosely based around the Russian Constructivist design aesthetic adopted by the German band 'Kraftwerk'. With both Samoan and German ancestry, the artist reconciles their past and present by creating utopic race relations in the site of their body: I am Olga Krause, German artist (Ich Heisse Olga Krause, Deutsche Kuenstlerin)

GUEST EDITOR

Amelia Williams

EDITOR

Nadia Gush

EDITORIAL ADVISORY GROUP

Giselle Byrnes, Massey University Te Kunenga Ki Purehuroa, Palmerston North.

Catharine Coleborne, University of Newcastle, Australia.

Nadia Gush, Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, Hamilton; University of Waikato Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato, Hamilton.

Stephen Hamilton, Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Australia; Massey University Te Kunenga Ki Purehuroa, Palmerston North.

Bronwyn Labrum, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.

Mark Smith, Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust, Oamaru.

***Past Caring? Women, Work and Emotion,*
Barbara Brookes, Jane McCabe, and Angela Wanhalla eds.
Dunedin, Otago University Press, 2019.**

Charlotte Greenhalgh.

Past Caring? puts women's work and caregiving at the centre of Aotearoa New Zealand's history. In doing so, the collection models a new framework for the nation's past and showcases the significant contributions of gender historians to its history. The volume demonstrates that women's everyday work was vital to the survival of individuals, families, and communities in the past, yet this labour has remained largely invisible and unpaid. By reconsidering the work of caring, its contributors connect New Zealanders' emotional bonds to the material conditions of their lives and their interactions with institutions. Their approach presents fresh perspectives on Aotearoa New Zealand's past and combats many of the frustrating absences and false dichotomies that skew historical accounts of work, family life, and the nation. On finishing the book, I am nowhere near 'past caring' about the obligations, inner lives, and endless work of Aotearoa New Zealand women.

The book's central themes of women's work and caregiving upend the typical organising principles of many Aotearoa New Zealand histories that focus on demographics, politics, and institutions. The authors build a compelling case that their alternative frameworks of gender, work, and emotion reveal more about New Zealanders' everyday lives and how society has functioned here. Barbara Brookes writes that the international historiography of care is institutional due to the perception that 'problematic' lives and 'encounters with the state' have created the 'documentary record' of care (p.11). Following this model, Aotearoa New Zealand historians have paid special attention to social policy, the welfare state, and public debate about the caring professions such as nursing and social work. In contrast, *Past Caring?* focuses on Aotearoa New Zealand women rather than the forces that aimed to regulate their lives. Along the way, the collection displays the promise of the field through its diverse sources — including material culture, photograph albums, oral histories, and films — and inspiring collaborations. A number of authors engage with the intellectual contributions of co-contributors and the influence of older female relatives alike. Heather Devere's account of Annette Baier (1929–2012), Susan Moller Okin (1946–2004), and their pathbreaking scholarship on the ethics of care, provides an entry-point to philosophy at the same time that it raises compelling historical questions about the professional lives of these two influential New Zealanders. In all of these ways, *Past Caring?* fulfils its promise to deliver a new account of Aotearoa New Zealand's past.

Charlotte Greenhalgh.

The volume presents a rich conversation about race, colonisation, and gender that exemplifies its broad vision and collaborative spirit. By telling the life story of her maternal grandmother, Tina Murphy, Melissa Matutina Williams demonstrates that accounts of care, women's lives, and whānau have the potential to rewrite histories of the Aotearoa New Zealand state and Māori families. Williams integrates the local, national, colonial, and familial context of Tina's life from the time of her birth in Whakarapa in 1910. The chapter shines as Williams interweaves her expertise on the region and time period with personal reflections on her grandmother's life. Jane McCabe develops the collection's argument for alternative frameworks for Aotearoa New Zealand history by considering the lives of mixed-race children of British tea planters who were born in northeast India and emigrated to Aotearoa New Zealand and other settler colonies in the 1920s, where they performed ayah care in settler households. McCabe shows that women's night-time care for children in northeast India travelled with younger generations as they entered British institutions, emigrated across oceans, and cared for children in Aotearoa New Zealand households. She reveals the powerful generational effects of family, work, memory, and migration in Aotearoa New Zealand history. Rosemary Anderson uncovers the personal costs of 'public care' through the life of the prominent Cook Islands leader Takau Rio Love who became a public figure in Aotearoa New Zealand when she married Tiwi Love, especially after her husband helped to establish and lead the 28th Māori Battalion. Anderson makes the compelling case that leading women faced an almost impossible 'double duty' to family and to public life. Her point is underlined by the personal and political difficulties that Takau encountered as she carried out patriotic work for both the Cook Islands and Aotearoa New Zealand. Together, these authors argue for an 'expansive definition of justice and care' that advances our understanding of the overlapping effects of race, gender, and colonisation on the public and private lives of women (p.220).

Past Caring? testifies to the unending work and care of Aotearoa New Zealand women, and their vital significance to families, communities, and the nation. Yet women often missed out on the empathy and practical support they needed in their own lives. We learn from Williams about the pressures that urban migration and state policies created for whānau. Angela Wanhalla shows how moral judgements and unequal migration and military policies hurt women who conceived the children of US servicemen during the Second World War. The collection showcases the depth and excitement of the field of

Charlotte Greenhalgh.

gender history in Aotearoa New Zealand. Its impressive authors include established leaders in the field as well as researchers working on short-term contracts and outside academia in museums and libraries. *Past Caring?* shows how collaboration among gender historians can move forward the entire field of Aotearoa New Zealand history. I hope that its contributors get the support and care they need to continue with this excellent work.

Charlotte teaches at the University of Waikato. Her book *Aging in Twentieth-Century Britain* was published in 2018 by the University of California Press. Charlotte is currently researching the history of pregnancy in twentieth-century New Zealand.