Geraldine McDonald (1926–2018) was a pioneer of feminist research and political advocacy in early childhood, and more broadly across the education and public service sectors. She began this work in the mid-1960s, a time when there were no courses on women’s studies and there was little research in education or other social sciences that included women’s experiences and perspectives. Her outspokenness on "women’s issues" was often met with resistance. Her career with NZCER included establishing its Early Childhood Unit and serving as Deputy Director of the organisation.

The contributors to this festschrift are mainly women born during or shortly after the Second World War. In different ways, all have been deeply influenced by Geraldine. Some worked with her as colleagues, in research or writing projects, on committees, in women’s or educational networks, or as members of her family. Others did not know her personally but were influenced by her writing. The book engages with the main themes in her body of work with the aim of protecting it from becoming fragmented, lost, or forgotten. It showcases the originality of Geraldine’s research and illustrates how it informed her own and others’ advocacy work for gender equality. Together, the contributors offer a "generational legacy" of a cohort of post-war feminists’ engagements with education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

For Women and Children: A Tribute to Geraldine McDonald
Edited by Sue Middleton and Helen May

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