CONSTRUCTION SITES:

CREATING THE FEMININE, THE HOME AND NATURE IN AUSTRALIAN DISCOURSES ON HEALTH

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the
Mawson Graduate Centre for Environmental Studies
The University of Adelaide
November 1995

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES 18-34 LOCATED BETWEEN PAGES 184-185.

ABSTRACT

This research explores the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in Australian health discourses from the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries, is indebted to Foucauldian insights, and reflects certain concerns about time and history, bodies and selves, and power and knowledge production.

In Part I (chapters 1-3), theory and context are laid out. In Part II (chapters 4-6), an archaeology is presented of the feminine, the home and nature in late nineteenth century Australian health discourses: healthy Australian society, the population debate, health and beauty regimes, dress reform, cruelty-free fashion, child-rearing, food adulteration, vegetarianism, anti-vivisectionism, home economics and public health professions and legislation. In Part III (chapters 7-9), a genealogy is presented of the same categories for late twentieth century discourses: memory-writing, government policy documents and advertisements connecting 'natural' health and consumerism. The constitution of the feminine, the home, nature and health over the two periods is accounted for by exploring works by Kant, Foucault and Nietzsche. Three characters - Form, Substance and Abstraction - then reflect on the changing meaning of the feminine, the home and nature in these health discourses. Prefaces to parts II and III comment on the eras being examined and describe the methodology used in different chapters. Part IV (chapter 10) summarises the research, discussing whether and how the feminine, the home and nature in Australian health discourses are part of a complex debate about living in ethical and moral ways.

DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I consent to copies of this work, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying.

Elaine Stratford
10 November 1995

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In producing this dissertation, I have been indebted to many people. My first thanks (and if I could write them in the same breath I would) must go to Timothy Doyle and Philip Hutch. Tim Doyle is the most giving and provocative adviser, allowing me creative room to work, providing guide ropes when I felt out of my depth; he has been my friend and colleague. Philip Hutch is the most giving partner, accommodating my intellectual needs in our joint social life, helping me to keep my humour by using his own; he too has been my friend and colleague. Without them, this project would be impoverished.

Dr Kay Schaffer and Dr Sandra Taylor provided stimulating assistance as advisers during the first year of my dissertation. Ken Dyer gave insightful and well-timed feedback on the full draft in the final stages of the process, and I am indebted to him. Thanks are also due to Barr Smith subject librarians Mick Draper, Alan Keig, Susan Woodburn and especially Margaret Hoskings for patient help with various inquiries. Kathy Spinks at the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, helped in the organisation of some of the plates that illustrate this research. Thanks are also due to staff at the National Library of Australia, and at State Library of South Australia.

I have had instructive discussions about this research with other staff of the University of Adelaide: Margaret Allen, Blair Badcock, Elizabeth Barnett, Philip Butterss, Jan Carey, Hilary Charlesworth, Stanley Fung, Bill Gammage, Nick Harvey, Neville Hicks, Graeme Hugo, Susan Magarey, Judith Raftery, Martin Williams. Peter Mühlhäusler has been a constant source of inspiration where the intricacies of language and meaning are concerned. Graduate Studies and Scholarship staff of the University have been most helpful; thanks to Jane Bromley, Ann-Maree O'Connor and Tim Gent, my dear friend and the Scholarships Officer until his untimely death in 1994. I have also gained much from listening to and speaking with Leonore Davidoff, Margo Huxley, Jane Jacobs, Louise Johnson, Gail Reekie and Susan Sheridan from other universities, and with the Gendered Geography Group here at Adelaide. Linda Westphalen has been a constant and insightful source of support during the delivery of chapter seven. Philip Barker and Clare O'Farrell answered my queries on Foucault, and Phil has been ever-ready to receive my long-distance calls on matters Foucauldian. Encouraging my endeavours, David McKie kindly invited me to publish work from the thesis. Jane Bennett, whose work on Thoreau has influenced my conceptions of time, provided considerable feedback on chapter two, as did Denis Cosgrove, whose comments required me to rethink or rephrase my position on more than one or two issues. Jennifer Bonham and Donna Ferretti have been my oasis.

Thanks are also due to the 'docs' at the Mawson Graduate Centre: I have been fortunate to work alongside Nicki Mazur, Margaret Cameron and Stephen Darley, Denise Noack, Alex Kutlaca, Andrew Lothian, Elizabeth Reid, Louise Rose, Keith Smith and Jason Ting. Pam Keeler, Kris James and Maureen Sutton at the Centre have always been willing

to help with the administrative details entailed by the doctoral process. Bev Clarke, Sue Dunn, Fiona de Rosa, Bruce Grey, Pam Gunnell, Alison Oppermann, Allison Purnell, Rob Ressom and Adam Simpson have read parts of this work and provided valuable feedback. Friends have been forgiving of my neglect of them.

Nicola Stratford, a desktop publisher and my sister, has been responsible for much proof-reading and final production, also caring for our son Lewis when rest or extra work spells have been imperative. Two historians, my sister Caroline Cottrell and her husband Michael Cottrell, provided incisive and complex feedback on the penultimate draft, despite the tyranny of distance to Canada and a pending set of comprehensive doctoral exams there. Kate and Will Stratford remain constant sources of support and inspiration. Kate has been rigorous in checking the bibliography to this dissertation and provided me with a colourful and moving depiction of her grandmother, a woman of the 1890s. Betty Hutch has maintained long-distant support from Sydney and always provides much needed laughter at just the right times.

I began this dissertation in 1992, and discovered I was pregnant four weeks into the academic year. Our son is now three. Above all else, Lewis has been my perspective and my ceaseless joy. He is a member of the future, and this work is dedicated to him.

PART I

FOUNDATIONS

1

INTRODUCTION

ASKING THE QUESTIONS

Beginnings. In *The Discourse on Language* (1972a), Michel Foucault says he does not like beginnings, because there are so many contested points where these events could be located. Beginnings are often written last as a process of closure that is designed to assure writers that the foundations of the work appear contained within both logical and arbitrary parameters. Beginnings also mark the intended passage of a journey. Issues that will form significant parts of that journey are mere signposts in beginnings. Writers hope that these traces will be tantalising and comprehensible enough for readers of the text to enter into and engage with the work as a corpus. This particular beginning has been written and rewritten, built on like a collage, from the early days of the project. This introduction is also one of many possible beginnings, an act of partial closure, a formal work to qualify for a rite of passage in the academy, a signpost and a promotional document.

My research is an amalgam, as I think befits a project undertaken in an interdisciplinary field such as environmental studies. Using what are termed (sometimes problematically) poststructural insights and tools of analysis, the *general* thrust of this work is to examine elements of Australian environmental and feminist history and theory, and comment on contemporary life. The research is premised on two ideas, that meaning is contingent and that history is partly made in the present by readers and writers alike, as they make themselves while making or interpreting the past. Thus, the work is critically concerned to advance certain observations about time and history, bodies and selves, and power and knowledge.

The *specific* research question embraces three parts. First, I wish to ask *how meanings of the feminine, the home and nature are constituted and contested.* In environmental studies, the feminine is a constant metaphorical companion to nature which is conceived of as 'home'; *oikos*. Yet, studies of another kind of home, *domos*, that small domestic site in which the vast majority of Australians live, have been extremely limited in environmental studies, particularly in terms of possible links to the feminine and to nature. It is the relationships among these three categories that intrigue me, since each category is the subordinate other to the masculine, the public sphere and culture.

Second, I wish to understand and demonstrate how the feminine, the home and nature come to be constituted and contested *as part of a biopolitics of life, a discourse on health.* Biopolitics refers both to how we govern ourselves and seek to govern others and the other, as well as to how we make truths on the basis of what it means to be embodied subjects. Health refers to ideas, ideologies and practices inscribed on bodies and selves, and marks what is normal and what is deviant. Throughout the research, I emphasise the notion of embodiment for two reasons. First, recognising that theory and history are created and played out on embodied subjects is an important part of some feminist scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s (Aldridge 1993; Cotterell and Letherby 1993; Probyn 1991). This recognition has been influential in some arenas of the environmental movement such as ecofeminism. Embodiment may be very different for women, for different groups of women, and for individual women as they live out their lives in changing circumstances.

Second, coming to terms with poststructural insights about the body and the subject has led me to think that theoretical positions which ignore lived experience have little chance of translating to praxis.

Praxis is critical to environmentalism and feminism. Yet social changes that do not account for both theoretical and corporeal matters are impractical. Moreover, common conceptions of nature as outside culture mean that issues which might be otherwise construed as environmental fall outside the research claims of the (inter)discipline. In my opinion, scholars of environmentalism need to consider the domestic sphere more often and more rigorously in their projects. Excellent hands-on texts, such as one by Linda Hunter (1989) on creating healthier homes, are necessary but insufficient for an invigorated debate on the place of home in environmental studies. The home is a powerful site of both normalisation and transgression, and these two processes are played out on bodies as well as on psyches. Environmentalism and feminism rely on transgression, and yet paradoxically depend on orthodoxies. Both social movements use reformist and radical scripts - derived in part from other struggles such as liberalism or socialism - to try and convince people that certain ways of living are more ethical and moral than others. Finally, many of our lived experiences of compliance and resistance are learned in the home, as our bodies and selves are socialised into disciplined subjects. In my opinion, this complex web of theory, praxis and embodiment is crucial to environmental studies. It is my intention to explore these issues in this work.

Third, I wish to examine how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted and contested in health debates *in Australia during the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries*; the significance of these eras being discussed below and in the prefaces to Part II and Part III. Gender equity and environmental activism have converged on the home and on the health of the nation in these two periods. However, rather than suggest some causal and linear relation between the two periods, I will first analyse health discourses generated in each era in the light of my assessment that discourses and social practices on health are also linked to questions about what it means to live in ethical and moral ways. In Part II, I examine documents from the women's popular press and from the masculine sphere of legislative material produced in the late nineteenth century. In Part III, I interrogate other documents emanating from the late twentieth century, including memory writing, government papers and advertisements. Only in the latter stages of this section will I bring the past forward to converse with the present about how the meanings that we attribute to the feminine, the home and nature may have changed over time.

This approach is taken to investigate more fully assertions by Michel Foucault about history as discontinuous and constituted in the present. In this exploration, I use materials that are considered subjective as well as objective, because too often the producers of research are hidden behind academic practices (avoiding "I", for example) which privilege the ideal of objectivity and serve to help us avoid responsibility for our opinions. These requirements for objectivity notwithstanding, lived experiences profoundly influence how research develops and is disseminated; subjectivity and objectivity are not crudely separate but mutually contextualising. Thus, in recognising the power of the subjective, I make my own experiences part of this objective research (see also Evans 1993; Freeman 1993; Smith 1994; Stivers 1993).

Catherine Hall (1992) suggests that the narratives of most history tend to be about what men do in other times. Much the same is true of environmental history, a field that traces what has 'happened' to nature, and what 'Man'[1] has done to accommodate or moderate such changes. There is, for example, a recent environmental history of Australia (Dovers 1994), in which only one woman writer's work is presented and none of the chapters explicitly deals with women's contributions to environmental issues. This lack exists despite archival and interpretive evidence demonstrating that women are important agents in producing change to discourses and social practices on the natural and the cultural.

Approaches to the production of knowledge that fall under the rubric of poststructuralism require a focus on the discourses rather than on the people of history (Ermarth 1992). According to these poststructural views, historical materials are represented, indeed partially constructed, in texts which cannot be removed from their accumulated meanings and analytical strategies. Kay Schaffer (1990) contends that there can be no intersubjectivity between the historian in the present and the historical 'subject' in the past. We cannot know this 'subject', this author, except as a function of criticism, and thus the relationship between the historian in the present and the historical 'subject' of the past necessarily is intertextual :

> Each instance constructs 'what happened' in different ways. Each of these representations evokes different responses by their readers who are, themselves, embedded in historically specific processes of reading and interpretation (Schaffer 1990, 92).

Here, I am writer and reader actively constituting my own multiple meanings as well as having, myself, been constructed by the contexts in which I am located. Part of the creation of my self involves the creation of this research; it is a self-reflexive process. When I ask of various texts such questions as who is writing this, for whom, under which forces of legitimation, with what power effects and leaving what unsaid, the answers that I provide are products of my engagement with these texts, along with the cultural and linguistic 'baggage' that I bring to bear in my analysis (see Flynn 1985; Sass 1988; Seigel 1990).

Nonetheless, I am not fully content with radical arguments asserting that nature is no more than text, mediated through language, even where distinctions might be made between nature as cultural construct and environment as both phenomenal and noumenal entity. Certainly, I concur that language and representation exercise extremely powerful influences on how we conceive of bodies and nature, of health, home and other discursive and material sites (Mason 1980; Norrman and Haarberg 1980; Twaites et al. 1994). Notwithstanding these comments, I remain committed to what John Fiske (1993) calls a fluid scepticism, accepting the utility of poststructural tools of analysis while not completely abandoning the idea that there are material and possibly prediscursive realities such as an environment or a nature outside of our experiences of it. I also recognise that cultural and linguistic differences create very different perceptions of 'reality' (Mühlhäusler 1995; Williams and Chrisman 1993). In this sense, I step outside a doctrinaire approach to the poststructural; it is not a manoeuvre with which I am uncomfortable.

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1 Following the recent example set by Lynette Finch (1993) in *The Classing Gaze*, use of the generic Man/man will be made without the usual addition of '[sic]' where it is felt that to include this apologia would be trying to correct a gender exclusivity that, in all likelihood is quite telling.

