

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF
WOMEN'S ACTIVISM AND SCHOLARSHIP**

SITE: New Zealand

**Transcript of Prue Hyman
Interviewer: Nicky Newton**

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Prue Hyman: born in England in 1943, is a feminist economist. She moved to New Zealand in 1969 to work at Victoria University, Wellington, eventually becoming an Associate Professor of Economics and Gender and Women's Studies until controversial restructuring between 2008 and 2010 abolished Gender and Women's Studies. She has also advised the New Zealand government through her work at the Ministry of Women's Affairs (1989-1990). Hyman studies the personal aspects of economics, such as how work is valued, with a particular focus on living wages and pay equity. She has written two books: *Women and Economics: A New Zealand Feminist Perspective* (1994), and *Hopes Dashed?: The Economics of Gender Inequality* (2017). In 2000, she was commissioned by the New Zealand Police Force to write an influential report titled *Women in CIB: Opportunities for and Barriers to the Recruitment, Progress and Retention of Women in the Criminal Investigation Branch*. While retired from university work, she continues to champion gender pay equity issues.

Nicky Newton is an Associate Professor of Psychology, who was born and raised in Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Nicky trained and performed as a classical flute player in New Zealand, Australia, and Austria. She played with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in the 1990s, before a hand injury curtailed her career. After moving to the United States, Nicky gained a PhD in psychology from the University of Michigan (2011). She has held research and teaching positions at Youngstown State University, Northwestern University, University of Michigan, and Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada). Most recently, she moved back to Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand, and is currently a Research Fellow with the Health, Work, and Retirement Study based at Massey University. Nicky uses quantitative and qualitative approaches to research relationships between personality, social roles, gender, life transitions, and well-being across the latter half of adulthood. Recent projects include a multi-faceted study of older Canadian women's lives, an examination of stressful events and well-being among mid-to-later life women in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and a case study of the life of an Ann Arbor-based community activist. She recently co-edited, with Jamila Bookwala, *Reflections from Pioneering Women in Psychology* (2022), a volume of 26 essays from trailblazing women in the field.

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Nicky Newton: There you go. Let's do that and-- Before we start the interview, I just need you to confirm that with a verbal 'yes' that you give your permission for this interview.

Prue Hyman: Yes.

NN: Thank you. We are here today with Prue Hyman, and I just need to do one more little thing and then we're good. We're good to go. I've told you that we're doing the interview in five or six big chunks of information. The first chunk of information or the first question is about the background about your life. As you think about where you are today, how would you depict the journey that brought you to this point? That is, what are the central commitments to your life? What does your career look like, and what do you consider your most significant lifetime achievements professionally? I'll remind you of those questions if we need to.

PH: I grew up in London¹ and went to Oxford University² for my undergraduate degree and did PPE philosophy of politics economics and specialized in statistics. I was a maths grad-- Initially, I was going to do maths, but I decided I wanted to do something more relevant to the world, but I had the math's and stats' background, which was useful. I did a postgraduate stats thing. Although I never did a PhD, at that time you could get an academic job in New Zealand anyway in my area because I had the maths and stats background where economics was just getting more mathematical. I got a job at Victoria University of Wellington³ in 1969 when I was about 25. I traveled from England to New Zealand basically because my first partner was a New Zealander, and I needed a job. Treasury⁴ offered me a job, and I decided on Vic.⁵ This is very pre or very early second-wave,⁶ and I was more of a lefty probably than a feminist naturally. Although I was a

¹ London is a large and diverse global city located in England. It is the capital of the United Kingdom and the third most populous city in all of Europe with a large cultural influence. ("London." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London> accessed February 20th, 2023.)

² Oxford University is the second oldest university in the world and is located in Oxford, England. Many notable figures such as Nobel Peace Prize winners and prime ministers are alumni of this institution. ("University of Oxford." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Oxford Accessed February 20th, 2023.)

³ Victoria University of Wellington is located in Wellington, New Zealand. It is a public university that is known for being a top research institution and one of the oldest in the country. ("About the University." Victoria University of Wellington. <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/about> Accessed February 20th, 2023.)

⁴ The New Zealand Treasury is a section of the national government which operates to advise on financial, regulatory, and economic issues. ("Who We Are." New Zealand Government Treasury. <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/about-treasury/who-we-are> accessed February 20th, 2023.)

⁵ Short for the Victoria University of Wellington.

⁶ Second-wave feminism was a form of the Western feminist movement that occurred roughly between 1960 and 1980. In contrast to first-wave feminism, which dealt largely with legal inequities such as the right to vote and own property, second-wave feminism sought to expand its reach into other domains of inequality within patriarchal home and workplace structures, such as domestic violence and sexual harassment. ("Second-wave Feminism." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second-wave_feminism Accessed February 20th, 2023.)

