



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

G O S S I P

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Grey Lynn
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akcentre@womensz.org.nz

P.O. Box 78 271
Grey Lynn
www.womensz.org.nz
Spring 2005

Centre Hours

Mon to Fri
9am - 4pm

Library also

First Sat of month
11am - 1.30pm

Collective 2005

Abigael Vogt
Alison Greenaway
Anna Witten-Sage
Annalise Myers
Clare Abaffy
Leonie Morris
Lou Renner
Nadine Rae
Paulette Benton-Greig
Sarah Greenaway
Shelley Fraser

Staff

Young Women's Advocate

Anna
youngwomen@womensz.org.nz

Projects Coordinator

Annalise
projects@womensz.org.nz

Centre Coordinator

Leonie
akcentre@womensz.org.nz

Administrator

Elizabeth
admin@womensz.org.nz

Kia ora koutou wahine ma! Greetings from the Women's Centre.

Spring has brought plenty of changes to the Centre this year. **Paulette Benton-Greig** who has been the Centre Coordinator for the last three years has moved on to new challenges as Business Development Manager at Auckland Sexual Abuse Help Foundation. Paulette has done an excellent job and will be sorely missed. It has been a pleasure working with Paulette and we wish her all the best for the future.

Leonie Morris, who was our Projects Coordinator, has moved into the Centre Coordinator position. Leonie's community involvement includes Women against Pornography, working as a trade union organiser, the paid parental leave campaign and three years coordinating the Auckland Peoples Centre. Most of the community education programmes that Leonie used to organise will now be carried out by **Anna Witten-Sage**, our Young Women's Advocate.

We are thrilled to welcome **Annalise Myers** to our staff. Annalise brings to the Centre her experience in community development, health promotion and delivery, and her strong commitment to positive health outcomes for women and their children. In the past Annalise was employed by the West Auckland Women's Centre as their Youth Health Coordinator and her most recent job was at the Bethany Centre supporting young mothers. At the Women's Centre, Annalise will be assisting Anna's work with young women and delivering our SKIP programme. This programme involves promoting positive parenting and effective non-physical discipline strategies to teen and lone mothers.

As part of her work at the Centre, **Anna**, our Young Women's Advocate, is training to be a self-defence tutor. We are very grateful to the Zonta Club of Auckland for helping Anna to take up this exciting opportunity. **Elizabeth Morey**, our Administrator, is back from a wonderful tour of England, France, Turkey and Belgium. We are relieved to have Elizabeth back, providing the oil that keeps the place running smoothly.

Shelley Fraser, a social work student, is currently working at the Centre as part of her training. Shelley has been doing social work here with individual clients and helping to organise the Women's Studies Association Conference (see article on the back page). Shelley finishes with us at the beginning of November, but fortunately has agreed to join our Collective. We also welcome another new Collective member, **Clare Abaffy**. Clare recently shifted here from Christchurch where she was involved in a variety of issues including, pornography, rape and the effects of free trade on women.

AT THE AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE . . .

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

The Centre has a great deal of information about services, programmes and activities offered in the community. We also have contact details for women-friendly doctors, lawyers, natural health practitioners and counsellors. Lesbian activities, events and services are advertised and the *Tamaki Makaurau Lesbian Newsletter* is available.



COUNSELLING

Low cost one-to-one counselling is available at the Centre. All counsellors are professionally trained and supervised. They use a sliding scale of \$30 to \$80 for fees and cater for a diverse range of issues. Please ring the Centre for an appointment.

THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY

An abundant collection of books by women, about women and for women. The library is open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm and on the first Saturday of every month from 11am to 1.30pm. We have a returns box on the porch for outside these times.

HEALTH SERVICES

In conjunction with Well Women's Nursing Services we have now extended our smear tests and breast examinations service to include full consultations on women's health issues such as menopause & PMS. Appointments available at the Centre on Friday mornings once a month. Next available dates are: 4 November and 2 December.

Low cost MASSAGE is now available on Mondays and Tuesdays between 12 noon and 4pm. Cost is a sliding scale between \$20 & \$35. Call for an appointment.

AND room and resources for feminist activism and campaigning, notice boards and advertising space . . .

COURSES AND GROUPS . . .

New this term is our **GRRLZ DIY Stitch 'n' Bitch** workshop, a collaborative effort between Cherry Bomb Comics, a feminist comic book and zine store (<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~cherrybomb/main.html>), and ourselves. This is an opportunity for young women to have a go at different creative techniques including: screen printing, basic pattern making, bookbinding and zine making. We have applied to Auckland Creative Communities for support to enable us to offer this workshop at a fee young women can afford.

