



Auckland Women's Centre

Ko Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

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Disturbing Gender Imbalance in National Design Awards

By Katherine McAlpine



Photo credit: Michelle Jones

In September, Auckland Feminist Action (AFA) joined the fight against design discrimination in Aotearoa. In collaboration with Designers Speak (Up) and their supporters, AFA protested outside the Best Design Awards held at the Viaduct Events Centre. The protest foregrounded the Action 40/3 campaign instigated by artist Catherine Griffiths by bringing attention to the gender imbalance in these awards and the design industry as a whole. During the last 20 years, 40 of the Best Awards have gone to men and only 3 to women!

The protest raised awareness and set the tone for the ongoing conversation around diversity in the NZ design community.

It was inclusive, focused, coordinated, colourful and determined. Many of the Best Awards attendees stopped to talk to the protesters, took 40/3 badges, thanked the protesters for their activism and promised to attend the

diversity forums the Designers Institute of NZ have hastily arranged for October. Some did avoid eye contact or looked confronted but many clapped and cheered.

The protest was live streamed and watched by members of the design community in Amsterdam, amongst other places. AFA brought a feminist analysis to the exercise, plus direct action experience and confidence, as this activity was outside the comfort zone of many of the designers. The ensuing Stuff article brought the issue to the attention of a wider audience

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/107303072/feminist-403-protesters-demand-action-at-design-awards-in-auckland>

AFA welcomes new members. Come along to a meeting – on the first Wednesday of the month from 7 – 9pm at Auckland Women's Centre, or email Katherine and Caryn: aucklandfeministaction@gmail.com

Learn more about Designers Speak (Up)

<https://designersspeakup.nz> ■

Strength in Diversity - He Toa Takitini, NCW's Conference

By Sylvia Barnes

The theme of the National Council of Women's recent Conference was He Toa Takitini – Strength in Diversity. This theme was thoroughly expressed throughout the conference with Māori, Pacific, Asian, migrant, refugee women, women with disabilities, and rainbow women well represented amongst the conference presenters.

Getting down to work, the participants discussed and passed the following remits:

1. Acknowledging and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
2. Support for effective pay equity legislation.
3. The need for education on family violence prevention.
4. Calling on the Government to make abortion a healthcare issue, not a criminal matter.
5. Recognising the importance of gender equity in all sporting codes.
6. Support for more work on climate change mitigation and adaption.

At the end of the first day there was an evening cocktail function to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Auckland Branch of NCW which included a well-received performance by MIXIT, who use creativity to empower young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Saturday began with a **keynote address by former Prime Minister, Helen Clark in conversation with Dr Gill Greer**, which was highly pertinent to the 125th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in NZ. This was followed by a panel of mixed generations of Feminists: Sandra Coney, Prue Kapua, Vira Paky and Kiritapu Allan, MP.

Participants then chose between four topical workshops including one on **contemporary masculinity** which received much praise.



Te Aue Addison-Te Whare, Ruby Eve Johnson, Latifa Daud and Asena Tolungamaka and Gabriella Brayne

After lunch, we returned to the main auditorium for the **youth panel**, 'Ka Mura, Ka Muri', a Māori proverb which means 'walking backwards into the future'. Facilitated by Gabriella Brayne, the Auckland Women's Centre's Youth Coordinator,



MT Eden Pharmacy window display supporting NCW 100 year anniversary. Photo credit: Felicity Moore

the question posed to the four panellists: Asena Tolungamaka, Latifa Daud, Te Aue Addison-Te Whare and Ruby Johnson was "How do feminist histories offer opportunities for reflection and learning for young feminists today"?

All were impressive, but the most memorable for me was the comment by Latifa Doud who said that she drew heart from the fact the new NCWNZ President, Vanisa Dhiru "looks like me" - both having their origins in the Indian sub-continent. This mirrors the generational and multicultural change that is taking place within this organisation and of necessity in other similar organisations.

This was followed by the second round of workshops. I attended the **#Me Too workshop**, which proved interesting. The two young facilitators are at the forefront of social media in publicising the sexual bullying, rife and tolerated in some large law firms. We formed a circle to exchange ideas and it was noted that the behaviour was widespread in many organisations and places of employment. We discussed methods of dealing with this problem.

The final session was a discussion between **Prue Kapua of the Māori Women's Welfare League and Vanisa Dhiru (NCWNZ)** on the recent CEDAW session and recommendations from the United Nations regarding the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Both women emphasised the central CEDAW recommendation calling on the New Zealand government to establish a **national action plan** for all New Zealand women. ■



Māori teenage girls more likely to be victims of online harassment

Māori teenage girls, especially those with a disability, are at higher risk than any other group in New Zealand to be harassed and to receive unsolicited nude images.

This is one of the significant findings in new research by online safety organisation Netsafe and the Ministry of Women, highlighting rates of harmful online communications received by young New Zealanders.

The report also shows that Māori teen girls were significantly more likely to have lies or rumours spread about themselves (33%) and have been called names they did not like (33%) compared to Pākehā (22%).

The research highlighted that girls were at a higher risk of being harmed by online communications than boys were. Girls were not only more likely to experience an unwanted digital communication, but also to be emotionally affected and unable to carry on with daily activities because of it. Girls were more likely to feel annoyed, confused and anxious than boys. Similar patterns were found about feeling distressed, insecure, unsafe and horrified.

This research shows that for girls, social media was the most common place for a harmful online communication to occur, while for boys it was on online games.

The majority of unwanted digital communications were sent by a friend, with just over a quarter of teens saying the online communication was linked to something that was also taking place offline.