natural feminist, I campaigned to get admission to the Oxford Union.⁷ Women weren't admitted to the Oxford Union when I started at Oxford, and I campaigned to get in there. I was a natural feminist, and I was one of the first two women elected to the standing committee of the Oxford Union,⁸ because people persuaded me that once we got in, I had to make speeches and I was terrified. It was probably the most terrifying of my life, and stood me in good stead with lecturing to 300 students. I was a natural feminist from the beginning but hadn't thought about a great deal about it apart from just a basic equality. I'm now in New Zealand in 1969, finding my way as an academic with no training-- My first lecture to 300 1st year students, it was fairly hair rising. It was maths and stats rather than economics that I was teaching at that point, and I taught some economics as well, of course. My big class was 300 students at 5:00 to 6:00 at night repeated from 6:00 to 7:00 because they were mostly part-timers, and it was before the day even part-timers got time off. That was three days a week. That was how I started, and it was pretty amazing really, but I coped and they didn't want to be doing the compulsory math and stats for commerce degrees. That was how it all began. Of course, there was practically no women in the economics department. I can't remember whether I was the only one or there were two at the beginning. There never were very many all my way through my career right up to 2001. There were only a few. I came to be head of department at one stage, and they were only too happy to let me do the work, but once my research was all about women in the economy, it was regarded with some disdain; it's not real research. I just coped with that. I started a course on women in economy, which I had to fight mad to get into the curriculum. It was pretty hard going all the way, really, in economics. Now, what am I doing? Am I doing my career-

NN: I actually do have a follow-up question. How did you cope with all of this then? You said you coped with it. What did you do to cope?

PH: I bought this house at Paekākāriki,⁹ and when I drove down the hill from Pukerua Bay¹⁰ to Paekākāriki, I cast off the university, and I'm sure that's what kept me sane for 50-odd years.

NN: For those people who don't know, that view is astounding. Once you crest and you come down into the bay, that's a one in a million views. It's gorgeous.

⁷ The Oxford Union is largely comprised of students from Oxford University, and serves as a debating society that seeks to uphold free speech in an effort to protect a free society. ("About." Oxford University. <https://oxford-union.org/about> Accessed February 20th, 2023.)

⁸ The Oxford Union's standing committee works to manage the affairs of the Society as its general governing body. ("Getting Involved." Oxford Union. <https://oxford-union.org/pages/getting-involved> February 20th, 2023.)

⁹ Paekākāriki is a coastal city in New Zealand. It is a major transport center and is located in the south-western Kapiti Coast District. ("Paekākāriki." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paek%C4%81k%C4%81riki> Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁰ Pukerua Bay is a hilly, coastal suburb in Southern New Zealand. ("Pukerua Bay." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pukerua_Bay. Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

PH: I was very, very lucky. My first partner when I came back to New Zealand we spotted the house, which belonged to Denis Glover, the poet.¹¹

NN: Oh, gosh.

PH: I don't know if you've heard of him. The poor lad boozed himself stupid and didn't pay his mortgage. It was available for very low price and it was filthy, dirty and dreadful. It took us ages and ages to paint it up and get it ready to for occupation. I was very, very lucky to buy that in 1972, I think. I'd only been here about three years. I'd been living in Wellington.¹² I was absolutely determined to buy the beach because I had a grandfather who lived at Brighton Beach,¹³ which is a pebbly old beach, but I fell in love with that beach, and then I fell in love with Paekakariki beach. I aimed at Paekakariki because it was with an easy reach of Wellington, but was open sea, which I wanted. I've never ever regretted it, even though we've had terrible trouble with erosion and so on and so forth. It's cost me a fortune in sea walls and things, but I've loved living there, and I really do think that made a difference to how I survived at Vic. Plus, I'm a no-nonsense sort of a character and I wouldn't take any nonsense, but I survived.

NN: That's great. I guess we should get back the more the interviewee questions. The central commitments of your life. You've talked a little bit about what your career looks like. We're at your uni stages, what happened at university and then maybe after university? You might want to start there perhaps.

PH: I really didn't know much about doing research because of the way I'd come into the university system. One guy was quite helpful in getting me going. It took me a few years, but I got into thinking about women in the economy from the early '70s certainly, and doing statistical research on where women were in the economy, which brought one up short about how they were treated. I started working on those issues, and when I went to America on sabbatical, I got involved with the pay equity movement over there. Of course, equal pay was on the agenda here. The Equal Pay Act had been passed in 1972, theoretically giving equal pay to women and indeed, including pay equity or equal pay for work of equal value.¹⁴ It was not very clearly expressed and employers more geared

¹¹ Denis Glover was a well-known New Zealand poet who lived from 1912 to 1980. He struggled with alcoholism and resigned from several positions because of it. ("Denis Glover." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_Glover Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹² Wellington is a large metropolitan city on the southwestern tip of New Zealand's North Island and the country's capital. It is the windiest city in the world and has a primarily service-based economy. ("Wellington." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wellington> accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹³ Brighton Beach is a beach on the South Island of New Zealand that is especially popular for day trips during the summer months. ("Brighton, New Zealand." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brighton,_New_Zealand accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁴ The Equal Pay Act ensured equal pay for men and women in both public and private businesses. It was enacted in October of 1972, and gained renewed interest in 2013 following a case that demonstrated its foundations in not just equality, but equity. ("Fifty years of the Equal Pay Act 1972." New Zealand Parliament. <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/library-research-papers/research-papers/fifty-years-of-the-equal-pay-act->