Our **Girlie Games Nights** are a huge success. All the women played one board game together and had such fun we have increased the frequency of this event from monthly to fortnightly. We also offer two book clubs, one for young women and one for not so young women, so you now have a choice.

This term we are pleased to offer **self-defence workshops** for all ages: 7-12 years, 13-15 years and one for women. Our free **Solo Mothers Support Group** with a free crèche provides mothers friendship and information in a welcoming environment. Other support groups on offer include: **Walking Back to Happiness**, a **Coming Out Group** for women questioning their sexuality or who want to explore personal issues related to coming out as a lesbian, and **Building a New Life After Separation**.

When I grow up I'm going to
have my own identity...

INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY HARMS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Experts estimate that 60 percent of all time spent on a computer in New Zealand is boys and men watching pornography. What influence does this have on their views of women and of sex?

No studies have been undertaken in New Zealand, but a comprehensive study in the United States found that boys who were frequent consumers of pornography were more accepting of rape myths and violence against women, and were also more likely to say that it was "OK" to hold a girl down and force her to have intercourse.

The development of the internet has made pornography extremely accessible. Pornographic websites contain key search words so that they are frequently inadvertently opened. If you misspell words that children might enter into a search engine like "Disney" you will connect to a pornographic site.

Links to pornography sites are sent as spam. The Women's Centre received one recently with the subject "fresh 9-15 year-old girls". The website contained near-naked young girls in provocative poses. Written on their genitals was "only members may enter here".

The Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act outlaws all child pornography and all sexually violent pornography. Our primary enforcement group, the Censorship Compliance Unit, does a good job, but does not have enough resources to monitor all computer traffic 24/7.

The Women's Centre is concerned that there is plenty of pornography not subject to our censorship laws that spreads harmful messages about women. Women's sexual depiction in pornography, for example, suggests that women are subservient to men and that their role is to sexually serve them. This subjection has implications for women's role in wider society.

A young woman we were working with was exposed to pornography by her brother and step-father. She became a prostitute pimped by her step-father. Becoming a mother at a young age motivated her to seek help from our agency and others. Only through talking to community workers and other young mothers did she realise that she had normalised the starting point of pornography - that her primary role was to perform sexually for men.

Violence, sexual abuse and sexual assault are endemic in New Zealand. One woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner every five weeks. A Department of Justice study found that one in five Kiwi men admitted assaulting their partners in the previous year, and in 2002, 21 percent of women reported having experienced physical or sexual abuse in the previous 12 months.

The Government needs to run a public awareness campaign about the effects of pornography, similar to the anti smoking campaigns. Boys do not realise that pornography influences their sexuality. They can be consuming vast amounts of pornography at a time when they are developing their ideas about sex and absorbing messages that women are objects to be used to provide a sexual service to men.

Report any child pornography or sexually violent pornography to the Censorship Compliance Unit via the ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, Child Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes) website www.ecpat.org.nz.

WELL WOMEN'S CLINIC

Free

Cervical smear tests for women Community Service Card Holders and women who have not had a test in 5 years.

Advice

On managing periods, PMS, menopause, stress incontinence using natural remedies, diet & lifestyle

Consultations \$45.00 (½ hour) for those who do not meet the "free" criteria

Clinics at Auckland Women's Centre
Ph: 376 3227
once a month and all Auckland areas

For more information ph: 523 0263



Feminist Conference in Auckland Next Month

This year's Women's Studies Association Conference is being held at the Auckland University Conference Centre from 25 to 27 November. The keynote speakers are **Helen Moewaka Barnes**, director of Whariki, the largest Maori research group in the country; long-time feminist activist, author and local body politician, **Sandra Coney**; popular New Zealand Herald columnist **Tapu Misa**; and **Farida Sultana**, Founder-Member of Shakti Community Council, which pioneered the ethnic women's refuge movement in New Zealand.

Some of the many interesting papers are:

- How far have we come/might we move forward towards social justice?
- Women studying at Te Wananga O Aotearoa
- Gambling and its effect on Aiga Samoa
- The basics of operating power tools
- An analysis of discourses on prostitution
- "We have seen the enemy and it isn't us": learning from the last twenty years

For more information please see www.womenz.org.nz/wsa/index.html

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MEMBERSHIP FORM:

Name

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Phone (day)(evening).....

Age (optional)

Ethnicity: (optional).....

Signature

Please enclose membership fee (\$5-\$20 sliding scale).
Cheques to Auckland Women's Centre.

The AWC undertakes to collect, use & store information you provide on this form according to the principles of the Privacy Act 1993. The information will be used only for administrative purposes within the Centre.