SETTING THE SCENE

In 1893, a book entitled *Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children: a Book for Every Family* was published anonymously in Melbourne (FIG 1). In keeping with the conventions of the time, the book cover carries the lengthy sub-title *Giving the Best Methods of Maintaining Health and Curing Disease as Taught by Eminent Hygienic Physicians*. Focusing on health and disease in adults and children, the book's substance is outlined in the contents, perhaps in order to appeal not only to the wife but also, in a section labelled 'Plain Talk to Husbands', to her spouse. There is a particular concern to educate the reader about accidents and emergencies, diet, wholesome food and drink, and the ethical training and rights of children. In the late 1800s, high levels of infant and maternal mortality, along with diminishing population growth were considered increasingly unacceptable among conservative elements in Australian society. Indeed, in certain quarters, the morality, affluence and well-being of the colonies were considered to be at stake (Hicks 1978).

The preface notes that the book presents much expertise equally relevant to the town or country parent. It also seeks to challenge the prescription and use of harmful drugs, suggesting an alternative, the "Hygienic mode of treatment that is cheap, simple, safe, and effective ...". This latter system emphasises prevention, and guarantees rapid and full recovery of health. The system allegedly follows "nature's laws ...", in the knowledge that violating these rules surely will lead to "punishment by outraged nature ...". In its dual concern for the corporeal and the ethical, this treatise is part of a larger series of liberal and middle class concerns with the body, both as a singular physical entity that can be manipulated and improved, and also as one unit in a wider social organism that can progress or evolve.

On 4 October 1902, and before the Australian Health Society, Mr Walter Butler read a paper entitled 'The Architecture of Healthy Homes'. The speech was published as part of a collection of the Society's papers, the larger commentary being named *Modern Architectural Design and the Architecture of Healthy Homes*. The text defines the meaning of home as more than a physical structure: a place of nurturance, affective interaction and happiness - as long as it is healthy. Health is seen to stem from two vital components of nature, namely "pure air and abundance of sunshine ..." (1902, 1). In any home, these essential elements depend on correct siting, which involves making expert decisions about soil and drainage, the proximity of particular industries and businesses, and the existence of soil, water and air pollution resulting from these other activities.

Butler then examines the internal ordering of the home, and especially the utilitarian and economic convenience of rectilinear floor plans. In some ways, these internal arrangements also dictate the overall siting of the home "parallel to the arms of the compass ..." or "round to the right or left to gain view or aspect ..." (1902, 3). Building and design are constituted as methods with which to capture and discipline various characteristics of nature. There are many details in the text on matters such as: the habits of the sun and the disinfectant properties of its rays; the correct design of windows for both natural light and ventilation (particularly with the advent of gas heating and lighting); the sensible placement of additions; the need for damp courses and other structures to protect against the infiltration of nature's more undesirable elements; the best floor and wall materials for hygienic and healthy living; the most appropriate ways to incorporate new labour-saving devices to enhance the ease of cleaning (considered so essential to the maintenance of hygienic homes); and finally, the most healthful modes of decoration to be employed in the home.

And for whom are all these regulations intended?

> ... it is the woman's place to be in her home, and it is her comfort, her convenience we should study the most, and her labour that it is our business to lighten; for in our home, be it palace or cottage, woman must live in pleasure, or the place will be unworthy of the name (1902, 15).

These two texts on healthy people and healthy homes were published almost a decade apart. As I will demonstrate and document in the work to follow, these texts were part of a widespread and vigorous debate focused on such topics as the home, nature and gender roles and relations that were deployed in diverse fields: medicine, psychiatry and psychology; economics and politics; architecture, building and engineering; religious and secular exhortations about sexual, personal and social morality; education; the progressive movement; the burgeoning new disciplines of the academy; and the popular press. The debate was constituted, normalised and challenged at the hearth, in the office, the shop, the factory, the legislature and judiciary, the clinic, the social club, the union, the universities, and the rooms of newspaper reporters and editors. It involved the strategic use of statistics, moral principles, factual and metaphorical accounts of terrible and tragic fates, and fabulous miracles of recovery. It was represented in literature, painting, and song, and in the everyday actions of subjects whose lives were constituted around, through and in resistance to this and other discussions. It is a debate that persists into the late twentieth century, although it remains both a matter for speculation and a central part of this research to establish how the debate has changed.

Four Characters

This last and imminent story, my research, asks how health discourses and attendant social practices contribute to the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in Australia in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. Thus, there are four characters involved in this 'construction site': the feminine, the home, nature and health. Despite my reliance on 'the' as a definite article of speech and writing, I am not suggesting that any of the categories are unitary or stable (Silverman 1983). The *feminine*, for example, may also be construed as woman, women or female, and all of these are heterogeneous categories of meaning. The feminine is a term on which I have settled because I think it can refer both to the allegedly real and to the representational, the corporeal and the conceptual. Irrespective of the difficulties attendant on naming that which is not the masculine, man, men or male, it is this term - the feminine - that I use most frequently to refer to that which is the 'other' to the dominant referent in a gendered society[2].

The *home*, too, is a term that I use with no intended implications about stability of meaning. My focus tends to be on middle class ideologies about the home as a desirable site of socialisation (discipline) of the population. Even here, I am not suggesting that this or any other class group is internally homogeneous. Nevertheless, diverse middle class ideas of home are also created by what they are not; paradoxically, distinction is a process of categorising meaning by which commonalities

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2 The naming of the feminine is a topic that concerns many feminist writers, and it is a complex and profound issue. In very different ways, Judith Butler (1990), Hélène Cixious and Catherine Cleménts (1986), Diana Fuss (1989), Luce Irigaray (1991), Julia Kristeva (1986) and Denise Riley (1988) suggest that 'woman' is an impossible category because we live in a phallogocentric world. Conversely, other feminist philosophical positions, such as that outlined by Mary Daly (1990) or Vicki Kirby (1991) celebrate different conceptions of the essential feminine which they propose can be created outside of the dominant order.

also are drawn. Thus I am also interested to examine how voices 'outside' middle class parameters of home contribute to the meanings assigned to that site (Bondi 1992; Madigan et al. 1990).

Nature is a third category of meaning with which I am concerned. Subordinate to culture and yet powerfully constituted as *a priori*, the original and universal object from which all else stems, nature and the natural are examined here as shifting and ambiguous symbols, among other things linked to the constitution of the feminine and the home. It is my suggestion that nature has been feminised and tamed, that the feminine has been naturalised and domesticated, that the home has been feminised and naturalised. All three have been represented and indeed mythologised as bodies, vessels and objects (Haraway 1991; Schiebinger 1993). Indeed, I have carried this assumption through the body of this text.

Finally, my decision to focus on construction of the feminine, the home and nature in *health* debates continues a theme found throughout social theory, from poststructural and specifically Foucauldian ideas about biopolitics to feminist and environmentalist concerns about the 'nature' of our relationships with 'nature' (Baum 1990; Milio 1990; Rose 1990). These relationships are often premised on paradoxical ideas that nature is sick and makes us sick or that we are sick and make nature sick. I explore these themes further in chapters two and three.

Beyond this explanation, I hope that the reader will understand the polyvalence that I intend to accompany these terms. They are categories bounded not only by their traditional binary attachment to the masculine, the public and the cultural, but given effect by other categories such as class, race or age, and by location, time and other contexts.

This research also draws on numerous threads in social theory, the study and heterodoxic use of language among them. Therefore, in some of the following work, I employ techniques belonging to discourse analysis and memory writing. I am also indebted to some of the insights provided by poststructural manipulations of semiotics, which examines modes of communication beyond the borders of traditional linguistics, embracing analyses of gestures, dress, customs, social practices and beliefs (Silverman van Buren 1989). Ferdinand de Saussure first proposed that language is a system of signs composed of a signifier (or conceptualised sound image) and a signified (or pre-existing social reality). In poststructural analysis, the signified is no longer privileged as a universal category; the social reality of the concept becomes as contingent as the specific signifier through which it gains expression in any given time or place (Harland 1987). Of particular relevance to my work is that two effects of the relativity of the sign are the radicalisation of language and the valorisation of the reader position (Smith 1989). Here, language is viewed as neither universal nor purely evolutionary, but as constitutive of reality (see Halliday 1992).

There are various ways in which meaning can be analysed by focusing on language. Here I am especially interested in the use of such figures of speech as metaphor and metonymy. Timothy O'Sullivan and his colleagues define these powerful tools of language as follows.

> Metaphor communicates the unknown by transposing it into terms of the known ... Metaphors work paradigmatically - they insert the unknown into a new paradigm from which it derives part of its new meaning ... Metonymy works by using a part or element of something to stand for the whole ... Metonyms work syntagmatically: we construct the rest of the 'story' from the part that we have been given ... [Metonyms] seem so natural that they are easily taken for granted, and we fail to recognize that another metonym might give a very different picture of the same whole. Myths tend to work metonymically (1983, 137-139).

By extension, metaphor and metonymy are tools that contain and conflate the meanings of 'women(s)' and 'nature(s)' as mythic and universal Woman and Nature. For example, in many cultural contexts (but for my purposes in Anglo contexts particularly) nature is typically gendered female - Mother Earth, Mother Country, Dame Nature. Word classes referring to nature, and to many objects, also tend to be feminine. These devices are among the many metaphorical and metonymical devices that collapse the feminine into nature, nature into the feminine, essentialising and naturalising both.

Terry Eagleton (1991, 51) argues that naturalising is a strategy that rests on exploiting a cultural misconception that nature is "massively immutable and enduring ...", an 'always' that reifies women's inferiority and nature's utility. Therefore, some texts are analysed here in terms of the multiple meanings which arise from the use of metaphor, metonymy and mythology, in order to show where images that are putatively natural are, in fact, cultural in origin.

A Place and Two Times

Analysing how the feminine, the home and nature are constructed is a substantial task. Even when contextualised in relation to the production and circulation of health debates, the breadth and depth of possible approaches is staggering. There is a need to narrow the focus of the study, and I have chosen to meet this need by examining a range of Australian health texts from the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries.

Australia is only one of several countries where health has been a prominent social concern. Endogenous conceptions of health have also been strongly influenced by North American and especially by British debates. Many such debates focus on the urban environment, and are accompanied by anti-urban sentiments and arcadian ideals, along with a yearning for the health that allegedly follows a life embedded in nature. Such nature is construed as a feminine domicile, and women (those primarily acting in feminine roles) are viewed as the natural occupants of the home. They are portrayed as naturally the most suitable producers of health within that arena, in part because of their consumption activities in the public sector. Now, these assumptions do not depend on the emergence of health debates exclusively in urban locations. Nonetheless, in the post-conquest era Australia has been one of the most highly urbanised countries in the world, and this rates more than a mention for two reasons. First, this urban bias is attended by substantial debate about the meaning of such things as health, the private sphere and the roles and functions of women. Second, environmental studies and the Australian environmental movement have largely ignored the home as a specific site in the urban arena in campaigns for the social reform of our approaches to nature, and yet health remains a crucial element in our own environmental well-being and many of its foundations are thought to be laid down or thwarted in the home (McMichael 1993).

Heavy concentrations of both Aboriginal and, after conquest, of non-Aboriginal populations in coastal areas have resulted from a variety of factors. The most obvious of these factors is the physical characteristic of the continent, but this component provides only a partial explanation for the rapid growth of cities. Influences on urbanisation in Australia have also included the growth of manufacturing, service industries, grazing, mining, agriculture, processing, building and construction, foreign and local investment, particular forms of government administration and

sometimes quite significant waves of immigration (Badcock 1984; Burnley 1985; Hugo 1986; Maher 1982; Reeves 1903).

These disparate conditions have been influenced by a range of discourses in the academy, the professions, the law and economy, and the popular press. People have been constituted as economic, political, spatial and sexual units through the multiple effects of these discourses. Some of these effects exist within specific contexts of class, race, gender and other confounding categories of meaning (Manderson and Reid 1994). Among other things, they include the emergence of labour movements and employer organisations; the development of the family wage and institutionalised female dependence on male workers; the reification of planning and local government, and the consequent spatial reification of certain forms of living. They are also implicated in the rise of the retail and commercial sectors where the masculine stands for the productive and the public, the feminine for the consumptive and the domestic. In general, too, debates emanating from the finance and building sectors have been conducive to the prevalence of the suburban home in the urban landscape.

> Most Australians desired not only to live in detached houses but to own them. The myth of home ownership, shaped partly by commercial interests and the state, was strong. 'Not to have your own home is unpatriotic', ruled the *Australian Financial Gazette* in 1890. Australian cities did not have dramatic depths of poverty except in some pockets of run-down slum housing adjacent to Sydney's and Melbourne's central business district [sic] ... The combination of rich natural resources, low population, productive rural industry, and organised labour, gave most Australians a relatively high standard of living. However, the cost of acquiring a house with garden was still prohibitive for many workers ... (Robert Freestone 1985, 15).

In Freestone's assessment, the ideology of middle class home ownership is linked to powerful ideas about nationalism, economic prosperity and the functions of the state. While colonial governments tended to adopt a hands-off approach to many urban issues, later national and state governments have been involved in the conception and development of suburban and city-based plans. Although constrained in vision and design, these controls have been promoted by the state as providing the population with freedom of choice, so that more Australians could make the 'great Australian dream' of home ownership a reality. Moreover, these models serve to discipline the population spatially, economically, sexually and socially. They contain lived experiences into particular configurations (normally of heterosexual nuclear familism) in allegedly healthy homes that together are meant to make up harmonious communities.

Healthy homes have also come to be signified by affluence, and affluence by conspicuous consumption, itself now paradoxically constituted as both an unhealthy and a creative act (Campbell 1990; Veblen 1899). Alternative models for living different versions of the great Australian dream such as communitarian settlements, ecocities or kitchenless houses remain marginal (Monk 1992; Orszanski 1994; Spain 1995). Nevertheless, resistance to orthodox images of a healthful domestic ideal form part of the discourse on the kind of life to which all Australians might aspire (Reiger 1985; Stretton 1989). In painting, literature, the lyrics to popular songs and throughout the popular press, the domestic ideal is represented as both desirable and stifling. The latter characteristic has been especially prevalent as an image in masculine discourses (Boyd 1987), although with the advent of second wave feminism women, too, have provided evidence that the suburban home is not as healthy as it is reputed to be (Matthews 1984; Nelson 1990).