up to avoid it. Unions were not geared up really with how to use it, and were-- Anyway, most unions were male-dominated, and weren't particularly enthusiastic about pay equity. The 1972 Equal Pay Act didn't have as much of an impact as it might have. It certainly got rid of unequal pay for absolutely identical work, except that some firms could, use different terminology for what the jobs were and still get rounded, but it did have an impact, but it didn't have a major impact. It got down the average ordinary time early earnings from about 72% ratio to about 77% ratio over the period of implementation, which was five years up to 1978. Anyway, going to America and getting involved in that movement, and then bringing it back here was probably the link between my academic work and my activism. Because I got involved in the various movements conferences and action about equal pay. The clerical worker's case in 1983 is one I remember where they tried to make a case for pay equity and got knocked back. Then we went for new legislation and we got it under labor, but it lasted five minutes. It was the labor government of 1984,¹⁵ which of course was incredibly right-wing economically under Roger Douglas.¹⁶ They couldn't quite-- but was also very pro-women under Margaret Wilson.¹⁷ It started the Ministry of Women's Affairs.¹⁸ It was trying to do women's social policies, but it didn't go too far with the economic policies, so it took until 1990 to pass new legislation, which was repealed immediately by an incoming national campaign. I spent a lot of time on that. I'd spent two years at the Ministry of Women's Affairs on secondment¹⁹ in 1989-1990. I'd been advising them. When Mary O'Regan was head of Women's Affairs²⁰, I'd been a part-time advisor, and I said to her, "You really need a full-time economist." She said, "Well, come down." I said, "Well, I would only do it on leave without pay if I can get it from the university," which I did. I was full-time the '89 and stayed on for 80% of my time in 1990 when I also, back

[1972/#:~:text=The%20Equal%20Pay%20Act%201972%20was%20enacted%20on%2020%20October, and%20females%20in%20paid%20employment%E2%80%9D.](#) Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁵ The Fourth Labour Government of New Zealand was in power for two terms from 1984 to 1990. During this time, major social and economic reforms were enacted, including increased public spending on education, the legalization of LGBTQ+ relationships, and nuclear-free legislation. ("Fourth Labour Government of New Zealand." Wikipedia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Labour_Government_of_New_Zealand#Formation Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁶ Roger Douglas was a New Zealand politician who served as the Minister of Finance during the two terms of the Labor Government. He is the reason that the economic reforms of the time were referred to "Rogernomics." ("Roger Douglas." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Douglas Accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁷ Margaret Wilson is a New Zealand politician and member of the Labour Party. She champions social causes such as feminism and multiculturalism, and served as the country's 27th Speaker of the House of Representatives. ("Margaret Wilson." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Wilson accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁸ The Ministry of Women's Affairs (now known as the Ministry for Women) was established in 1984 and works "towards its own abolition" and advise the government on policies and issues affecting women. ("Ministry for Women." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_for_Women accessed February 21st, 2023.)

¹⁹ A term for a temporary paid assignment, while on leave from one's primary position.

²⁰ Mary Oregan is a New Zealand government official who led and established the country's Ministry for Women's Affairs and has extensive experience working in community and international development projects. ("Mary Oregan." Wellington Community Fund. <https://wellingtoncommunityfund.org.nz/team/mary-oregan/> Accessed March 20th, 2023.)

at Vic, got the Women in Economy course going. I was instrumental, partly, in that legislation. The group of us tried to compromise with what the government was prepared to do and got that legislation through. Then, of course, it got immediately repealed by national. In 1994, I wrote *Women and Economics: A New Zealand Feminist Perspective*. That was my first book, which was really a revamping and linking of all my articles which I'd written over the 70s and 80s about various aspects of women in the economy. Which was not only pay equity, pay equity was my biggest campaigns, but was all about sole parents, Maori²¹ Pacific women being particularly disadvantaged, sole parents being disadvantaged, just participation rights, the whole works really. Also, feminist economic theory²² because feminist economics as a discipline was starting to exist. International Association for Feminist Economics²³ was starting up in America and based in America, but worldwide, and I went to all their conferences and was on their board, so on. Just trying to remember all these things. Feminist economic theory, which is, how and why economics can be full of biases and not deliberate necessarily, but just simply the way that the male-dominated profession thinks and constructs-- The differences between paid and nonpaid work. Same stuff as Marilyn Waring²⁴ writes about, and if women counted or counted for nothing. She did more popularizing of it than I did. She did very well with that. It's the same thing about the undercounting of unpaid work and all stuff. I brought all that together in my 1994 book, *Women and Economics: A New Zealand Feminist Perspective*, which was a boring title that Bridget Williams²⁵ insisted on [laughs]. I wanted something more jazzy [laughs]. I carried on working in the areas and brought out a second book in 2017, which was after I'd retired from Vic, but I was hope-stashed in the Bridget Williams tech series which was about what had happened since 1994 and really how very little progress had been made for women on the whole over that period. I should say, equal opportunity was-- There was progress made in that way. There were more women at the top, but I was more concerned with working-class women, women at the bottom, and not much had

²¹ The Māori people are indigenous to New Zealand and were the first people to settle there. They face discrimination and poorer socioeconomic outcomes than their non-Māori counterparts in the country. ("Māori people." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people Accessed February 23rd, 2023.)

²² Feminist economic theory encompasses the critical studies of traditional economics and its constructions, as well as paying particular attention to equity and gender-awareness within the field. ("Feminist Economics." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist_economics Accessed February 23rd, 2023.)

²³ The International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE) is a group which seeks to expand knowledge and awareness into feminist inquiries of economics on a global scale. It is comprised of a diverse mix of scholars, activists, policy makers, students, and more. ("About IAFFE." The International Association for Feminist Economics. <https://www.iaffe.org/pages/about-iaffe/> Accessed February 24th, 2023.)

²⁴ Marilyn Waring is a New Zealand feminist who focuses on feminist economics, and is best known for her book, "If Women Counted" published in 1988. She has also worked as a professor at the Institute of Public Policy in Auckland, New Zealand, and renounces the concept of "Gross Domestic Product (GDP)." ("Marilyn Waring." Marilyn Waring. <https://www.marilynwarrior.com/> Accessed February 24th, 2023.)