Teenagers with disabilities were more negatively impacted by harmful experiences online than other teenagers.

"Ministry for Women chief executive Renee Graham said: "It is very concerning that any young person receives unwanted messages.

"The research raises concerns around attitudes towards mental health, consent, healthy relationships, and rape culture ... [it] will be used by us and across multiple government agencies to guide policy-making in relevant areas, particularly in ongoing work to end violence against women and girls."

Netsafe provides free and confidential advice and support for anyone experiencing online abuse or harm - call 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723) or email help@netsafe.org.nz. The full report is available at <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/youth-population-survey-2018>. ■

Photo credit: New Zealand Teens and Digital Harm Report 2018

Don't Miss 'RBG' - the Ruth Bader Ginsberg Documentary

Film Review – By Sabrina Muck

Shy student. Brilliant lawyer. Outspoken judge. Adored wife. Demanding mother. Loving "bubbe" (grandmother). Feminist icon.



The documentary "RBG" delves into all these facets of Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life and career. The second-ever woman to be appointed a justice of the United States Supreme Court, she has worked tirelessly on legal issues affecting women since the late 1950s. But in the face of Trump-era politics, she has become increasingly vocal in her dissenting opinions, and this, coupled with the rise of social media, has seen her gain some measure of fame in her 80s and become a popular hero for a whole new generation.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that a film about a United States Supreme Court judge would be somewhat dry and worthy. But it was unexpectedly filled with warmth and humour, both from "the Notorious RBG" herself and those that know her. Although she is repeatedly described as very serious, she has a dry wit and excellent comic timing; and one of the loveliest parts of the film is seeing her look at her granddaughter's Harvard Law graduation photos with unabashed grandmotherly pride.

It was encouraging to learn that, although very quiet and reserved, Ruth acted on the courage of her convictions in the face of breath-taking sexism to bring cases as a litigator for the ACLU, the success of which led to her appointment to lower courts and eventually the Supreme Court.

There is no doubt that Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a highly intelligent, formidable and disciplined person. However, even she must have had moments of self-doubt, or times where she felt that she could not possibly keep going – but she did anyway. This is one aspect I wish the film had explored more, but given her personality and her current role, it is perhaps understandable that it didn't.

'RBG' is entertaining, uplifting and inspiring, and implicitly challenges us to think about how each of us can use our skills to continue the fight for women's rights.

Shakti, who provide wonderful support to migrant and refugee women, are screening 'RBG' as a fundraiser on Thurs 25 Oct. Tickets available at [Eventfinda](https://www.eventfinda.co.nz). ■

Sexuality Education in Schools - Ongoing Inadequacies

The Education Review Office (ERO) recently published a report on their review of sexuality education in schools which identified a continued need for improvement and action in schools.

Schools can still decide how they teach sexuality education

Sexuality, relationships and violence prevention education come under Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum (2007). However schools can decide how they teach it, after consultation with their school community which they must carry out every two years. The previous ERO audit of sexuality education in 2007 found that most sexuality education programmes were not meeting students' needs effectively.

The recent report, explores the question "How well does the school use sexuality education to support and promote wellbeing for their students?" ERO was also particularly interested in the extent to which schools were providing an inclusive environment for sex-, gender- and sexuality-diverse students to support their wellbeing.

The review found ongoing concerns with school sexuality education, stating "overall ... curriculum coverage is inconsistent. Some schools are not meeting minimum standards of compliance with current requirements. Most schools are meeting minimum standards, but many have significant gaps in curriculum coverage."

The two least often covered topics - sexual violence and pornography

These are covered in less than half of the secondary schools examined. The report states more in-depth coverage is needed for aspects such as consent, digital technologies and relationships. Biological aspects of sexuality and puberty are well covered.

The most common barrier to implementation was not planning for a comprehensive approach to sexuality education. Only a few schools conducted regular evaluation of their sexuality education provision, or undertook robust analysis of the perceptions and needs of their students in this learning area.

Groups of students with specific needs - not having their needs met

In addition, the 2007 review had identified that schools were not meeting the needs of Māori and Pacific students, international students, students with strong cultural or religious beliefs, students with additional learning needs and students who were sex-, gender- and sexuality-diverse. The 2017 review finds these students remain less catered for, despite being at higher risk of negative wellbeing outcomes.

Good practice

The report also documents "narratives of good practice." These narratives typically paid attention to the voices of their communities, and especially their students, around what they knew and what they wanted to learn more about. These schools found that most parents and whānau were supportive of comprehensive sexuality education once they were fully consulted and informed. It states that some parents' choice to withdraw their child from sexuality education should not impede the development of a comprehensive programme for other students in the school. Additionally, leaders in these schools had established an environment of collective responsibility for inclusion of sex-, gender- and sexuality-diverse students. These schools were proactive, rather than reactive, and did not simply rely on more general policies and practices, but made this collective responsibility for inclusion explicit.

Source: New Zealand Family Violence Clearing House, nzfvc.org.nz/node/3316 ■

Save the Date Clementine Ford

'Boys Will Be Boys'

Tue 27 Nov, 7-9pm,
Freemans Bay Community Hall



Auckland Women's Centre



Ko Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

Contact & Services

Contact us

09 376 3227 x 0

info@womenz.org.nz

www.awc.org.nz

Centre Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Library Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Services

- + Women's Support: free support, info, advice and referral
- + Community Education
- + Community Events
- + Counselling
- + LGBTQ support
- + Low Cost Massage
- + Self Defence Classes
- + Opportunities to talk and support feminism
- + Diversity Forums
- + Support Groups
- + Support for High School Feminism