The choice to examine material from the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries requires comment. Various linguistic and social strategies that are used to give meaning to the feminine, the home and nature operate in Australia in the late nineteenth century as well as in the late twentieth century, among them such diverse elements as figures of speech, ideology and coercion. However, this research is not a history of 'what was and is going on', and it is not about making 'causal connections' between events in two discreet periods in time. We live in an intellectual community where the production of knowledge typically is viewed as continuous, moving from less enlightened to more enlightened times. Poststructural conceptions of history propose that this continuity is more invented rather than natural, challenging some of the connections made among history, metaphysics and teleology (Veeser 1989). This work asks how the two eras have been discursively produced as continuous, how their narration might be reformulated in ways that acknowledge discontinuities or multi-directionalities, and how they influence our conceptions of ourselves. Hence my stated interest in time and history, bodies and selves, and power and the production of knowledge.

In relation to the late twentieth century, debates that inform and link the feminine and the natural have burgeoned in the last twenty years in Australia. The emergence of environmentalism and ecofeminism has been a hallmark of these decades. Feminist discourses and social practices have partly challenged the orthodox in fields of knowledge such as science and philosophy, and there has been a comparable increase in discussions that analyse and reconstruct notions about the feminine and nature in environmental discourses and social practices. There has also been an increased emphasis on the nexus among community, environment, consumerism and health in these last decades (Grace 1994). Thus, the choice to examine material from the late twentieth century has been relatively straightforward.

The late nineteenth century is another matter. The initial decision to examine the decades from around 1873 to 1903 stems from my interest in early methods of advertising and the representation of nature in the popular press. Numerous health texts in circulation in Australia in the late nineteenth and very early twentieth centuries were supported by advertisements promoting an expanding range of mass-produced commodities (Reekie 1993). Many such advertisements were directed at women consumers because of their position in the home. Arguably, these texts were implicated in the paradoxical construction of the feminine as a consumer item in itself (FIG 2). Advertisements also embodied textual strategies where 'nature' and the 'natural' stand for 'better' or 'kinder' or 'healthier'. In some of these advertisements, certain assumptions were made about women consumers being morally pure and natural, and about these women mediating between masculine culture and feminine nature. Moreover, health was a central concern for women in these years, and there was a proliferation of documents and routines about it. The body's discipline and care seem to have been paramount. Issues of population and eugenics, food adulteration, healthy homes, dress reform, child care, home economics and scientific management informed this health debate, and may have influenced how women were constituted and constructed themselves to live in the home in relation to nature and the natural, and came to act within the market as consumers influenced by conflicting moral codes about what correct living entailed.

There are other reasons for examining texts from the late nineteenth century. Around these decades, various sectors of Australian society experienced considerable commotion and change. There are many analyses of this period emphasising issues of national pride and the need for a

national approach to a range of issues, environmental management included (Powell 1994). For example, in 1890, the first national convention on federation was held among the six Australian colonies and New Zealand. It was an event that gestured at and then institutionalised a drive towards nationalism that was to be constitutionally effected at the close of the decade. There was also a clearly articulated desire to conquer and use the land for national economic well-being, a concern that was heightened by economically straitened times (Powell 1976).

These nationalist views galvanised the disciplining effects of other discourses concerned to strengthen family values and increase the ranks of the white population with strong and sturdy offspring (Bacchi 1980; Hicks 1978)[3]. Such discourses were connected to ideologies that viewed women as the guardians of health in the home and, through their philanthropy, in the community. Juxtaposed against the values of domesticity and the (social) reproduction of healthy Australian citizens, and not absolutely in conflict with some of these values, was the rise of feminism in Australia. Focusing largely, though not exclusively, on the issue of suffrage, the early women's movement sought to challenge orthodox conceptions of womanhood and some of the social practices of masculine mateship. The consumption of alcohol was one such practice connected to domestic violence; in significant ways, the temperance movement served to broaden the definition of health to include freedom from violence, and the home was an important site in this campaign.

These feminist ventures were undertaken almost exclusively within the philosophical confines of liberal reformism and progressivism, although there were both strong socialist and evangelist leanings in pockets of middle class reform. While the gains made by these diverse reformers must never be discounted, they do need to be understood as existing within specific and conservative constellations of ideas that inform and are informed by the prevailing cult of domesticity. Only a few feminist discourses challenged the basic notion that women's natural place is in the home (MacIntyre 1991); more often than not, significant numbers of these tracts aimed primarily to improve the position and influence that women have in this site (Daniels and Murnane 1980; Allen et al. 1989). I elaborate on some of these issues in the preface to Part II.

Thus, I intend to demonstrate that the analysis of discourses on health serving to constitute the meanings of other categories, and stemming from both the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries, is relevant and novel. Certainly, an examination of continuous and discontinuous themes across the periods will prove interesting, since it is an approach that Foucault himself did not undertake. We tend to view history as a process that is unilinear - from an authentic past to a real present. By examining the two periods, I will explore how our conceptions of the past (someone else's present) influence how we deal with our present (someone else's future) and how we speak and write about ourselves, the world and time. I will also be able to explore if time and the conception of history are multi-directional rather than continuous or discontinuous (both of which seem to me to imply simple and problematic linearity).

Finally, the most important justification for delimiting the research in these various ways comes from Foucault, who notes in *The Order of Things*:

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3 Debates about population decline, pronatalism and eugenics were significant in number and they generated a lot of contention and acrimony. As well as the research by Carol Bacchi and Neville Hicks, works by Patricia Quiggan (1988), Judith Raftery (1993) and Gigi Santow et al. (1988) outline various population histories of Australia. Texts by Thomas Malthus (1798/1970), Friedrich Engels (1884/1972) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1898/1970) also provide fascinating material on the construction of social morality, gender roles and relations, and proposed solutions to population pressures and the social and somatic challenges arising from these pressures.

> I should like this work to be read as an open site. Many questions are laid out on it that have not yet found answers; and many of the gaps refer either to earlier works or to others that have not yet been completed, or even begun. But I should like to mention three problems. The problem of change ... The problem of causality ... The problem of subject ... (1970, xii-xiii).

HOUSEKEEPING

This work is organised in four parts. In the rest of this Part, I examine major theoretical concerns of the research and analyse five narratives about health and health reform to explore how other scholars constitute the meaning of the feminine, the home and nature in their analyses. In Part II, I examine these categories and how they have been given meaning in certain nineteenth century documents that reflect on the constitution of health. In particular, I study texts both from the feminine popular press and from documents generated by men in journals and in legislation. In Part III, I bring forward to the present some of the themes identified in Part II, engaging with them directly and indirectly as a person of the late twentieth century who is gendered feminine, lives in a middle class home in Australia, and holds particular views about health and nature. This self-reflexive approach is supplemented by the use of material generated in the academy and the popular press in the last thirty years. The procedure is designed to put to the test my ideas that history is indeed multi-directional; constructed in the present as much as 'found' in the past. In Part IV, I stitch together the various parts of my story with a discussion on whether and how discourses on health are part of a more complex generation of discourses and social practices that reflect subjective and institutional concerns about ethics and morality. These issues are of particular concern to me because environmental studies involves questions of ethical change and because the feminine, the home and nature have been sites of moral discipline in the two eras under examination.

Five other points briefly need to be made here. First, I have chosen to write this work by embracing the "I". This first-person approach has been under-employed in the academy, on the grounds that scholars must be seen to be objective and impartial about the knowledge they discover (produce). This is a position I challenge, given the theoretical and technical choices I have made in researching and writing this dissertation, choices that involve a rejection of the idea that knowledge is produced in purely objective and rational ways. Further, my concern to elucidate the lived experience of writer and reader as embodied subjects, constitutive of their own meanings, requires that my presence be maintained front and centre in this work. In a recent article from *The Weekend Australian* newspaper entitled 'Is Feminist History Bunk?' (March 4-5, 1995, 27) an historian named John Hirst argues that the exploration of self is an indulgence of the worst kind: "Of course, it is not just feminists who have elevated the promotion of self-esteem to a prime object of education. Education is no longer to take students out of themselves, but to make their selves the central objects of study ...". I agree in some measure, and yet do not lament this particular phase in the production of knowledge. For one thing, self-reflexive work does not negate the ability to be empathic to other subjects, to come out of oneself. For another thing, Hirst's comments imply that only certain roles are appropriate for learning. Finally, Hirst's use of the term 'object' suggests that he has missed the point about self-writing, an endeavour that attempts to discover subjects in the self. I acknowledge that self-reflection is empty without some kind of 'useful' and 'productive' political and

philosophical motive. However, I also suggest that self-understanding is vital for the various projects that fall under the rubric of environmental studies in particular and social theory in general.

Second, I have chosen to use certain illustrations to provide a contextual flavour to the work being discussed. Readers will find reference to these illustrations in text, except in chapter seven where reference to the illustrations would interrupt the flow of the story. The illustrations are located at the end of Part I, Part II and Part III.

The third point on style concerns the use of quotes in different parts of the text. At the beginning of each chapter hereafter, I use certain quotes to set a context or scene; these passages have been redolent of significance for me. In the substantive parts of chapters, quotes are used either to preserve a particularly eloquent passage by another writer or, most importantly, form the 'data' of the dissertation, extracts of full texts which I analyse for various purposes. Sometimes these extracts are quite long. I consider their inclusion essential.

Fourth, I think that some discussion is warranted about how I present matters of methodology. Until I came to write the chapters in Parts II and III, there were several possible ways to choose texts for analysis in the dissertation. I gathered a considerable amount of material during my fieldwork at the Mitchell Library in Sydney, the National Library in Canberra and the Barr Smith Library in Adelaide during 1993 and 1994[4], and I spent considerable time working on body, self and nature in 1995, experimenting with ways to analyse textual material, since the techniques were then new to my skills-base. I think it is important to acknowledge this development as part of the process of the research and, as part of a personal narrative or chronology, I want to demonstrate how various insights have emerged as the project has developed. This openness about my own research procedures requires that some methodological issues (as well as discussions about them) arise in discussion only as we go along. To me, this step seems rather more desirable than accommodating novel thoughts and new understandings 'after the fact' in chapters that were written, by and large, before these insights were made. It is also in keeping with the idea of this work as an unfolding narrative.

Finally, at the end of most chapters is a section called Final Observations. Material presented in these passages is designed to summarise and to provide stepping stones to following chapters. With these various comments made - with the research question(s) asked, the scenes set and the housekeeping done - I now want to examine the major theoretical considerations upon which this research is based, and these are the concerns of chapter two.

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[4] In preparing for fieldwork, I have examined several bibliographic, photographic and essay source materials. Notable among these are Margaret Adamson (1988), Margaret Bettison and Anne Summers (1980), Dietrich Borchardt (1950-1990), Clifford Burmester (1974-1982), Kay Daniels et al. (1977), Terry Hogan et al. (1976), Terry Lane and Jessie Serle (1991), the Mitchell Library Manuscripts Guide (1977-), the National Library of Australia (various years and 1959), Heather Radi (1988) and The Fabian Society (1884-1909).

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CONSTRUCTION SITES:
MAJOR THEORETICAL CONCERNS

> Many women [and men] acknowledge the feeling of being a different person in different social situations which call for different qualities and modes of femininity. The range of ways of being a woman [or man] open to each of us at a particular time is extremely wide but we know or feel we ought to know what is expected of us in particular situations ... We may embrace these ways of being, these subject positions whole-heartedly, we may reject them outright or we may offer resistance while complying to the letter with what is expected of us. Yet even when we resist a particular subject position and the mode of subjectivity which it brings with it, we do so from the position of an alternative social definition of femininity [or masculinity]. In patriarchal societies we cannot escape the implications of femininity [or masculinity] (Christine Weedon 1987, 86-87).

> Nature is the other against which the human is defined, the raw to the culturally cooked. But nature is also the original, the given versus the made, and as such it provides the comfort of an existential foundation. Nature in contemporary environmental discourse, then, is not only the realm of beasts but also of God, of what lies beyond or behind the precarious web of semiotic constructions (Jane Bennett and William Chaloupka 1993, ix-x).

INTRODUCTION

The postmodern and poststructural are powerful forms of critique, although whether these 'post- turns' are new paradigms (indeed, whether they can be such) remains to be seen (Milner 1991). What is more clear is that the impact of the postmodern and poststructural is very different in different disciplines. In architecture, literary criticism and theory, literature and the arts, postmodernity has been used long enough for some observers to suggest that the disciplines have moved beyond the concerns of postmodernism. In this instance, postmodernism is defined as a set of practices which critique the modern turn, whose inception is dated anywhere from the Renaissance to the middle of last century (Rose 1991). However, in the social sciences, although the label postmodern is used, the term poststructural also describes disparate works that critique foundational assumptions on which the knowledge of modernity rests. Among the 'sacred cows' targeted by poststructuralism are ideas that the body is an essential object; that the (Cartesian) self is separate from the body in which it is located; that there are universal and immutable truths from which we can derive teleologies; and that - among others - nature and culture, the masculine and feminine, the public and private are binary opposites. I use this term - poststructural - throughout the research, except where others refer to the postmodern.

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise certain of these theoretical concerns for environmental studies in general and this topic in particular, by examining some of the foundations of environmentalism and ecofeminism. These movements present specific and problematic conceptions of the feminine, the home and nature, sometimes exhibiting certain and often profound reservations about the poststructural turn. I then discuss select Foucauldian insights about time and history, bodies and selves, and power and knowledge production that have bearing on this research,

noting some of the criticisms that have been levelled at these ideas. I also summarise five very different studies indebted to poststructural methods that have direct relevance to my own research.