²⁵ Bridget Williams is a publisher who has founded two publishing companies in New Zealand, and has published many non-fiction works about the country and its history. ("Bridget Williams." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridget_Williams Accessed February 24th, 2023.)

improved for them. I can't remember where the question started or where I finished [laughs].

NN: No, no, no, that gives us a great outline. I will confess, I know very little about this. How was it when the women's and gender studies, the department at Vic was declassified, so to speak or decommissioned? What happened around that? Can you speak to that a little?

PH: Yes, sure. Women's studies at Vic had been pretty vibrant. Phillida Bunkle, Beryl Hughes, and Jackie Matthews got it going.²⁶ I did lots of guest lectures in feminist economics. They retired or left for Parliament,²⁷ the other two eventually retired. Alison Laurie²⁸ was running it, and it was going fine, but it got shifted to Karori,²⁹ so the teacher's college, which was not a good move. Kay Matthews³⁰ was involved in it at that stage, and she'd had an educational background so didn't mind moving. Earlier than that, I went down to halftime work at Vic, I can't remember what year. Shortly after that, women's studies could afford me [laughs] because I was only halftime, and I moved over to be in women in studies, which was still called Women's Studies. Then I was regretful about the change to women and gender studies, which in retrospect, my gosh, [laughs], I regret, and mad. We still had reasonable numbers, but frankly, the university by then was, I don't know, run by people who weren't sympathetic to it. It was undermined quite honestly, and students were told courses weren't going to be offered that were meant to be offered and proceeded to drift off to other courses. Of course, there were lots of good women within departments who were doing courses of their own within their department. I wouldn't rule that out for a moment, but women's studies just was allowed to disappear.

NN: Has it remained disappeared? Has it remained-

PH: Yes.

²⁶ Beryl Hughes taught history at Victoria University ("Interview with Beryl Hughes." National Library. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/35828410> Accessed March 20th, 2023); Phillida Bunkle became a politician after teaching history and helping found women's studies ("Phillida Bunkle." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phillida_Bunkle Accessed March 20th, 2023); Jacqueline Mathews taught French at Victoria University (<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22440384>).

²⁷ A government's Parliament is a legislative body that is responsible for representing the citizens, making laws, and overseeing the state's activities. ("Parliament." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

²⁸ Alison Laurie was an American author best known for her novels, though she wrote many non-fiction works as well. ("Alison Lurie." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alison_Lurie Accessed March 6, 2023.)

²⁹ Karori is a populous suburb of New Zealand centrally located on the island in Wellington. ("Karori." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karori> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³⁰ Kay Matthews was a professor at the Eastern Institute of Technology in New Zealand whose work focused on the achievements of women, as well as children, schooling, and health. ("EIT Pays Tribute to Top Research Professor Kay Morris Matthews." Eastern Institute of Technology. <https://www.eit.ac.nz/2021/07/eit-pays-tribute-to-top-research-professor-kay-morris-matthews/> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

NN: Oh gosh.

PH: Oh, yes. There's no women's studies or gender studies as such. As far as I know, it hasn't been revived. It's all dispersed around departments. There's plenty, plenty going on, but it's within departments.

NN: I guess the one question that we haven't touched on with that first block of questions is, what do you consider your most significant lifetime achievements?

PH: Well, to be honest, I'm a bit depressed about them at the moment because everything seems to be going backwards. Obviously, my work on pay equity was the most significant area I contributed to, and I made a difference in that area. These days, well, pay equity is still on the agenda, of course. It's being done in a different way with particularly in the public sector nursing, teaching, and clerical, so on around the public services. It's gone back into the union movement more than women's organizations. Women's organizations were very active in it for a long time, and now it's much more close that the union and government got in bed with each other. When Kristine Bartlett hadn't mentioned about the case, that was a case to try and prove that the Equal Pay Act was still alive and did mean pay equity.³¹ It was another landmark case, and I was heavily involved with preparations for that. They sort of won. They really only won a case that it could be done. They didn't win a case that it absolutely was going to happen, but it could be done. The government were running scared and proceeded to undercut it by setting up structures with the union movement to do things in a different way. That has made a difference. There are pay equity gains undoubtedly in the public sector, but it doesn't have very much impact in the private sector, which is where a lot of the low paid women work, a lot of Maori and Pacific women work. I tended to shift my focus to general labor market policy. The minimum wage and the living wage has been being really important because low-paid women are going to benefit more from focus on that. I got involved in the living wage movement at that point and worked quite heavily on that. That's achieved quite a deal. It's quite a reasonable level and quite-- Of course, it's a voluntary thing only for employers, and it involves three groups; the general religious organizations and unions and the community groups. They've done a terrific job in particularly local government, but also in-- A lot of private companies now are paying a living wage and getting-- There's an economic case for it as well as the social case; it improves morale, reduces turnover, reduces absenteeism. It does a heck of a good job. It's at a quite reasonable level. Unfortunately, differentials have widened tremendously in the labor market. The top people are paid absurd amounts and simply decide to pay each other ridiculous amounts. There's been a change from labor to capital. A gradual switch in returns from labor to capital. Labor is underpaid in New Zealand, generally. We were on to my achievements. Well, I think my achievement is to keep all those

³¹ Kristine Bartlett was the care worker at the center of a legislative case in 2012 when she did not receive equal pay per the stipulations in New Zealand's Equal Pay Act of 1972 on the basis of her gender. She received a settlement and the wages of service workers increased accordingly. ("Kristine Bartlett." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kristine_Bartlett Accessed March 6, 2023.)

things going. Possibly, the other one I would point to is, when I was teaching at least, I taught a third paper in *Women in the Economy*, and that paper certainly raised the awareness of the students on it immensely [laughs].

