

Awards, the publication of Paula Ryan's *Fashion Quarterly*, *Cha Cha*, and television series *Gloss*. Alongside the opulent fashions, there was an important androgynous industrial strand, featuring overalls, army pants and oversize shirts. Streetlife (later Helen Cherry) epitomised this style. Patrick Steele, Barbara Lee, Kostantina Moutos and Keith Matheson were prominent names. Economic reform led to the demise of the domestic apparel industry. Yet New Zealand designer labels were on a course to success.

Building upon the 1980s, the 1990s was a 'Search for a Style' which saw Auckland emerge as the 'powerhouse' of New Zealand fashion, and Trade New Zealand encouraging overseas exporting in a decade when imported garments flooded the domestic market. *The Dress Circle* culminates with the 2000s as 'Our Fashion Moment', which saw the start of the much-hyped New Zealand Fashion Week in 2001. Helen Clark donned New Zealand designer garments and gave fashion an intellectual edge.

Still, the fashion of the 2000s has a decidedly down-home look to it. Would many garments still be appropriate for the theatre dress circle? There's a casual, outdoorsy look to an industry that's proudly urbane, as the top of the fashion industry design for chain stores.

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Dining Out: A History of the Restaurant in New Zealand. By Perrin Rowland. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2010. 280pp. NZ price: \$59.99. ISBN 978-1-86940-464-2.

DINING OUT DESCRIBES THE HISTORY of the restaurant in New Zealand from the 1870s until the present day, and provides a gentle corrective to the dominant narrative of the history of public eating in New Zealand — namely that until the advent of licensing in 1961, New Zealanders were restricted to and largely content with a bland diet of 'plain meat and three vege' when they ate out in the limited venues that were available. New Zealanders were saved from the 'Dark Ages of wowserism' (p.3) by pioneering restaurateurs who both produced and met the desires of an increasingly sophisticated public (as demonstrated by the desire and ability to drink wine with meals) until local restaurants achieved international standards. Rowland suggests that this narrative circulates because fine dining 'does not easily fit with the broad accounts of New Zealand history that regularly emphasizes equality, rural life, ruggedness and practicality' (p. 3). Moreover, this story parallels another widespread narrative about New Zealand national identity — of pioneer restaurateurs 'throwing off New Zealand conformity and colonial cringe to develop forms of culture (and eating) that are both distinctly Kiwi but also world-class' (p.3).

By contrast, Rowland describes a long and rich history of public eating, in which transformations in where and what people ate, and what that experience meant to them, were connected to similar international trends. The earliest public eateries emerged in the 1850s, and by the 1860s ranged from cafés and luncheon rooms, to hotel dining rooms and restaurants, such as the City Buffet in Dunedin, whose food, in 1863, was prepared under the direction of 'an experienced Parisian Artiste' (p.16) and which boasted a 'Parisian Hydrostatic Percolator' (p.16) so that patrons could enjoy the finest coffee. Chinese restaurants also appeared in Dunedin and Auckland at this time, and contemporary newspapers provided descriptions of the food, as well as instructions on how to eat it. In the following decades, an extensive and varied restaurant scene emerged in New Zealand. Rowland describes this as 'The Golden Age of restaurants', where the emphasis was on 'abundance and ostentation' (p.89). Alcohol was consumed in restaurants in these decades, but liquor laws were changed in 1917 owing to pressure

from the temperance movement. From this point, licences were effectively restricted to hotels. According to Rowland, this did not result in the demise of restaurants, as the common narrative suggests. On the contrary, trends in restaurants matched wider social changes, and provided an experience which fitted the new values of abstemiousness, refinement and respectability.

Rowland's discussion of dining out during the war years also provides a challenge to the story that the presence of American troops produced greater sophistication in the restaurant scene. Most GIs hailed from rural backwaters, and New Zealand's cities were likely to have provided them with their first taste of urban life. What they wanted were familiar foods from home — coffee, burgers, doughnuts and milkshakes. And while the American presence certainly increased the popularity of these foods, they were already widely available and appreciated.

Post-war New Zealand saw further transformations in the restaurant scene, with less formal styles of dining such as milk bars and coffee lounges increasing in popularity. Moreover, in line with international trends, it again became fashionable to consume alcohol with meals. Restaurants met this demand in a variety of ways, despite continued licencing restrictions. In some cases customers bought their own alcohol with them; in others it was kept for regulars, and a few places sold wine. Such restaurants were raided by police, and in some cases customers helped pay the ensuing fines. In 1961, as a result of public pressure, laws were changed and restaurants could apply for licences. These were rare because of the lengthy and complicated application process, the kind of food that was required to be served (a minimum of two courses per customer), and the standards and décor that needed to be met (one coat hook per customer and smooth walls were mandatory). As a result, many restaurants continued the illegal BYO tradition.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed an explosion in the number and variety of restaurants; the food and the dining experience were strongly influenced by international trends. This period also saw the beginnings of a New Zealand cuisine, which emerged much more fully in the following decades. The final chapter of the book is entitled 'Coming of Age', and describes a local gastronomic scene that is 'appreciated for, and reflective of, its own sense of culture and tradition' (p.237). *Dining Out* shows how restaurants have contributed to — and reflected — changes and continuities in society throughout New Zealand's post-settler history. By doing so, the book demonstrates the role of public eating in the construction of national identity.

The revisionist restaurant history that *Dining Out* presents is supported by wide-ranging and detailed data. It is well written and very well produced, and the numerous photographs of interiors and the reproductions of menus provide fascinating insights into changing fashions in food, clothing and décor. *Dining Out* provides a welcome addition to the small but growing literature on New Zealand culinary history and also contributes to the now extensive literature on the history of popular culture.

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Abortion Then & Now. New Zealand Abortion Stories from 1940 to 1980. By Margaret Sparrow. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2010. 304pp. NZ price: \$50.00. ISBN 978-0-864736-32-1.

MARGARET SPARROW'S COLLECTION of abortion stories, amassed through interviews and letters, is an important contribution to the growing literature on the history of abortion in New Zealand. Most of this research is found in unpublished theses, so the publication of Sparrow's work is important as it brings the history of abortion to a much wider