QUESTIONING ENVIRONMENTALISM AND ECOFEMINISM

Environmental studies is part of a collection of ideas and practices concerned to analyse and act on the state of a global crisis said to be facing humanity, other species and the biosphere. Interestingly, such analyses regularly use potent metaphorical tools to describe the earth as sick. I will return to these metaphors throughout this research. Environmental studies also includes diverse political alliances. For example, there are stories about the nature/culture relationship that examine the exploitation of the earth over time (Glacken 1967; Marsh 1864/1974; Mercer 1991). There are analyses of cornucopian, technocentric, instrumental and ecocentric appraisals of nature (O'Riordan 1981). There are explorations of the ethical dimensions of environmentalism (Cooper and Palmer 1992; Des Jardins 1993) or the place of activism in this movement (Merchant 1992). There are leftist political tracts about environmental problems (Pepper 1986; Schnaiberg 1980), and projects from the right of the political spectrum (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1977; Hardin 1968). Environmental studies also incorporates ecocentric philosophies rejecting the anthropocentrism and instrumentalism apparent in these other studies (Eckersley 1992; Fox 1990). Complex issues of population (White 1994), along with politics and policy are also examined (Doyle and Kellow 1995).

These various perspectives are elaborated on in the preface to Part III. My focus here is on environmental studies, which remains generally androcentric, and on ecofeminism. Paradoxically, certain ecofeminist discourses also suggest that the feminine is closer to nature than the masculine. Androcentric and gynocentric texts alike constitute women as mediators between masculine, cultural and public spheres on the one hand and feminine, natural and private spheres on the other[1].

Ecofeminism has been the subject of considerable research activity in the fifteen years since the 'Women and Life on Earth Conference' held in 1980. Linda Vance (1993) summarises 'significant' ecofeminist texts, noting prevailing concern with issues of spirituality, sexuality, history, economy, polity, international relations and environment. Various political, philosophical and religious positions influence ecofeminism. Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic on Sex* (1971) first pioneered calls for an ecological feminist revolution to challenge the boundaries of patriarchal capitalism. Other works argue for a fully gynocentric approach to living with nature (Daly 1990). Some texts are benchmarks for alternative ways of writing about masculine approaches to the feminine and the natural (Griffin 1984) or about broadly western understandings of nature (Mies and Shiva 1993). Other texts focus on issues about women and waste (Keller 1990; Schultz 1993), or on issues of urban pollution and its effects on the material well-being of women and children (Nelson 1990). Some deal with the spiritual aspects of being feminine in urban settings (Javors 1990). Others present complex critiques of western philosophies that underpin much of the 'malestream' discourse on nature (Birkeland 1993). A few texts argue for localised and micro-political resistance based on Foucauldian understandings about the exercise of power (Quinby 1990).

[1] A prolonged interchange on ecofeminism and deep ecology among Ariel Salleh (1984, 1991), Karen Warren (1987), Michael Zimmerman (1987) and Warwick Fox (1990) has been particularly interesting in relation to these issues of gender in environmental studies.

Janet Biehl (1991) argues that ecofeminism is problematic on two counts. First, ecofeminist discourses aim to revalue the feminine and the natural using forms of reasoning that ironically and dangerously exacerbate the conflation of feminine and nature as subordinate objects in the symbolic order. Second, these texts construct the feminine and nature in ways that are biologistic, essentialising in nature that which Biehl argues is culturally and socially derived.

In direct response to Biehl's charges, Janis Birkeland (1993, 21) notes:

> In my experience, ecofeminism is more threatening to masculine-identified men and women than environmentalism because it hits closer to home. Not surprisingly, then, it has been falsely stereotyped to such an extent that most debates about ecofeminism revolve around misconceptions rather than matters of substance. The main misconceptions are that it is dualistic, partial, anti-rational, and "essentialist" (that is, endorses the idea that women's nature is unchanging and that they are inherently "closer to nature"). However, in each case it is not ecofeminism, but rather Patriarchal theories, to which these adjectives should apply.

Some of Birkeland's points are well-taken. Yet it is also important to note the arguments of scholars such as Jacques Derrida (1978) or Christine Weedon (1987), who argue that there is no outside from patriarchy; all discourse is thought to be located in a phallogocentric world, ecofeminism included. Thus, in environmentalism and ecofeminism there are various views about the philosophical and political positions of women and the meaning of the feminine vis-a-vis nature, and many of these views are concerned with advancing positions about what it means to live in ethical and moral ways.

Both formal and informal components of the environmental movement have been politicised. Premised largely on instrumental understandings of nature and society, mainstream environmentalist programs of reform and resistance provide a focus on environmental values attributed to public and wild places. Typically, this focus has ignored or marginalised the home as a place of environmental action, interaction and involvement, even though a significant number of conservationists are drawn from the urban middle classes (Figgis 1984) for whom the home has had particular resonance as a natural place in which to create disciplined and moral citizens.

Indeed, the home is awkwardly positioned between nature and culture. Yet, environmentalists tend to ignore the home and other local and allegedly private symbols and sites, and thus they ignore a locus of much of women's past, present and likely future activities. They also neglect a place of significant socialisation, 'environmental management'[2] and potential social change. Reformist drives about energy efficiency, green consumerism or recycling and clean technology (Kirkwood 1994), alongside more radical plans for alternative methods of living, are necessary but insufficient conditions of change. Arguably, we must change how we speak, write, think and feel about environmental matters, particularly given the power of language to constitute us. Notwithstanding its putative stability, the home is a polyvalent sign. Its shifting symbolic values are inscribed onto the very products from which the material existence of this space is derived; it is a body. Importantly, the home can also be constituted in ways that might avoid the essential and orthodox. It is a terrain in which the feminine, nature and health converge, and yet we need to avoid conflating the feminine and the natural in analyses of the home (Stratford 1994).

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[2] Environmental management is a problematic term, often construed as the management of the environment, rather than the management of individuals, social groups and institutions in their interactions with the environment. Rather than pursue this issue in more detail, I note its difficulties in passing at this point.

In modernity[3] are created and privileged the transcendent, the masculine, the cultural, the public and the rational subject. Along with the inferiorised others which are their alleged opposites, these constructions are problematic in the broad context of environmental studies, since many seemingly rational actions of patriarchal culture have turned out to be spectacularly irrational. The characteristics of modernity are criticised by other forms of thinking which fall under the rubric of postmodernism and poststructuralism (Foucault 1984a; Gunew 1990). Yet, many of the cracks in the modern episteme come from the edifice itself. For example, Marx argued that much social analysis before his time ignored the material bases of life, and was thus thoroughly trapped in idealism. Freud proposed the existence of an unconscious beyond the grasp of reason. Saussure suggested that people fit the linguistic realities in which they are located[4]. Yet Marx, Freud and Saussure remain within modernity, even while picking away at its foundations (Harland 1987). It may well be the case that the poststructural and the postmodern are also part of a late modernity, but that complex debate is beyond the parameters of this work. What they do allow is a critique of the rigidity of the oppositions found in modernity, and this challenge is central to my work.

Despite certain theoretical and political difficulties attendant on its use, poststructural thinking about the ambivalence of meaning is strongly appealing. It empowers groups whose contributions to legitimate(d) forms of knowledge have been marginal within modernity. These groups include colonised and indigenous peoples, diverse groups of women, psychiatric patients and other people classified as deviant, along with members of disruptive and unorthodox social movements such as environmentalism and feminism. Poststructural approaches question how transgression and normalisation are produced in the academy permitting - in this case - a challenge to orthodox understandings of the construction of the feminine, the home and nature in health discourses by creating space for fresh analyses of texts that constitute the discourse on health, itself embedded in a wider discourse on what it means to be moral and ethical. In the field of environmental studies, there may be significant insights to be gained by this kind of research.

POSTSTRUCTURAL AND FOUCAULDIAN METHODOLOGIES

The work of Michel Foucault has been important in the development of some ideas explored in this research. Initially, tentatively, I leaned on Foucault as one might on a friendly stranger in unfamiliar territory. As I have become more comfortable with my own skills of critical analysis, my early reliance on Foucauldian ideas has been modified. At times, I have baulked at what Foucault's critics present as unavoidable conclusions, such as those asserting that his relativism is politically bankrupt, and his conceptions of power disabling. At other times, I have celebrated Foucault's

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3 Here, I adopt a definition of modernity advanced by J.O. Urmson and Jonathan Rée (1991, 215): "The idea of modernity ... is an attempt to grasp the peculiarity of the present by contrasting it with a preceding age. Various criteria of modernity have been proposed: science, commerce, capitalism, police, print, surveillance, cheap travel, atheism, bureaucratic rationality, urbanism, consumerism, and above all, alienation. But the underlying contrast is always epistemological: the modern world is enlightened, scientific and disappointed, whereas its predecessor was superstitious, gullible and magic. Hence, philosophical debates about the scope and limits of reason or science touch the crux of the concept of modernity".

4 In semiotic theory, there has been an important shift from Saussurean and structuralist ideas that the sign is composed of stable signifieds or concepts and signifiers or individual forms which give expression to the signifieds (Harland 1987). In poststructural theory, the signified has come loose under the challenge mounted against notions of Cartesian (masculine) subjectivity (Hekman 1990), among others. Meaning is highly contingent, and positions other than those typically accepted as authorised gain some voice.

influence on contemporary scholarship, particularly his contributions to releasing subaltern knowledges, and challenging orthodoxies and procedures of normalisation. Lately, there has also been some interesting rapprochement between Foucault's 'allies' and 'dissenters' who use the works of other social theorists such as Jurgen Habermas (see Hoy and McCarthy 1994). These conversations demonstrate that some of the early reactions against Foucault are now being tempered by additional analysis and discussion.

This research is thus a personal intellectual journey, and I remain ambivalent about those elements of Foucault's work that I have examined to reach this point. Indeed, I hope that this document will reflect some of the challenges characterising the research process, for surely one of the important functions of doctoral work is to create intriguing uncertainties as well as comfortable assurances.

Time and History

Time passes. In part, how we conceive of that passage depends on the metaphors we develop and naturalise. Hopi Indian time is an ever becoming later. Koori Aboriginal time is a present and presence of ancestors and the dreaming. Formal western time is linear, and is sometimes collocated with the idea of progress; in such representations time is a J-curve.

Our metaphors for time have profound implications for how we view life and the ethical and moral living of it. In his works on the discourse of language and the archaeology of knowledge (1972a, 1972b) Foucault asserts that 'the document' typically stands for the past reconstituted as truth in the present. He challenges this approach to archival materials, noting that they function as a mass of documentation through which present society views itself as inevitably linked to a past which it renders similar: among other things, he says, we order, arrange and convey discontinuous documents so that they appear continuous. We make otherness become familiar to mask resistance. Foucault thus suggests that the project of history is a tool by which we discipline our conceptions of the past, a terrain that he views as having many discontinuities and points of difference.

In this light, the search for continuity of meaning in the environmental and feminist movements over time appears as the *desire* of the present for an authentic past that holds the essential origins of the present in safe keeping. However, Foucault's aim is to disturb rather than to reject the idea of continuity, because it can also be viewed as relative and periodic (1972b). Indeed, in his final works, he acknowledges that many of the statements he had made in earlier years about the death of man, of the author and of the subject - statements to challenge continuity - were heuristic devices. Foucault also admits to being embedded in the enlightenment project he earlier had sought to question (Hoy 1986; O'Farrell 1988). I will return to this element in Foucault's work and my own research in chapter nine, because it has implications for how we might view discourses on health in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries.

In his archaeological, genealogical and ethical phases spanning the period from the early 1960s until his death in 1984 (Davidson 1986), Foucault "continually investigates both how human beings constitute themselves as subjects and how they treat one another as objects ..." (Hoy 1986, 4). In some of this work, he focuses on this project of subjectivation in modernity. Methodological aspects of his work are mirrored in the structure of my work. First, in Part II, I undertake an archaeology of health discourses in the late nineteenth century (focusing on the production of

statements). Second, in Part III, I perform a genealogy of other health discourses in the late twentieth century (focusing, in part, on the dispersion of power on bodies). Finally, in Part IV, I conclude with an examination of whether and how health discourses are crucially concerned with the constitution of ethical and moral subjects and societies.

The archaeology of the discourse on health involves asking how statements are produced, dispersed, succeeded, limited and distinguished; analysing the relations between statements and "institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization ..." (1972b, 45). Thus, the object of archaeology is to analyse statements, texts and discourses about health and other categories, not "to pierce through [their] identity in order to reach what remains silently anterior to it ..." (p.48), but to analyse their complexity and hidden heterogeneity.

There is a persistent concern in Foucault's work to challenge the production of knowledge based on "consciousness and continuity, liberty and causality, sign and structure ..." (1972a, 230). Foucault argues that the project of history is often a struggle for domination (Barker, 1993); a will to truth based on a fear that discourse is not controlled, uniform and true. He suggests that in the knowledge we produce in formal institutions, there has been little space for chance, discontinuity, multiple perspectives and subjectivities, although I suggest that this case is changing. Marginalised stories have remained so because of the exercise of power within and around authorised discourses: subaltern interpretations about bodies, places and nature have been left from discourses on health and from the social institutions in which their production is fostered. Particular stories of otherness are now emerging into legitimated fields of knowledge and popular culture alike, and this trend demonstrates a resistance to marginality. Even so, subaltern stories can also be based on tacit or unwitting acceptance of orthodox definitions and categories of what is knowledge (Halperin 1994). In other words, the transgressive can be absorbed and normalised (Sorensen, 1994), even while it retains the paradoxical or even impossible position of the symbolically 'outside'. In this way, the feminine, the home and nature are crucial to normative conceptions of health, and nevertheless remain potential and actual sites of transgression.