NN: Well done. I guess we should probably move on to the second block of questions, which is the background about your work. You may have covered a little bit of this in the first block, but let's have a look at what questions we have. What drew you to the work that you do or have done? What was the draw to that work? You've covered how you first became involved in that work, so that may not be relevant, but I'll remind you of these questions again. How has your involvement changed over time? The next bit of questions about change are, has your life changed in view of your work and/or vice versa, has your view changed, has your work changed because of your life? What else? What kinds of sites or sites of action that is of intervention have you primarily focused on and why? Much of it you've covered. Let's go back to the first one; what drew you to the work that you do? What was the draw?

PH: Well, it was a natural feminist class analysis and ethnicity too. I don't think it's true that white women-- Although they dominated, I suppose, the feminist movement in the early days, I don't think it's true they ignored. Class and racist issues were totally bothered about middle-class women. I think all three and to some extent disability and age and so on and so forth, all the other variables that have impact intersectionality, as it is partially called. I think I was drawn to realizing a lot of advantages I had. Although as a Jewish lesbian woman,³² I was also aware of the complexity of one's disadvantages. I think that helped make me aware of the disadvantages of others, which I didn't have. I think I was drawn to working on those issues. I haven't mentioned lesbian issues at all, but I actually work on those too. I did work on lesbian economics and lesbian inclusion in the census and various things of that type. That naturally because I was a lesbian and was aware of the fact that while some lesbian couples earn very well, because they didn't have time off for kids, they do now, lesbians were mostly without children, although, of course, quite a lot came out of marriages and had children. Then from the, I don't know, 80s, 70s, 80s, 90s, people started having kids, AI³³ and so on. Nevertheless, some lesbians do earn very well—in two-income lesbian households. There were an awful lot who were at the bottom. I just wanted to make lesbians visible apart from anything else. My mate lesbian is invisible. I was completely out at Vic, and that posed its problems too, but was all right.

³² A lesbian is a person who identifies as a woman who is attracted to and seeks relationships with other women. ("Lesbian." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbian> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³³ AI here stands for artificial insemination, which is a medical procedure in which sperm is injected directly into a person's uterus near the fallopian tubes as an egg is about to be released as a means to initiate pregnancy, often in response to prolonged infertility. ("Intrauterine Insemination." Mayo Clinic. [https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/intrauterine-insemination/about/pac-20384722#:~:text=Intrauterine%20insemination%20\(IUI\)%20%E2%80%94%20a.more%20eggs%20to%20be%20fertilized](https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/intrauterine-insemination/about/pac-20384722#:~:text=Intrauterine%20insemination%20(IUI)%20%E2%80%94%20a.more%20eggs%20to%20be%20fertilized). Accessed March 6, 2023.)

NN: About what problems it posed at that time? You were out in the 70s, right, we're talking about here? The 70s, you were an out lesbian?

PH: I probably wasn't that outright at the beginning. I was a bit probably naturally nervous or just didn't think about bringing it out at the early 70s. By the late 70s I was certainly-- I came out to my classes and I came out-- I remember, for example, when the Homosexual Law Reform bill was being passed,³⁴ and of course, that only applied one part of the bill to men because it's never been naturally illegal for women. The second part of the bill was to bring it in human rights act and that would've applied to women as well as men. A group of us who were working on the bill with the men, we were supporting the men in part one and working like that on part two. We decided that we weren't getting enough publicity. It was all about the men. We got the *Dominion Post*³⁵ to do a double page spread on the lives of four lesbians with pictures and their stories just to show that we were in there too and why we supported the act and so on. I was one of the four. I remember walking into professorial board meeting, of which I was on as a staff rep or something, late that morning because I'd had a lecture from 9:00 to 9:50. The third meeting I walked into late, and it felt like every eye was on me. People ask you why you do it, why it's important to you and so on. They weren't hostile, really. Very few people were hostile, but it's just the curiosity factor is a bit wearing after a while.

NN: Yes, you're the token lesbian on campus when really you are possibly not, it's just that you are visible there. Very interesting. Let me just check to see that-- I think we've covered--What kinds of sites of action or intervention have you primarily focused on? Perhaps we have already covered that: the feminist economy or being a feminist economist and lesbian issues. Are there any other sorts of sites-

PH: That's been my two areas. Women in the economy is a very, very broad area, the whole of the labor market, the whole of social policy, superannuation policies one I haven't talked about that I've been involved in. It covers a very wide range. I haven't been involved in, for example, violence against women. I've been very supportive abortion law reform and the violence ones. I'm obviously supportive of them, but I haven't been involved in rape crisis or refuge movement or anything like that. A lot of my friends were.

³⁴ The Homosexual Law Reform Act of 1986 legalized consensual sex between men in New Zealand. This was to undo its criminalization in 1961, and set the legal age to 16 years old. ("Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexual_Law_Reform_Act_1986 Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³⁵ *The Dominion Post* is a New Zealand newspaper that is published out of its capital, Wellington. ("Dominion Post." Stuff. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

NN: Reflections on your work as the next section. Questions in this one are all about feminism. How do you understand the term 'feminism' and what has it meant to your work? We'll start there, maybe.

