

sian society and private life should read and I do regret feeling as I do. No doubt Dr Toynbee would find my books just as unsatisfactory in their own way.

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Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives. Edited by Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1994. xv, 368 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-86940-107-7.

IN THE CONCLUDING ESSAY of this collection, Carol Pateman points out that 'votes for women is all too often seen as a rather boring and insignificant matter. On the contrary, it is a fascinating and complex subject . . . that can teach us a great deal about political development and the structure of institutions.' It is a fitting conclusion to a fine collection of articles, reinvigorating and reassessing the campaigns and achievements of women's suffrage in various countries and different periods of time.

Inspired by the importance of the centenary of New Zealand women's victory in gaining the vote, a number of feminist historians gathered for a three-day conference at Victoria University of Wellington in August 1993 to evaluate the historical significance of women's suffrage. This resulting collection contains only 16 of the 54 papers presented but is a strong indicator of the strength and depth of scholarship in the area and the preoccupations of those attending the conference.

Internationalism is the key theme both as a judgement made of turn-of-the-century suffrage campaigns and as a position today from which to assess the significance of those campaigns. Readers are offered comparative histories as a means of re-evaluating significance, timing, representations; to explore the contexts of colonial pasts and post-colonial consequences; to reclaim politics from its dichotomized separation into men's space; and to invite further studies into issues of women's citizenship status.

Despite an unexplained absence of Maori women, it is an impressive collection, thought-provoking, challenging, informative and very interesting to read. Ostensibly organized geographically and thematically into five main parts it is at the same time broadly chronological. Appropriately, given the impetus for the conference, it thereby corrects an Anglo-American bias in the traditional timeline historians have used to chart women's suffrage.

On New Zealand Raewyn Dalziel explores how New Zealand women's suffrage was represented overseas and Patricia Grimshaw revisits her earlier definitive work to examine the paradox of women fighting as women for rights which had been defined as those of men. Placing New Zealand in the context of other American and Australian states where women also got the vote comparatively early, Grimshaw reasserts the primacy of the WCTU in the suffrage campaign and alerts us to the value not only of comparative studies but also to a gendered as well as a woman-centred approach to understanding political reform. The 'close interconnectedness of suffragists and male politicians, the nature of the relationship of women to men assessed widely in these societies is crucial', she writes; why some women campaigned actively for suffrage is an important question but we need also to ask why did enough male politicians decide to support it and why did other non-activist women and men outside parliament offer support and encouragement to the political actors.

Susan Magarey also looks at paradox: in the issue of women suffragists becoming

legislators in South Australia. Women's experience of working as wives and mothers, she argues, emphasized for them essential bodily differences between women and men that made claiming equal rights with men (between bodies of different sexes) paradoxical; and similarly, women's continuing subjection and profoundly unequal economic status made liberal democracy's aspiration to egalitarianism in government paradoxical and impracticable as a form for achieving social justice for women. Instead, she argues, women turned to other non-parliamentary means to bring about change. Ann Curthoys addresses the profoundly difficult and important question of what women and indigenous people can make of philosophical and political traditions which offer ideals of equality and freedom as they also provide a basis for ethnocentric and male-centred politics; Penelope Schoeffel Meleisea points out that the issue for Pacific Island women has not been the struggle to obtain the vote, but to reconcile old political traditions with new forms of democracy. Pointing out the variation in Pacific Island cultures and experiences while also drawing out some commonality (e.g. in the way women are often accorded special responsibility as keepers of traditional culture while men are freed to embrace modern economic activities, education, etc.) she thereby reminds us of the importance of historical specificity in locating changes and their significance.

Jane Rendall looks at a neglected period of British suffragism and the language which located British suffragists within radical and patriotic traditions, thus, as she says, offering us a more complex perspective on citizenship claims than oppositional claims for equality or difference allow. Karen Offen again takes up the paradox contained within women's suffrage; this time, the very late achievement of the vote in France, a country where the issue was articulated earlier than in virtually any other nation in the world and which was the first in Europe to institute universal manhood suffrage. Offen addresses clearly questions of historical significance in the when, how, what and why of French women's suffrage. Yukiko Matsukawa and Kaoru Tachi similarly explore the timing, organizational politics and changing arguments for women's suffrage in Japan, challenging the Americanist assumption that it was the Allied occupation after World War II that got Japanese women the vote by demonstrating the strength and long history of Japanese women's organizing, especially in the WCTU. Asunción Lavrin looks at South America (particularly Uruguay, Chile, Argentina and Colombia) and places the uphill struggle for suffrage, its complex ideology and varied strategies, within the gendered politics of those countries. South American suffragists chose a difficult task, she argues, by assuming the role of ethical nurturing protectors of home values, preserving the distinctiveness of their sex, while simultaneously claiming justice on equal grounds to men. While not changing the political landscape, the proliferation of women into public life as a consequence of suffrage has, she says, 'been nothing short of spectacular'.

Sandra Stanley Holton explores the place of women's friendship and kinship networks in the nineteenth-century trans-Atlantic women's movement to reveal aspects previously invisible to historians; Nancy Cott looks comparatively at Germany and the US to establish the internationalism of turn of the century feminism and Ellen Carol Dubois takes this further, to offer 'a revisionist overview' of previous studies, in arguing that international co-operation was a key feature which gave women suffragists the resources to combat their marginalization in the politics of their own nations, and to argue for women's suffrage as a progressive development rather than a conservative one. Marilyn Lake, Martin Pugh and Johanna Alberti look at citizenship after suffrage in Australia and Britain, where themes of gender and national identity intertwine. All in all, it is a timely, useful and stimulating collection, brought together with an admirable introductory essay by the editors.

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