Methods of historical survey that seek unity, continuity and significance tend also to blend fact, generalisation and value judgment (see White 1965). Foucault seeks instead to expose the unvoiced, unexplained and contingent within events, using these tools in ways by which "we gradually perceive - beyond battles, decisions, dynasties and assemblies - the emergence of those massive phenomena of secular or multi-secular importance ..." (Foucault 1972a, 230). Thus, effective history - genealogy - is the task of constructing the present, a line of descent of statements, texts, discourses, events and institutions. It is critically concerned with the production and deployment of meaning, central to the examination of the 'construction sites' in my work. Rather than asking questions such as does human nature exist? does woman exist? is the home a universal and essential phenomenon? what is health? or is there an environmental crisis? the scholar using genealogical methods asks how do concepts such as human nature, woman, home, health or environmental crisis function in our societies and what are the effects of these concepts? Genealogy critiques relations of power: for example, how we deploy our resources to control ourselves and others using surveillance, discipline and the techniques of governmentality, how it is that we are

constituted as disciplined and apparently orthodox subjects within domains of power/knowledge - that is how we develop and live within ethical and moral frameworks.

Genealogy is indebted to the philosophical writings of Frederick Nietzsche (Foucault 1984b; Ankersmit 1989). It is meant to facilitate a discovery of multiple truths and processes, of the marginal and contingent. In adopting three Nietzschean terms, *ursprung* (origin), *herkunft* (descent) and *entstehung* (emergence), Foucault positions some of his work in a methodology that questions notions of progress, universal truth and the Cartesian subject. As Ankersmit (1989) suggests, Nietzschean philosophy serves to question notions of causality, proposing instead that 'origin' is decided retrospectively and thus is to be found in the effect (present) rather than in the cause (past). This point may come to have more resonance in chapter nine when my present and the past that I have chosen to analyse (constitute?) converge around the feminine, the home and nature.

Genealogy is concerned with the emergence of normalising and transgressive discourses and social practices. The use of genealogy involves asking how we govern ourselves by producing what we call truths and what power effects such truths have, and exposing in turn local knowledges and counter-memories that challenge the safety of these truths. Indeed, Foucault's driving purpose is to effect an "insurrection of subjugated knowledges ..." (Sawicki 1991, 57), often as part of his dedicated program of broadly emancipatory exercises around issues such as prison reform or the breakdown of taboos on sexuality (see Foucault 1975; Eribon 1992; Miller 1993). Hence, I am not convinced by arguments that his relativism equates with political ambivalence or an inability to act, a criticism I return to in a moment.

Using genealogy, Foucault has traced the emergence of two regimes that have specific relevance to environmental studies.

> In concrete terms, starting in the seventeenth century, this power over life evolved in two basic forms; these forms were not antithetical, however; they constituted rather two poles of development linked together by a whole intermediary cluster of relations. One of these poles - the first to be formed, it seems - centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the disciplines: *an anatomo-politics of the human body*. The second, formed somewhat later, focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanisms of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: *a biopolitics of the population*. The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed (1976, 139, original emphases).

Two disciplines: an anatomo-politics of the body and a biopolitics of the population. Biopower, the transformation of human life through the deployment and exercise of power, also invokes the existence of biohistory, the intersection of life and history. Life seems both within and outside history, though never outside language, and it resonates with complex discourses and social practices. The ethical and moral construction of gender, place and health are important parts of these regimes. In relation to ethical and moral considerations, I think that the concern to normalise the past and bring it into the present as cause and origin of the present is based on a desire to discipline otherness: for how can we descend from the other? The figures of history must be like us, or must be relegated to the absent, silent or marginal. Yet, with the advent of feminist, postcolonial and poststructural scholarship, subalterns have found voice. Even nature has come to be imbued with its

own life force through such devices as James Lovelock's Gaia metaphor or radical feminist reiterations of the earth mother. The result is a cacophony of different and contested positions; impolite, far from neat and certainly out of uniform.

Bodies and Selves

For heuristic purposes, one of the most important aspects of this research has been my decision to view the feminine, the home and nature as metaphorical bodies: I reiterate my understanding that meaning is contingent, so the notion of body itself involves polyvalence. Bodies function in particular ways in our society. Typically (though perhaps not universally), they are objects on which we exercise certain practices, objectifying them in order to manipulate them (Hekman 1990; Jaggar and Bordo 1989). Bodies are important in poststructural analysis. Typically, they are theorised as existing through specific cultural significations, rather than as part of an historically uniform and universal *a priori* such as a 'nature'.

Indeed, the poststructural body is radically anti-essentialist (Grosz 1994). For feminist scholars interested in the poststructural, assumptions among certain male poststructuralists that the body is gender-neutral are problematic. Elizabeth Grosz (1990) notes with exasperation the particularly paradoxical colonisation of the feminine by scholars such as Derrida, who uses metaphors involving the female body in analysis, a practice Alice Jardine (1985) calls gynesis. It is also the case that the "body circulates inexorably among other categories which sometimes arrange it in sexed ranks, sometimes not ..." (McNay 1992, 37). In other words, gender is a representational device given effect through textual and social practices (De Lauretis 1987).

Institutional forces have also been exercised on the bodies of the feminine, the home and nature as much as they have on the masculine, the public sphere and culture, those traditional concerns of historical and theoretical analysis. From the Enlightenment, specific practices have developed in diverse fields of knowledge to survey, discipline and control our bodies and our conceptions of self; some of these practices have been highly gendered. Surveillance, discipline and control have been particularly effectively exercised through government of self, other and society, strategies that also constitute what is ethical and moral - that is what is order. According to Zygmunt Bauman:

> It was in that era [the Enlightenment] that the power/knowledge syndrome, a most conspicuous attribute of modernity, had been set. The syndrome was a joint product of two novel developments which took place at the beginning of the modern times: the emergence of a new type of state power with resources and will necessary to shape and administer the social system according to a preconceived model of order; and the establishment of a relatively autonomous, self-managing discourse able to generate such a model complete with the practices its implementation required (1987, 2).

The state, the church, the academy, the professions and the burgeoning middle classes number among the social institutions through which both human bodies and other 'cultural' and indeed 'natural' bodies have been normalised and disciplined in a new and 'enlightened' world increasingly premised on rationality, science and the laissez faire political economy. Sites of discipline examined by Foucault include the asylum (1965), the clinic (1973), the prison (1975) and the body as a terrain of sexuality (1976 et al.). Each of these places contains and constrains people whose bodies and subjectivities are temporarily or permanently unable to act in natural, healthy and moral ways.

Numerous female scholars have used elements of Foucault's work to examine sites such as the obstetrician's surgery (Poovey 1986), the working class community (Finch 1993) or Thoreau's ethical and political world (Bennett 1994). Female bodies and nature are ordered and controlled within certain regimes that define what it means to be feminine and natural, although it is crucial to note that these bodies are also inscribed in ways that can be transgressive. Typically, though, female bodies are naturalised in ways that conflate them with two specific terrains: the small, passive and private sphere of the feminised home and the larger sphere of nature which paradoxically is constituted both as pliant and as wild (Merchant 1990).

Thus, modern bodies are public, disciplined, moral and yet privatised tools constituted through diverse discourses about population, economy, polity, society, science and religion, colonial imperialism and nationalism (Bhabha 1990), and the development of the modern family and home. In the modern period, there has been a proliferation of texts and practices based around the construction of healthy bodies - the bodies of people, of homes, communities, cities, nations and environments. Healthy bodies nevertheless seem elusive because there is a tendency in our society to focus on illness rather than on wellness; this I think has coloured our approach to ourselves, each other and nature.

Power and Knowledge: embodied sites and disembodied time

Discourses and social practices operate in various ways. They are codified in specific networks of power (Andersen 1988). They are political. Moreover, they privilege the author, the commentary and the discipline as stable and unitary. Nevertheless, discourses and social practices that appear unproblematic are often sites of struggle and dissent, since discursive power is constituted within, around and through the constitution of resistances to it. Yet such contest is not always explicit, and is rarely ever 'equal'; the existence of alternative and marginal discourses and social practices can be concealed, despite the claims of liberal and pluralist scripts in which it is proposed that eventually all will be equally served. Here is where my training in structuralism has sometimes clashed with my adoption of poststructuralism, although I am convinced by John Fiske's proposition that:

> If some of the arenas of political struggles are changing, so too are the frameworks used to comprehend the issues within them. In particular, the frame of "left wing/right wing" appears to have lost its explanatory usefulness for many people. This loss is in step with the attempt of both Republicans and Democrats [or equally - in Australia - of Liberals and the Labor Party] to occupy the center: the centrism of the two parties is the public equivalent of the diminishing significance of the difference between left and right in the public consciousness. The difference may not have disappeared, but it has become only one of a number of frames, often not the most salient, by which social differences and therefore politics are made to make sense... Two frames [are] clearly more common than any others; one produced the key social difference as that between "the haves" and "the have nots", and the other divided social issues into "those where I can exert some influence" and "those where I cannot"... "The haves" and "the have nots" are not objective social categories like the "bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat" or "Blacks" and "whites". They are mobile categories, formed to fit the conditions of their use and their user... (1993, 6)

Questioning the constitution and exercise of power is therefore critical to this research (see Lukes 1986). I speculate that current forms of the feminine, the home and nature are linked to the rise of surveillance, governmentality and discipline of bodies in health discourses and social

practices from the late eighteenth century. Three panoptic[5] activities, surveillance, governmentality and discipline are part of the deployment of power through the operations of ideological structures and technologies of dominance linked closely to a will to truth. The bodies of the feminine, the home and nature are all ideological structures as well as being material sites. Technologies of dominance that seek to reify them as naturally related and mutually reinforcing include patriarchy, spatial determinism and anthropocentrism, all of which are 'targets' for environmentalism and feminism.

Foucault's conceptions of power do require some elaboration here. He enunciates a thorough analysis of the exercise of power in his work on penology in *Discipline and Punish* (1975). This focus also forms a significant component of his research on the history of sexuality during the 1970s and early 1980s, but in ways that concentrate on the creation of the ethical limits of the self. In volume one of *The History of Sexuality* (1976, 92-103), Foucault outlines his understanding of power by suggesting what power is not: it is not the mechanisms of groups or institutions designed to subjugate the peoples of states; it is not hegemonic domination of one group over another; it does not assume that the sovereignty of the state, the form of the law and the unity of domination are ordained - these are merely the terminal forms that power takes. Power is neither fully institutional nor solely structural, although it is exercised and operates in such settings. Rather than being an edifice, then, power is a process that forms chains and systems, disjunctions and contradictions, strategies in which struggles occur "whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus ..." (1976, 93). Such a state apparatus includes the form of the law and the various social constraints that are part of the production of power. Foucault argues that power is everywhere and that, as a permanent and repetitive installation, it is "simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities ..." (1976, 93).

In an interview with Pierre Boncenne, reproduced in *Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Foucault 1988a, 104), Foucault was asked if his conception of power was not also totalising: "Can you, too, not be criticized for seeing power everywhere and, in the final analysis, of reducing everything to power?" His lengthy response ultimately rejects the assessment that his idea of power is reductionist; rather he states that there is a specificity to power that manifests in the techniques people use to discipline themselves and others. The jury is still out on these matters.

So what are Foucauldian conceptions of power? In volume one of *The History of Sexuality* (1976, 94), Foucault notes that "power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations ...". It is immanent in - rather than external to - any other power relationships. It is not superstructural, and is direct and productive. Power also comes from below: from small units, such as families, that form power relations and lines of force intersecting all oppositions and linking them. According to Foucault, and this is crucial, hegemonic effects of power (as distinct from hegemony) may be classed as significant dominations that are sustained by

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[5] The panopticon is a model for the penitentiary developed by Jeremy Bentham and adopted by Foucault (1975) in reference to society. Composed of a central round tower encircled by storeys of open cells also in the round, the panopticon is designed for maximum surveillance. It allows prison staff to see into any cell at any time, and also affords them the ability to undertake such surveillance without being seen. The basic idea behind such a design is to force prisoners to monitor themselves, conforming to socially utilitarian behaviours without constant overt coercion. In Foucauldian thought, the panopticon refers to any form of surveillance, any form of the gaze, by which people conform to prescribed ways of behaving without being explicitly compelled.

all other micro-political lines of force. Power is also resistance to power, not as total force, but as multiple points of power and resistance, dense webs of power relations.

Given that much of feminism and environmentalism is a strategic response to patriarchy, industrialisation, late capitalism and so forth, and given that these two social movements tend to be premised on understandings of power as totalising and hegemonic, new conceptions of resistance as inside power are particularly important in this context because they create a space for radical change (Quinby 1990). *If* those who are labelled the other can manipulate language to resist the exercise of power over them, and can create difference which they own (while still appearing as the other), *then* resistance may occur even where the dominant forces in society do not perceive such resistance. In the meantime, the other has claimed for itself a space of difference and is empowered, even where severe structural impediments to fully unconstrained living may remain. These are necessary, if insufficient, conditions of social change such as that demanded by feminism and environmentalism.

DEBATES ABOUT FOUCAULDIAN INSIGHTS

Critiques of Foucault's works are numerous and varied. Foucault has been labelled a neo-conservative and a fascist, a radical leftist, a reductionist, a structuralist, a poststructuralist and a charlatan. His works also form the basis for much adulation. At an international conference in Queensland, entitled 'Foucault the Legacy', delegates were reminded that Foucault was not a saint and that it was not the job of any audience to canonise him (O'Farrell 1994). Such beatification would contradict Foucault's challenge to the central role of the author, although paradoxically, it might also have tied in with his recognised talents for 'marketing his product' (Charlesworth 1993).