PH: Feminism at its simplest is simply equality for men and women, but it involves much more than simple equality. Equality is a difficult word because equality of opportunity is often regarded as sufficient, whereas equality of outcome at least one should be moving towards. Feminism simply has to look at all the structures of society that support men more than women, and try and figure out what the best moves to make things better for women. Feminism should make things better for men and for children too, decent feminism. It's not individual feminism. It's group feminism. It's feminism as a real action for all women. I think it's not enabling prostitutes to have equal rights. It's trying to figure out why prostitution exists and should it? Can one get round and avoid the structures in society that encourage it. It's very simple to just go for individualist feminism. I think third wave has, to some extent, done that.³⁶ I think feminism as a class action is under threat certainly at the moment. Of course, the current move which is absolutely appalling is to get rid of women altogether, because of the trans movement.³⁷ I am completely willing to say that I am a terf, a trans-exclusive original feminist.³⁸ I'm not anti-trans. Of course, individual trans people should have human rights. I worry tremendously about the extremists in the trans movement who say trans people should be admitted to the other gender. Sex and gender are two different things. Biological sex cannot be changed. There are a few intersex³⁹ people who have to decide what's best for them. We are born men or born women, and biologically, we can only stay that way. Of course, those who want to use the word gender and want to change their gender, that's okay. It's a worry that there's a huge movement towards it at the moment. I think it's become very fashionable. It's not surprising that women want to be men. Men get a better deal. But some good, butch

³⁶ Third-wave Feminisms refers to the feminist movement which began in the 1990s and focused on transforming definitions of feminism to be more intersectional and recognize the multiple layers of oppression that still existed. ("Third-wave Feminism." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third-wave_feminism Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³⁷ The trans movement refers to the increasing awareness around the rights, existence, and acceptance of transsexual individuals (those who identify with a gender that differs from their assigned sex at birth) in both legal and social domains. This is in an effort to ameliorate the discrimination this community faces. ("Transgender Rights Movement." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender_rights_movement Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³⁸ TERFs (Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminists) are a group of feminists who do not recognize trans women as women, and consider trans women to be incompatible with their conceptions of radical feminism. Both the name and ideologies of this group of feminists remains highly controversial among feminists; their views are antithetical to those of many feminists, and are a very charged topic within the larger movement. ("Radical Feminism." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_feminism#Views_on_transgender_topics Accessed March 6, 2023.)

³⁹ An individual who was born "intersex" does not have a clear biological distinction between male and female sexual anatomy, including either externally or internally. ("What is Intersex." Intersex Society of North America. https://isna.org/faq/what_is_intersex/ Accessed March 6, 2023.)

lesbians⁴⁰ are being persuaded that they're men, and the parents love it because they don't want butch lesbians. They're about trying to have a male son. In reverse, the men that want to be women-- There's a lot of trans women who agree with us, who just want a quiet life dressing as women, behaving as women. Fair enough, although that is weird thing because a lot of trans women get up in the garb that women wouldn't touch with a barge pole in their clothing; and I think it's great shame. Sorry. Feminism to me meant breaking down the binaries between men and women in behavior. It didn't want extremes in how males and females were treated. Of course, women bear the children. That you cannot get around and that leads to some differences. We wanted to break down the differences between men and women. "Women could do anything" was one of the slogans. Instead of that, they're going to hopping over from male to female and making the binary even worse. That's incredible.

NN: It is a really complicated issue. I guess we probably should try and get back to your life and what-- The next set of questions are about-

PH: I'm being active on this issue. I'm 79 and I'm not the most active on it, but I'm in LAVA, the Lesbian Action for Visibility Aotearoa.⁴¹ We are working on these issues because we are really worried. In New Zealand, it's gone mad. Not only have the birth marriages and deaths act that you can just simply sign a form and hop over. That, as an economist, is appalling because our statistics about males and females are going to be wrecked by it. They're small enough, hopefully, that they won't be wrecked. When it comes to women in prison, a trans woman who rapes a woman in prison is regarded as being a woman raping a woman, not a man raping a woman. Those numbers are quite small, so they can be completely ruined by this. It's very important.

NN: Yes, really important.

PH: [crosstalk] and important. Puberty blockers are being dished out very easily.⁴² That wrecks people's lives at an age when they were aren't old enough to make sensible decisions. We are already retreating from it in America and England. There's a realization that it's gone too far and there's a lot of retreat, but it hasn't reached here yet. We're still in the 'encouraging it'.

⁴⁰ A butch lesbian is a lesbian who displays stereotypically masculine characteristics but maintains the gender identity of a woman. ("Butch." Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butch_\(lesbian_slang\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butch_(lesbian_slang)) Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁴¹ Lesbian Action for Visibility Aotearoa (LAVA) is a New Zealand-based group which focuses on the rights of lesbian women as it principally relates to rejecting notions of gender identity, queerness, or cis/trans qualifying language. ("About." Lesbian Action for Visibility Aotearoa. <https://www.lava.nz/about> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁴² Puberty blockers are prescription medications that principally block the hormones testosterone and estrogen to slow the progression of puberty, including the development of sex-specific traits. ("What are puberty blockers." Planned Parenthood. <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens/puberty/what-are-puberty-blockers> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

NN: What are some of your expectations for-- Tell me again, it's LAVA that you work for now, can you say what that acronym stands for again?

PH: Lesbian Action for Visibility Aotearoa.

NN: Okay. What do you think the future is for that particular organization that you are working for?

PH: Well, it's only a small organization. It's a ginger group⁴³ that's drawing the attention via our websites and submissions to select committees and all that sort of thing, and occasional in-public demonstrations as to what the problems of this are. It's one of many organizations that are doing this. Speak Up for Women⁴⁴ is another good one. This is a real threat to women and to feminism.