Numerous criticisms have emerged in response to Foucault's critique of modernity (Hoy 1986), and his responses to these criticisms have often been masked by obscurity and impatience. Philip Barker (1993) describes how Foucault's critics persistently level two charges at his work. Against the charge of presentism, the tendency to seek for the pure origins of a contemporary issue in the past, Barker notes that the idea of an authentic origin and the unfolding of continuous history is in fact problematised by Foucault. Another criticism levelled at Foucault is that of relativism, and he appears to have two standard responses to this charge: first, that it accepts a binary opposition about absolute truth and non-truth which he finds a nonsense; second, that his work is indeed relative, and that this position need not also imply political weakness. Rather, Foucault sees relativism as a strategic ploy acknowledging the contingency and context of power relations. Perhaps more than any other characteristic, Foucauldian approaches to the history of ideas involve suspension of belief in the reliability of such things as the statement, the expert or the event.

Foucault's work is also said to lack gender analysis. Indeed, liberal and radical feminists argue that poststructural understandings of the subject deny, on the one hand, the rational and autonomous subject of history and, on the other hand, the essential female nature that lies behind patriarchal constructions of history. Foucault asserts that these rational and essential subjects are the creations of particular moments during the rise of the modern episteme. In agreement, Weedon (1987, 125) proposes that the poststructural subject exists and can act, and is "able to reflect upon the discursive relations which constitute her and the society in which she lives, and able to choose from the options available ...". Nevertheless, she acknowledges that Foucault's work only poorly

demonstrates how gendered differences in micro-political sites such as the family unit are constituted as natural, despite his discussions of the hysterisation of women during the modern era (Foucault 1976), or the role of home economics (economic relations between men and women) during the Hellenic period (Foucault 1984c).

Elizabeth Grosz (1990) notes that Foucault is more sensitive to issues of gender than are other male French philosophers such as Louis Althusser, Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida, whose very different works on language and subjectivity all tend to use woman-as-metaphor and colonise the feminine (Jardine 1985). Foucault still "neglects the fact that the various technologies of power he outlines operate in quite different ways according to the sex of the bodies they take as their objects ..." (Grosz 1990, 107). Human bodies are not neutral: how they may be inscribed with gender is part of the question of how they function in the world in which health is also gendered.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, the work of some feminists has benefited from Foucault's research; he at least acknowledges the materiality of the body, even though he sometimes leaves it ungendered or generically gendered masculine (Man, Mankind) in contexts where masculinity and femininity would produce all manner of discursive and material polyvalence.

On this issue of the specificity of gender, Lois McNay notes that:

> Foucault makes detailed and extensive references to many techniques such as daily regimens and time-tables, methods for distributing and organizing bodies in space, drills, training exercises, examination and surveillance techniques, and so on. In effect, both the soul and the body are produced through disciplinary technologies (1992, 64).

What is so interesting about these comments, and about Foucault's own work on the body, is their broad - though silent - relevance to the regulation of women's days within the domestic sphere, and to the constitution of maternal and domesticated female bodies as naturally centred on the home and on the production of healthy citizens. Nevertheless, Foucault does not indicate how genderedness would influence how such techniques gain expression. Nor does he account for analogous metaphors about how we discipline and regiment nature in diverse ways ranging from resource management to the production of advertising rhetoric about natural beauty that contributes to the constitution of genders and spaces[6].

Numerous studies that individually analyse the feminine, the home or nature imply the relativism of knowledge without using overtly poststructural techniques. Several map the profound changes that occurred in the philosophy of science during the Scientific Revolution. The perspectives brought to bear by Carolyn Merchant (1990) are particularly apposite. Merchant outlines how our understandings of nature moved from reliance on organic metaphors to the dominance of mechanical ones during the emergence of the modern period from the sixteenth century. She notes that long-standing ideas about nature as active and alive were displaced by notions that viewed it as dead or, at very least as entirely passive. Merchant is also able to document similar changes in the metaphorical construction of women from the sixteenth century. In the context of the organic metaphor, women and nature were viewed both as nurturant and as wild.

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6 Extensive work has been done on advertising and consumerism in a poststructural context. Of particular interest are texts by Jacquelin Burgess (1989), Colin Campbell (1990), Martin Davidson (1992), Stuart Ewen (1988), Michael Featherstone (1990), Jackson Lears (1983), Pam Gilbert and Sandra Taylor (1991), Michael Howlett and Rebecca Raglon (1992), Mica Nava (1992), and Gaye Tuchman (1978).

When the shift to a mechanical metaphor of nature occurred under the influence of scientific and philosophical discourses emanating from Baconian and Cartesian rationalities, both the feminine and the natural became associated with manipulable objectivity, and ceased to have recourse to the protection afforded by subject status.

According to Merchant, the implications of these philosophical changes for the lives of women and for nature were and are enormous and often horrendous, involving women's dispossession and torture, and nature's pillage. In Foucauldian terms, these bodies are gazed at, disciplined and normalised. They are domesticated and viewed as naturally, universally and passively belonging in and to the private sphere (although exceptions are made for women of colour and women of the poorer classes whose labour has always been needed)[7]. Men do not escape these techniques of discipline; almost exclusively, however, they have created and enforced them (Lerner 1986).

Denis Cosgrove (1990) discusses approaches to environment in those premodern years which precede the Scientific Revolution, and again in those years now being labelled postmodern. He argues that in both eras concerted efforts were made to expose the modernist binary oppositions that privilege subjectivity, spirit, culture and technology. Cosgrove focuses on how metaphor and image were used in the fields of mathematics, mechanics, optics and theatre to try and achieve a collapse of hierarchies in what he terms Renaissance environmentalism. He also examines the use of metaphor in postmodern projects that challenge these hierarchies in modern environmentalism. In so doing, Cosgrove notes the particular contributions made by new romanticism and some feminisms. He recognises that much of the discourse on environment is also a male discourse premised on masculine notions of science and philosophy. Cosgrove stresses the need to rework moral questions about subjectivity, society and environment in order to invoke the potential of constituting new ways of living in the future. His work also exemplifies the possibility that discourses and histories are - as Foucault insists - discontinuous and ruptured.

POSTSTRUCTURAL ANALYSES OF THE FEMININE AND NATURE

Criticisms of Foucault's work thus have some merit, and other forms of analysis that examine aspects of nature and gender in similar - but not strictly Foucauldian - ways are also useful. Nevertheless, the analytical tools that he has provided are worth exploring further. A brief summary of five works using elements of his forms of analysis may be helpful at this point, for three particular reasons. First, poststructuralism is rare in environmental studies, and it is instructive to understand the perspectives brought to bear by its use in other, related fields (see also Cheney 1989; Quigley 1992; Teymur 1982). Second, by examining the operations of class, the disciplining of the reproductive body, the dichotomous arrangement of public and private space in the containment of the family, and the policing and surveillance of the environment itself, these five studies are relevant to the issue of health and the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature explored here.

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7 In very different ways, the works of Annette Kolodny (1975; 1984), Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall (1983; 1987), Kereen Reiger (1985) and Lynette Finch (1993) exemplify this assertion. Each examines the construction of the feminine, discussing how it was that various categories of women came to be excluded from the normative and middle class understanding of natural and domesticated femininity. In the context of the treatment of 'mentally ill' women in twentieth century Australia, Jill Julius Matthews (1984) discusses what can happen when the lived experiences of women challenge these orthodoxies.

Finally, this felicitous correspondence among five separate studies provides something of a methodological and thematic precedent for the rest of this research.

Lynette Finch (1993) analyses the construction of the working class by the middle class in Australia, and argues that the appearance of class as a disciplining appellation also marks the advent of the middle class. From the early nineteenth century, increasing use of class as a social and economic concept indicates the growing exercise of power by this group, whose members were becoming increasingly vocal and active in politics, philanthropy and other arenas. Finch also argues that the emergence of class consciousness parallels a rise in the use of surveillance of the population. Her particular concern is with surveys of the urban poor, with their observation, classification and analysis, and with prescriptions of normalcy and deviance which were especially important given much of Australia's penal history. Such surveys were moral exercises for the middle class, among other things designed to effect economic, political or other social changes. Indeed, these techniques and regimes of power were part of the construction of the middle class itself: middle class men and women scrutinised themselves as well as those 'less fortunate', using social practices and discourses to impose regulations and disciplines on themselves and the working classes.

Surveillance is also a hallmark of medical and social welfare in the nineteenth century. Mary Poovey (1986) uses a poststructural approach to trace the emergence of chloroform use in the treatment of obstetric and gynecological 'complaints' in Great Britain. Poovey takes a moment in time when Dr James Young Simpson successfully administers chloroform on two colleagues and himself. She follows the ensuing debate on chloroform use, also noting the existence of contemporaneous oppositional versions of the story and of other sub-plots such as those which detail the introduction of forceps and the decline of midwifery. Poovey also analyses the biopolitics of chloroform use, concentrating on the representation of woman as body, man as expert, discussing some of the inherent dilemmas of modernity that erupted through this debate: Is woman part of nature or culture? can man master this other? what is the morality of the woman positioned in nature? in culture? what is the relation between the expert and the laity and wherein lies the power to negotiate such a relation? how does health become associated with an economy of morality and behaviour? how does the female body become silenced? and how do medical procedures become consumer items?

Jacques Donzelot's (1980) work on the family marks the emergence of complex debates about diverse conceptions of the public, the private and the social. The study focuses on how particular strategies of power effected changes to the construction of the family from the late eighteenth century, analysing the development of diverse medical, juridical, dietetic and scientific mechanisms to control the activities of family members. The text traces the use of philanthropy, the deployment of state-based instruments that intervened in the composition and function of the family, and systems of education, economics, marriage and family planning. Donzelot also focuses on how psychology came to be deployed as a means by which to determine the ethical, moral and mental state of small social groups in wider institutional settings.

Finally, there are studies by Paul Rutherford (1993) and Jane Bennett (1994) that use poststructural methods to examine issues of environmental politics and ethics. First, Paul Rutherford's (1993) analysis of the biopolitics of the environment addresses many gaps about power in environmentalism, although it neglects the question of how gender may influence the

constitution of the environment. Rutherford's work is based on three related premises. First, knowledge about the ecological administration of life is invested with pastoral and police concerns. Second, economic measurement is used in the analysis of population and environment (presumably because economics is a significant mechanism in control of bodies). Third, the state has created "new modes of regulatory intervention ... [directed by] ecological rationality ..." (1993, 1). Drawing parallels with Foucault's (1978) comments on the governmental state and the rise of institutions, bureaucracies and other mechanisms of surveillance in the eighteenth century, Rutherford argues that the environment has become yet another object of scrutiny. (Parenthetically, health is one arena in which an ecological biopolitics arises in western approaches to environment, and its confluence in the home and on differently gendered bodies is worthy of investigation.)

Second, Jane Bennett (1994) examines the embodied experiences - the life - of Henri David Thoreau in terms of his openness to discourses and social practices that constitute the "wild". Bennett takes aspects of Thoreau's writing and brings them forward to the twentieth century to 'converse' with various thinkers in the present:

> ... with Michel Foucault on the question of identity and power; with Donna Haraway on the nature/culture relationship; with the Hollywood celebrities of the Walden Woods Project on the environment; with the National Endowment for the Humanities and Milan Kundera, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, on the relation between politics and art; and with Franz Kafka on the question of political idealism (1994, xx).

Bennett demonstrates how 'her' Thoreau is a character who constructs himself with great care and deliberation, adopting various technologies by which to constitute himself as a positive and powerful other to mainstream American society. In her work on Thoreau, Bennett is able to challenge notions of linear and causal time, suggesting that discourses play through time and are constituted again and again.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

In describing the construction of the body of the illegitimately pregnant woman, Gail Reekie (1994a, 4) describes her process of poststructural analysis with considerable eloquence.

> I've deliberately chosen these bodies for the ways in which they both overlap and separate from each other. They refuse to be stitched into a smooth, unbroken narrative. These bodies have edges that fray, colours that clash, patterns that jar, textures that will never blend. Snipped out of their history, their meaning comes not from their context, but from the way they are arranged next to other bodies. Instead of a seamless story, I have put together a collage of textual fragments.

Such is the textual and textural impression that I hope this research will make, because our ideas about various categories of meaning are far from neat and tidy, and the emancipating effects of recent theoretical challenges to modernist conceptions of history and society celebrate the inchoate and the chaotic. Jane Bennett and William Chaloupka (1993, vii) note, for example, that nature has become a "profuse and polyglot" discourse.

The purpose of this chapter has been to present the major theoretical understandings that underpin this research. The feminine, the home, nature and health are viewed here as unstable and historically contingent categories, whose diverse meanings emerge in various fields of knowledge,

at different times and in different domains. I suggest that environmental studies and ecofeminism provide only partial critiques of the problems in modernity, tending to reify the feminine in nature, nature in the feminine. Neither sufficiently examines the site of the home as a particular social arena in which the operations of gender and environment are naturalised and exceedingly complex. The use of Foucauldian and broadly poststructural ideas about history, embodiment, power and the production of knowledge may well provide new insights by which to analyse the research problem outlined above. Some of the criticisms of Foucault's work have been noted and will be returned to from time to time in other chapters.

I now want to consider in more detail the discursive constitution of health, so central to the research. Where once environmental problems that detrimentally affected people were placed within the confines of the common law, the last two hundred years has seen the emergence of a plethora of movements designed to regulate and adjudicate about how best to prevent nature from making us sick, for such is how this category of meaning is often represented. Much of the debate about how to achieve this end has been embedded in discourses on health. It is the task of chapter three to examine such discourses.

3

PREFABRICATIONS:
CONSTITUTING THE HISTORY OF HEALTH

> Our metaphors of disorder perhaps reflect our consciousness that death visits our bodies, not through acts of overt violence, but secretly through cancerous growths, silent viruses, and humiliating strokes. ... [all these] lend weight to the need for a new concept of modern societies as somatic (Bryan Turner 1992, 12).

> How we see the diseased, the mad, the polluting is a reflex of our own sense of control and the limits inherent in that sense of control. Thus the relationship between images of disease and the representation of internalized feelings of disorder is very close (Sander Gilman 1988, 3).

INTRODUCTION

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972b), Foucault outlines a method of historical analysis that questions traditional reliance on 'world views' or 'ideal types'. His archaeological method calls for sceptical analyses of statements, documents and events. Questions about the production of knowledge become who speaks for whom, with what authority and with what presumptions about truth, using what strategies? What rules govern the production and distribution of statements? How do certain statements coalesce to form discourses and to effect the constitution of particular social practices and institutions? How do different discourses and social practices coexist? succeed one another? We can add to these questions some genealogical ones such as how are such discourses and social practices delimited and with what power effects? How are particular statements lost from history? What are the ethical effects of these shifts and discursive arrangements?

Here, these kinds of questions inform my analysis of documents that purport to write the history of health and health reform for particular places. Rather than describe the events of such stories to interpret *what* they say, we must ask *how* have statements been formulated and distributed and with what effects? How have linguistic and political devices been employed in commentaries on health, and how do these commentaries contribute to the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature? Are strategies of surveillance, normalisation and discipline part of the production of knowledge about these categories of meaning? What implications do these questions hold for the constitution of various conceptions of health and health reform? Are they constitutive of ethical frameworks and moral codes?

There is a twofold purpose to this chapter. One aim is to explore different ideas about the concept of the body as a complex site for health and disease. The other aim, and a corollary of this first, is to analyse some of the discursive and textual strategies used in five accounts of health and health-reform in Great Britain and Australia during the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. The texts being examined here are, in the British context, F.B. Smith's *The People's Health 1830-1910* and Anthony Wohl's *Endangered Lives: Public Health in Victorian Britain*; in the Australian context, they are John Cumpston's *The Health of the People: a Study in Federalism*, Anne Crichton's *Slowly Taking Control? Australian Governments and Health Care Provision 1788-1988*,

and a work by Donald Nutbeam and colleagues entitled *Goals and Targets for Australian Health in the Year 2000 and Beyond.* Despite the title, this last document provides insight into aspects of the contemporary history of health in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s.

I have selected these five texts because each is a product of an academic forum. Foucault (1972a) notes that discourse is privileged in the commentaries of certain experts whose role is partly to protect the boundaries of the field of knowledge in which they are practising their work. Speaking subjects are also influenced by the rules of discourse, adhering to oral rituals, the rules of the club, doctrine and social appropriation. The effects of these various rules include exclusion of non-initiates; prohibition of certain ways of thinking, feeling and expressing by particular subjects; division of knowledge into legitimated and bounded fields in which interdisciplinarity is difficult; and finally homogenisation of new knowledge into established disciplines programmed to pursue particular kinds of truth.

Before analysis of these texts proceeds, some conceptual issues about biopolitics need to be fleshed out, since the issue of the discursive constitution and governance of individual and collective bodies is central to health reform. It is also crucial to any understanding of how we come to constitute ourselves as embodied subjects.

CONCEPTUALISING POSTSTRUCTURAL BODIES

The Emergence of the Discourse of Modern Health

In the Preface to *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973, ix), Foucault writes "This book is about space, about language, and about death; it is about the act of seeing, the gaze ...". *The Birth of the Clinic* traces the emergence of modern clinical medicine from the closing years of the eighteenth century. Foucault argues that changing approaches to the study of humanity, to the technologies allowing such study, and to the moral and ethical exhortations that justified it, permitted a shift in knowledge about the visible and the invisible, about what can be seen and what can be said. From the Scientific Revolution and using this newly probing gaze, new breeds of medical professionals came to challenge the "corporeal opacity ..." of bodies (1973, xiii), developing new and secular truths about these vessels that privilege rationality, empiricism and geometry. It became feasible to look inside bodies, naming their workings and disorders. It also became possible to attribute new meanings to health and illness, and to justify policing and disciplining individual bodies and groups of bodies, along with various physical sites, allegedly for the health and well-being of all. These various mechanistic and instrumental approaches to the corporeal had wide-ranging implications for nature (Merchant 1990; Worster 1987). The emergence of the life-sciences also stems from this time (Foucault 1970). During this modern period, novel ideas about the internal workings of the bodies of people, about 'social' bodies and about the body of nature converged in scientific understandings, which accepted these bodies as external and stable realities.

An innovative language of the body also began to contribute to a "scientifically structured discourse about an individual ..." (Foucault 1973, xiv). This discourse about the body and health is fascinating, particularly in the way that Foucault links it to the discipline of history.

> Medicine made its appearance as a clinical science in conditions which define, together with its historical possibility, the domain of its experience and the structure of its rationality. They form its concrete a

> priori, which it is now possible to uncover, perhaps because a new experience of disease is coming into being that will make possible a historical and critical understanding of the old experience ... meaning has taken shape that hangs over us ... We are doomed historically to history, to the patient construction of discourses about discourses, and to the task of hearing what has already been said (Foucault 1973, xv-xvi).

In making these statements, Foucault is concerned to point out the relationship between the signified and the signifier - the substance and form - of health and illness as abstract ideas. He argues that the new gaze of clinical medicine redefined the symptoms that signify disease and the sores that signify pain. The gaze changed how health and illness were conceived, how they were represented in the symbolic order and were accepted as real and natural. Thus, the body has become a site for the spatial expression of health, a map to be read for the marks and traces of disease.

Among others, Foucault, Jacques Donzelot (1980) and Lynette Finch (1993) argue that the family is constituted as a natural locus of life and disease; by extension, the home is a site where moral actions determine the penetration of disease onto and into bodies. Along with the appearance of the medical expert, other panoptic professions emerged in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whose impact was felt in the home. Among these groups were health, shop and factory inspectors; central and local government officials; statisticians; quarantine officers; abattoir supervisors; architects trained in the principles of healthy housing; advisers and philanthropists to the community. Women slowly entered these professions as restrictions on their access to the public domain were successfully challenged, yet their dominant role remained in philanthropic work[1]. In these professions, there were and continue to be particular assumptions about what it is to be healthy (and thus moral): a healthy body, family unit, home, workplace, community, society, nation and environment. Ideal health also came to signify normalising and privileged states of being: race (white), sex (male), class (middle), faith (Christian/Protestant), political leaning (liberal), or status in relation to nature (civilised and cultured).

James Riley (1987) draws out this last complex connection between health and nature, analysing the relationship between disease and locale made in medical and philosophical treatises at various times.

> Looking about themselves, these physicians saw afresh the habitat of man. It was a habitat of stagnant waters and steaming marshes and fetid cesspits; of narrow, airless, and filth-ridden streets and passages; of hovels and grand buildings without ventilation; of the dead incompletely isolated from the living. It was, we can now see, a habitat in which the micro organisms of disease (and the living vectors that transmit these micro organisms and other pathogenic matter) thrived (Riley 1987, x).

Riley pinpoints the period from the end of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century as a time when nature became a site for surveillance in debates about whether disease was miasmatic or bacteriological. He acknowledges that these earlier discourses about pathogenic nature (culprit) differ from contemporary understandings of it as a site for the deposition of pathogens stemming from human activity (victim). Yet both arguments imply the need for surveillance and discipline, particularly in relation to drainage, lavation, ventilation, (re)interment, fumigation, refuse

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1 Numerous feminist histories examine the function, power and empowerment of the middle class feminine philanthropists: see Anne Summers (1979), Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall (1987) and Coral Chambers Garner (1980).

burial and the relocation of noxious industries. Riley suggests that these concerns are connected to other links made between humanity and nature from the 1700s; the rise of ecology is one such link. These connections focus on disciplining the natural environment to preserve the health of individual and collective bodies. Most importantly for the case being made in my research, Riley observes that the medical gaze extended from the site of the human body to other entities which, I argue, are metaphorically linked to the corporeal. Thus, the home and the family, and the community and society were viewed as sites, bodies, for the interplay of health and disease; many of the sources, origins and truths of health and disease remain located in nature.

This point implies the existence of a powerfully constituted and orthodox set of arguments in western philosophy and politics that connect nature to the feminine and the private[2]. If nature is a source of disease, then the feminine and the private (and their corporeal expressions as women and homes) can be forms of illness, lack and disorder. If nature can be domesticated and controlled, such illness, insufficiency and chaos will disappear; and so it has been with the discourse on inefficient domesticity and the unruly feminine. As an absence of illness, health also signifies the disappearance of unruly nature, the undomesticated and the wild elements of the feminine; it becomes ethical and moral and thus a powerful form of knowledge for the constitution of subjectivity.

Contemporary Debates

Currently, there are three models of health, the medical, the community and the public health models. In the *medical model* of health, bodies are objective units that can be diagnosed, treated and either repaired or managed in some way. The dominant metaphors by which they are represented in this model include the machine and the atomistic unit. These representational devices are reified and naturalised, such that medical practice and intervention is premised on objectifying the body; which is to say, on ignoring or suspending the subjectivity of the patient.

Although the *community health model* is characterised by significant levels of state involvement, health is viewed as a social issue. Bodies are part of a complex network embracing social as well as physical well-being, and the prevailing metaphor of community health is ecological interconnectedness, holistic health. Pam Gunnell (1994) notes how this model is linked to contemporary environmental philosophies suggesting that enhanced well-being and interaction with nature are characterised by community participation, a drive for micro-political empowerment on issues of global and local significance, and the idea that people are part of nature.

In the *public health model*, health is linked to instrumental ideas of nature, emphasising structural concerns such as access and equity, along with the rational identification of environmental determinants of poor health (McMichael 1993). Bodies are viewed as well or ill because of the effects on them of environmental factors such as sanitation, ventilation, water supply, proximity to industry and so forth. For instance, a survey of *The Australian Journal of Public Health* (formerly *Community Health Studies*) from 1982 to 1992 is illuminating. Public health is constituted in very

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2 Carolyn Merchant (1990) has made the effects of this connection particularly clear in her analysis of the disempowerment of the feminine during the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, two periods neither revolutionary nor enlightening for the vast majority of women. On the complex of issues about women, spirituality, science and nature, see also Mary Daly (1990), Elizabeth Fee (1983), Diana Fuss (1989), Elizabeth Dodson Gray (1979), Susan Hekman (1990), Ynestra King (1990) and Rosemary Radford Ruether (1975).

broad terms, embracing diverse issues such as general practice, nursing, psychiatry, alternative health practices, Aboriginal peoples' health, educational issues, adolescent health, obstetrics and gynaecology, gerontology, migrant health issues, diet and nutrition, the effects of television on the dissemination of health information, substance abuse, cosmetic surgery, history of medicine, social work, oncology, water supply, road traffic accidents, and book reviews of Foucauldian and broadly poststructural studies of aspects of public health.

Sidney Sax (1990) argues that health reforms emerged in Australia because of growing urbanisation and industrialisation, the concentration of populations in major centres, the rise in use of the motor vehicle, and the increased use of chemicals in everyday life. He notes that these factors have had different impacts on different groups of people, such as Aboriginal peoples, those in lower income brackets, the homeless and people with drug dependence. Sax's analysis is based on a critique of structural impediments to better health, and his assessment of 'risk' groups may have merit if one accepts all of the terms of the debate, for clearly these impediments do influence health outcomes. Sax focuses on the divisions among various classes which compose Australian society, and asserts that:

> Even where unhealthy lifestyles can be improved by personal effort there remains an overwhelming need to tackle the milieu that is beyond the individual's control so that the opportunity and the temptation to indulge in unhealthy habits are reduced (1990, 33).

Although Sax's initial point is intended to critique structural inequities arising from class barriers and differential access to health services, his argument nevertheless implies that particular subcultures of the population lack maturity, need monitoring and cannot generate their own forms of resistance to situations that are detrimental to their health. Sax's comments exemplify analytical slippage: he sees individuals as powerless and yet as the only people who can help themselves. He does not mention how "poor housing, crowding, lack of privacy, broken families and strong feelings of helplessness, dependence, inferiority and marginality ..." (1990, 33) are only some of the manifestations of sub-culture. He also ignores some of the other reasons for these 'symptoms' of 'social disorder', failing to ask how alternative discourses and social practices are constituted by these groups in positive resistance to industrialisation, the negative effects of capitalism, town planning or materialist notions of what health and good living mean.

In contrast, Stephen Darley (1994) persuasively argues that discourses such as Sax uses serve to constitute people as victims and reprobates. In his study of working class community responses to environmental health issues on the LeFevre Peninsula in Adelaide and in the suburb of Ardeer in Melbourne, Darley demonstrates that residents "continuously generate evidence of the effects of pollution upon themselves and their local environment ..." (1994, 41). He argues that people in these areas empower themselves through action and interaction, and are often cohesive communities, showing little of the social disorder implied by Sax to be normal of their 'kind'.

These debates are about power. Philip Barker (1993) notes the power that derives from things that have been said, as though enunciation constitutes things in some putative reality. Gail Reekie (1994b) extends this point into the terrain of feminism, arguing that our bodies are historically gendered through discourses as they are classed or made into sites of race, sexuality and health or illness. I suggested in chapter two that Foucault has been sharply criticised for his early conceptions

of the body as an ungendered text or effect of discourse. Touching on this issue, Reekie notes that a crisis of faith has developed in the discipline of history because of the shift from history based on experiential accounts to history based on understanding reality as always mediated by discourse. All historical meanings rely on the discursive context in which they are located.

> We recognise corsets as corsets because of the meanings they have acquired from pornography, from medicine, from advertising, and from feminism. These different discursive contexts given us different objects: a sexual fetish, a surgical appliance, a fashion garment, and instrument and symbol of women's repression ... a corset is only a corset as long as it is integrated within a system of socially constructed rules ... (Reekie 1994a, 4-5).