NN: Okay. On that note, we'll move on to the next group of questions, and this is the relationship between feminist scholarship and activism. How do you perceive that relationship between scholarship and activism for you and in general? What does it mean in general? Maybe we'll start in general then we move to you particularly.

PH: I think it's very important, anyone who's a feminist have to be a very pure theory feminist, not to want to be involved in activism. It seems to me that you have a responsibility as an academic. You're very privileged as an academic. You've got a decent salary, probably too decent [laughs], and the time to work on these issues. You owe it to your community to get involved in activism. I think most feminists academics do. Some activists would say the academy has got too pure and doesn't do enough activism. I respect that view, particularly some feminist theorists have encouraged the move on sex, gender, and of course others. There are real repercussions for those who stand out on the transgender issue. There are academics that have been sacked from their jobs and for being activists on these issues. I think it's important that they are, but I think one has to realize that it's scary and in some cases, to be activists in some areas-- Economics, it's not so scary, you're fairly-- you might be regarded as not being a proper academic, but you're not threatened with life. You're not sacked or threatened with life-changing things.

NN: I was just going to ask you about your previous work. I know a little bit about the previous work that you did. It's like you've had this history with academia and government and then activism, which I see as three separate parts of your work.

⁴³ A ginger group is one which seeks to change the direction or focus of an organization internally. ("Ginger Group." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ginger_group Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁴⁴ Speak Up for Women is a New Zealand-based group that aligns with the views of trans-exclusionary radical feminists and seeks to address the language used in these controversial conversations. ("About." Speak Up for Women New Zealand. <https://www.speakupforwomen.nz/about> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

They're overlapping. You've worked with the police force, didn't you? Or the CIB?⁴⁵

PH: Forgotten about that one. Yes, I did. I did it with a student who was doing it for a masters of a woman in the CIB and why women weren't doing better in the CIB. We interviewed loads of people and I could have written the report without interviewing anybody. It was completely obvious that it wasn't a family-friendly place. It's difficult for it to be a family-friendly place because you're needed when you're needed. Its culture was incredibly anti-feminist or pro-male. We wrote a report on it, and I think there've been follow-up reports since then done, but I'm not sure. I think more women are promoted to the top in the police these days. More women are promoted everywhere, but one have to be a little suspicious as to which women and whether they're women who are mentoring other women through, or whether they're women who reckon, "I made it and so can you." Even then they're not always front. They're often more backroom than in front of the public's type thing.

NN: I guess we should clarify. CIB is the Criminal Investigation Bureau, correct?

PH: Yes.

NN: This would been in early 2000?

PH: I think it was earlier than that. I can't remember. I'm sorry, dates are terrible for me.

NN: Not a problem. The next question, it's in the same block of questions. It seems like a no-brainer, but I'll ask it anyway. Do you identify as feminist?

PH: Yes. Obviously, I'm going to say I'm the only Jewish lesbian feminist economist in Aotearoa.⁴⁶

[laughter]

NN: Well done, well done. You have that. Excellent, excellent. I think that's pretty obvious from what you've been saying. Now, we move on to the global or international focus and thinking about your work and how that fits in. What's your analysis, evaluation, and expectation of the development of feminism in New Zealand?

PH: I don't know. I'm a bit old for that question. I'm a bit depressed about it, as I've indicated, because a lot of feminist organizations are actively going along with the business that practically abolishes women, that talks about pregnant people and

⁴⁵ The CIB is New Zealand's Criminal Investigation Branch, which operates to investigate and respond to serious crimes within the country. ("Criminal Investigation Branch." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_Investigation_Branch Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁴⁶ Aotearoa is the word for New Zealand in the Māori language. ("Aotearoa." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aotearoa> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

menstruating people and so on and so forth. I really think it's very, very dangerous what's happening. A lot of feminist organizations go along with it, or so-called feminist organizations. The over-simple sympathy for trans, which I don't have any objection to, doesn't stand up to scrutiny about how society should be organized, quite frankly. I don't know, young feminists-- I don't, unfortunately, have a heck of a lot to do with very young women. I haven't got children of my own and grandchildren. As you get older, you tend to mix mostly, in that case, with people your own age. There are some young feminists who get it, who are still fighting the fights that we fought. I believe everything goes in cycles. I think the trans-movement thing will be rectified over time. I really don't know what's going to happen to feminism. We have a hell of a lot of problems in the world. We have as much conflict of women in peace as a very, very important dynamic that I haven't mentioned at all in this. Women in the peace movement have vital aspect of it.⁴⁷ We have climate change; women in the environment, which I haven't mentioned. It's another vital area. I think women are very active in those movements. Probably a lot of people who would be active in feminism have gone into those movements. That's very worthwhile. I don't mind it if they're doing good work. Women need to be everywhere. Feminists need to be everywhere and working on all these issues, and hopefully, they will.

NN: Yes, fair enough. The next question is really about how your connections with other activists or scholars and organizations in other countries. Do you maintain those connections with people in the US?

PH: I'm still a member of IAFE, the International Association for Feminist Economics. I haven't been to a conference of it since about 2015, I think. I used to go every year. Some of them were canceled for COVID, and they do them online these days as well, so you can join them from here. I'm a bit less energetic about traveling overseas these days. Although, I still go back to England. Well, my current partner has a connection with England, so I was there in 2020. IAFE is my main international connection these days. That has worldwide-- It's not just America where it's based.

NN: Worldwide, of course.

PH: It's worldwide organization and has very good third-world representation.

NN: How did the connection with IAFE come about? The next question to that or related to that is, what have that meant for your own work?

PH: Oh, it's been very valuable to me, and very innovating. I don't know, I can't remember how I first got into-- I got onto it right at its beginnings. There was a conference on Women in the Economy, which was not IAFE, in Holland in 1993. It's in

⁴⁷ Peace movements contain members which seek to achieve social ideals such as non-violence or eradicating war, and can be loosely linked together through the shared tenets of other movements such as humanism, feminism, anti-racism, environmentalism, and more. ("Peace Movement." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_movement Accessed March 6, 2023.)

my brain, but it might've been earlier than that. It's not as that long-standing. It's not as long -standing as National Council of Women⁴⁸ or any of those ones. Economics has grown like mad over the last 30 years. That conference which wasn't totally feminist. I remember standing up and grumbling at a guy who [laughs] gave a totally boring factual but no analysis at all. People came up to me afterwards who didn't know me and say, "You are brave, who are you?" I started talking to some Americans, and they were getting IAFE going, and I joined it straight away. I was on the board for six years and was very, very active in it. I still keep up with it.

NN: Given that you have these international connections, how do you make sense of the differences and similarities in the issues that are raised or approaches taken by activist scholars and organizations in different countries?

PH: Oh, that's a pretty difficult one. [laughs] I don't think I can really answer it properly. I totally respect every individual country's priorities and movements and those that are still fighting colonialism. I completely respect that they are-- and colonial are more important than the feminist concerns in that country. A lot of women will say, "I want to work on the colonial issues, not on the feminist issues." I think all we can do in First World is support third world people as much as we can financially and with expertise, if it's wanted, not if it's not, and really try and help out as much as we can.⁴⁹ Look at Afghanistan now. What can we do to fight for girls to be in schools and universities? It's just [unintelligible 00:55:07], and there are just so many-- There's slavery, there's incredible problems right through the world. We don't know how lucky we are [inaudible 00:55:24] about how things are here. We can help if we possibly can in these countries, but we have to be respectful to what their concerns are.

NN: Yes. That's all the questions that I've got written in the script, but I wanted to think about-- I will turn on New Zealand and thinking about-- I can't do this interview without thinking about recent events. Jacinda Ardern has stepped down as Prime Minister,⁵⁰ and now we have Chris Hipkins.⁵¹ Many questions about New Zealand being the first to grant suffrage to women, and yet the third female prime minister that we had received all the vitriol and death threats, and all the rest of

⁴⁸ The National Council of Women of New Zealand seeks to improve conditions for women in the country and make progress toward equality. ("About." National Council of Women of New Zealand. <https://www.ncwnz.org.nz/about> Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁴⁹ The grouping of countries into "first," "second," and "third" worlds occurred during the Cold War, with "first world" countries including nations such as the United States and Europe, the "second world" including the Soviet Union and China, and third world referring to countries not politically involved in the war. Today, this term often references the lower socioeconomic position that those countries tend to have, though it has been largely replaced with other language (such as the Global South and Global North). ("Third World." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_World Accessed March 6, 2023.)

⁵⁰ Jacinda Arden was the 40th Prime Minister of New Zealand and a member of the country's Labour Party. ("Jacinda Ardern." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinda_Ardern Accessed March 7, 2023.)

⁵¹ Chris Hipkins is currently the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and is a member of the Labour Party. ("Chris Hipkins." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Hipkins Accessed March 7, 2023.)

it, rape threats. This is a really naive and fairly broad question. Do you think New Zealand's made progress?

PH: Just one thing I have to say before I answer the question. I won't have "to grant suffrage"-- to fight for, and win suffrage in New Zealand. Women fought for and won suffrage New Zealand, They weren't handed it on a plate.

NN: Thank you. I stand corrected.

PH: Sorry, I've lost the train of the question now.

NN: Thinking about New Zealand, has it advanced? Have we made headway since the 1800s?

PH: There's always steps forward and steps back, isn't it, as it is for everything, and in the standard of living is higher than it was both for women and men in the 1800s. Yet, inequality seems as bad as ever. People at the bottom are doing really, really badly. Admittedly, we don't have that much starvation in New Zealand, but we have people apparently missing meals because the housing costs are so utterly out of line. Housing policy is shocking. I don't know whether we've made progress. We've made progress in some ways. Women are certainly higher percentages in parliament, and at the top of organizations, and so on and so forth. Yet, it doesn't seem to have made enough difference to women who are struggling. Sole parents or violence against women, it seems as bad as ever. I think one can exaggerate as well how bad things are. I think it all comes out these days. Social media and everything that you can't get away with as much, because it isn't as hidden as it used to be, the inequality. I think that's a point. Certainly, I'm not terribly enthusiastic about the progress that's been made, because I think it's tended to be for women at the top, and not that much for women at the bottom. I don't know, things are better. Things must be better. I tend to probably have a bit of guilt because I live an easy life, and I feel like I don't do enough anymore at 80, at 79 to ease, to [laughs] fight for that--

NN: No, it's not your burden of guilt to bear alone.

PH: I don't think I can answer it any better than that.

NN: No, you've done really well. Thank you, Prue. I guess that marks the end of the interview. I'd like you to stay a little bit. I'm going to stop the recording now, and I've just got a few clerical details that I want to ask, though. She's going to talk to you again and saying recording stopping.

PH: Okay.