In other words, Foucauldian theory decentres the 'real' from history, asserting that all historical contexts are textual and constructed. Therefore, Sax may well be right in his analysis of some of the health differentials that exist among various sub-groups of the population; the appalling health of Aboriginal peoples' communities being one plain case of structural malaise. However, there is a fine line between improving unhealthy conditions and imposing normalising procedures of living on sub-cultures whose members may practice certain lifestyles viewed as culturally central by them and as anti-social or unhealthy in sectors of the community where health is formally constructed as being this and not that.

On the matter of theorising social construction, Bryan Turner (1992, 8) argues that this area has yet to create an effective space for understanding the "phenomenological nature of the lived body ...". Turner suggests that Foucault's later ideas about biopolitics necessitate an expanded understanding of text in relation to the body to incorporate lived experiences[3]; the body itself becomes a text for the production of our subjectivity. Turner argues that early theoretical optimism about the positive outcomes of subjectivity as 'in-process' has shifted to a discouraged doctrine of death, because specifically transgressive expressions of subjectivity have been circumvented by social and sexual risks. Plastic surgery and AIDS are two disparate examples of these risks (Bordo 1991; Gilman 1988), along with the nuclear nightmares of children or the increased health problems that stem from environmental pollution. Though the body has been a site of celebration in the post-war years, Turner now sees it as a metaphor for what he calls corporeal disorder.

Parallel to this dejection has been a mounting scepticism about the ability of environmental discourse and techniques of management to effect productive and rapid change in a world that is diagnosed as ill. Turner notes in passing how the Green Movement reflects current biopolitical concerns in a somatic society, particularly in terms of the population debate and the development of diverse practices by which to regulate the number of bodies, the spaces between bodies, and the spaces between bodies and nature. Although his analysis generally is sensitive to issues of gender, at this point Turner does not make it explicit that spaces, like bodies, are gendered, and it seems important that he should have done so.

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[3] In deep ecology, it is argued that we need to rethink our relationship with nature in order to encompass an understanding that nature is sentient and has equal rights to ethical consideration (Fox 1990); that nature has a lived experience, is a sentient body. In Gaian hypotheses, similar claims are made. Yet both these philosophical positions remain firmly located in a humanist tradition that assumes total and authentic relationships between people and earth. Perhaps it is in this area of environmental ethics that postmodern insights could be most productive and provocative, requiring a reassessment of the human-nature complex in ways that celebrate present and heterogeneous expressions of that relationship. We would not then need to seek for original sources of environmental harmony or to try to create utopian outcomes based on narrow understandings of what such outcomes should be.

The body of the home is also a construction (Routt 1986; Rybczynski 1988). The home is viewed as a feminised and domesticated site where regulatory regimes and practices are different from those in sites that are stereotyped as masculine and public. The idealised allocation of spaces within the home is also gendered (Johnson 1993). Orthodox feminine terrains are focused on (re)production: the kitchen, the laundry, the nursery and the bedroom. Masculine spaces emphasise rationality and action: the den, the garden and the garage. Domestic spaces are regulated by discourses and practices such as planning, architecture and building, and are naturalised in social practices of urban design and suburban lifestyle[4].

Ironically, some of the most unhealthy and dangerous locations in the domestic sphere are those very spaces constituted as feminine. In the last one hundred years, and with the advent of standards of cleanliness far beyond those prescribed earlier, kitchens and laundries have been made 'healthy' by the use of noxious chemicals and made 'productive' by the use of dangerous tools. Although feminine work is being partially redefined in this process (Probert 1990), domestic sites remain those where health is produced by women enacting their prescribed feminine roles, providing nutritious food in the kitchen, germ-free clothing in the laundry, and a clean and aesthetically pleasing living environment throughout.

Furthermore, women still tend to be conceived of as the natural (read also heterosexual) care-givers of children in the nursery, as the lovers of men in the bedroom and, paradoxically, as pathological in relation both to their offspring and to their spouses[5]. Foucault calls this situation part of the hysterisation of women:

> ... a threefold process whereby the feminine body was analyzed - qualified and disqualified - as being thoroughly saturated with sexuality; whereby it was integrated into the sphere of medical practices, by reason of a pathology intrinsic to it; whereby, finally, it was placed in organic communication with the social body (whose regulated fecundity it was supposed to ensure), the family space (of which it had to be a substantial and functional element), and the life of children (which it produced and had to guarantee, by virtue of a biologico-moral responsibility lasting through the entire period of the children's education): the Mother, with her negative image of "nervous woman," constituted the most visible form of this hysterization (1976, 104).

Here again, in representations of illness and the feminine, there is both a strong connection which has its confluence in the site of the home and a reliance on specific understandings of nature and the natural.

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4 The range of texts that touch on the analysis of gendered terrain is substantial. Very different approaches are by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall (1983), who discuss the architecture of public and domestic life in provincial England in the period from 1780 to 1850; Dolores Hayden (1981), who examines the 'grand domestic revolution' which occurred in the United States; Druscilla Modjeska and others (1989) in a collection about Australian women's memory of place or Lyn Richards (1990) on new suburbia.

5 Much has been written on women and domesticity, particularly in social history. On the issue of housework and its effects on the constitution of the feminine, texts by Ruth Schwartz Cowan (1983), Caroline Davidson (1982), Christine Hardyment (1988), Glenna Matthews (1987), Kereen Reiger (1985), Mary Ryan (1982) and Susan Strasser (1982) are particularly useful. In discussing changing regimes and practices of household management, a number of these texts touch on matters of public health and its links to the environment. Numerous other works examine the pervasive social and psychological effects of the cult of domesticity on women, usually employing socialist or radical feminist perspectives. These include texts by Catharine Beecher (1841), Nancy Chodorow (1978), Christine Delphy (1984), Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1898/1970, 1903/970, 1911/970), Beverley Kingston (1975), Ellen Malos (1980), Jill Julius Matthews (1984), Ann Oakley (1974, 1976) and Adrienne Rich (1991). On the related and more broadly based issue of the construction of gender, of the feminine, of woman and women, poststructural works by Teresa De Lauretis (1987), Diana Fuss (1989), Alison Jaggar and Susan Bordo (1989) and Denise Riley (1988) are especially provocative.

My argument, then, is that bodies are not objective entities naturally located in certain domains for predetermined purposes. Rather they are also subjective artefacts on which are inscribed moral categories of gender, place and state of being. In constituting, surveying and normalising gender, particular spaces and nature "who then are the disciplinarians?" (Foucault 1975, 222). How is a biopolitics about health deployed, and with what effects on whom? First, I think it important to note that all people produce and are products of specific representations of health and illness. We attempt to discipline these representations and the intersecting realities arising from them in order to domesticate our fears about the otherness that illness stands for in the symbolic order (Gilman 1988). Second, we also constitute ourselves as localised, embodied and gendered by practising disciplinary techniques such as dieting or sports (Glassner 1989); observing and following fashion trends (Williamson 1986); practising home economics; adopting and changing lifestyles; or participating in the rituals of certain social movements that prescribe certain modes of action and thought.

In relation to health and illness, it is noteworthy that symbolic connections between human bodies on the one hand, and the home and nature as bodies on the other, really have not been investigated to date. These conceptual issues and concerns to decentre notions about the body challenge orthodox ideas about the feminine, the home and nature; they form part of the framework on which the analysis of the history of health proceeds in this research.

ANALYSING HISTORIES OF HEALTH

The British Public Health Movement

F.B. Smith's text, *The People's Health 1830-1910*, was published in 1979. It is a substantial document over four hundred pages in length. The table of contents lists the following: Childbirth; Infancy; Childhood and Youth; Adults (Dirt and Disease, Hospitals, Regular Practitioners and Quacks, Venereal Diseases, Contraception and Sexuality); Old Age (Maladies, Quacks, The Medical Profession and the Poor Law, An Estimable Profession? Workhouse Health); New Perspectives and Problems. This list clearly structures the scope of Smith's task. As the objects of analysis, people are separated by chronological stages and significant life events; this text uses age and life stage as two markers of corporeality, forms of discipline on the production of knowledge.

My analysis here focuses exclusively on how issues are raised for discussion in 'Dirt and Disease' (pp.195-243). Smith notes that the "veterans" (p.195) of the sanitary movement could look back to 1842, when Edwin Chadwick's study of the *Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Classes of Great Britain* was published, with some satisfaction about what had been achieved to the turn of the new century. The term 'veterans' is telling; there was much in the language employed by this health reform movement that used metaphors and images of battles, conquests, warriors for moral good, and enemies of disease and moral turpitude. Smith also writes of a "visionary quality ..." (p.195) to the work of the movement's advocates and proposes that, however dislocated and misplaced their efforts, the outcome was that the "life chances of every person in Victorian Britain ..." (p.195) was bettered. He is able to argue this point because of the development of statistical surveillance on the population at the time, such as that produced above, and because of the preservation and validation of those kinds of documents.

Statistics are a traditional tool of discipline and surveillance. As populations are 'captured' by the enumerations of census and other statistical studies, bodies become numbers, which can signify great change or indicate stasis. These significations may be used in government and through policy to rationalise the exercise of particular forms of bureaucratic control and surveillance. Numbers are also symbolically linked to political and ethical issues. Falling death rates can stand for such things as medical and moral progress, the success of governmentality or changes to nutrition arising from the events of - say - the Agricultural Revolution. Conversely, rising death rates can be attributed to the shortcomings of individual bodies and subjects. Moreover, successful health outcomes are readily ascribed to the appropriate management of society and nature, a discipline that can be linked to the rational operations of policy and practice, and sometimes such conclusions are reasonable. Nevertheless, there is a danger that poor outcomes can be justified by falling back on traditional constructions of nature and people as unpredictable and wild, in need of further manipulations.

Smith notes that by the end of the nineteenth century in Britain, enhanced life expectancy was achieved despite a "deep popular resistance ..." (p.200) to changes in property rights and despite concerns about disruption to communities and manufacturing sites caused by slum clearance and other health measures. Yet, his analysis shows little explicit regard for how gender, class and other categories influence the nature of sanitary reform. For example, Smith writes of owners and occupiers as if they were equivalent. Traditionally, middle and upper class men have been the owners of property. Yet through the dispersion of middle class ideologies and practices, the home seems the natural province of the feminine figures who enlivened it. The weight of implementing higher standards of domestic hygiene and care fell on this already burdened category. As servants left domestic employment for other jobs, middle class women were expected to maintain images of genteel leisure while having to take over many of the domestic chores previously done for them. Even so, 'gentlewomen' did work at various tasks around the home before the general demise of the servant and, prior to the nineteenth century and except at the most elite levels, these middle class women worked very hard. Of course, working class women have always worked hard; their burdens remained generally heavy, although the nature of the labour often was different.

My point is that measures of health reform would have fallen on owners and occupiers in different ways. Consequently, Smith's comment about the existence of deep resistance to change among the British population may hide some of the legitimate struggles that the poor - as occupiers - went through to be considered in the reform process. In effect, Smith's analysis marginalises political differences that explicitly involve class and gender, and that implicitly touch on issues of domesticity and the management of 'natural resources'. Neither does Smith present any discussion of the tensions about occupation and slum clearance that might have arisen from the 'Irish problem'[6] or the influx of other ethnic groups and members of diverse rural communities, tensions also implicating the diverse effects of religion and ethnicity.

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6 In *The Condition of the Working Classes in England* (1844/1969, 105), Friedrich Engels notes that the majority of people who dwelt in the worst conditions in cellars were the Irish poor. Jenni Calder (1977) provides an excellent summary of the marked differences in housing standards that existed between categories of respectable and destitute poor. In some measure these categories were constructed from the living practices that middle class philanthropists witnessed; significantly though, these labels came to dictate who should be helped on moral grounds. The Irish community, as a vilified other, was rarely on the receiving end of middle class beneficence. Moreover, the theological and political dimensions of Irish-British relations make this issue an enormously complex one, beyond the scope of this research.

Smith does note that accessible medical histories penned by patients exist, yet he does not use these texts in his own analysis. For instance, in the material about children, and in discussions about ailments suffered by women, Smith might have examined documents written by middle class women. He also might have analysed any of the works by British women writers, whose novels provide rich details about domestic life and the effects of such life on health. Given Smith's connections with Australia, noted in his preface, he could have examined something like *A Week in the Future* (1888/1988), a fascinating and insightful utopian novella by Catherine Helen Spence. In semi-autobiographical fashion, the work conveys how a woman diagnosed with a terminal illness trades the remaining few months of her life for a week in London one hundred years in the future. It is always a difficult task to include all possible material in analysis. Nevertheless, in consciously or otherwise adhering to normative understandings about what constitutes a legitimate and authoritative historical document, Smith lets any possibility for other stories to be written slide away.

On a different matter, the medical and health apparatus of the nineteenth century is linked to a contemporaneous development of the politics of health (Foucault 1980). What had been a series of private matters became public; health and illness and the things that caused them came under the surveillance of legislatures and bureaucracies, and were normalised. There is little question that juridical processes to prevent mass infection and disease have the effect of improving the life chances of populations. These same processes have also been used to correct and discipline bodies and populations in other ways. Take for example Smith's description of techniques for the disinfection and decontamination of a house declared unfit for human habitation.

> The house was closed. The wallpaper was stripped and burnt. Then either steam at 260° F was applied for thirty minutes to furniture, clothes, bedding etc., heaped in an iron steam chamber, or hot air at 230° F was applied in the chamber for five hours, while the rest of the house was suffused with chlorine or sulphurous acid gas for 12 hours. The local authority was not liable for damage, except through proven 'negligence'. Until 1890, the local authority had no responsibility for the family excluded from their dwelling during the fumigation (1979, 203).

This regime, worked out to the exact temperature and time, attests to the use of particular strategies of control that had other effects. For instance, it is not made explicit that many of the poor had, at best, only a small number of clothes. It also remains unstated that, if they had nowhere to go during the 'purification' of these homes, entire streets of people could be turned out for fend for themselves, sometimes for days at a time, since fumigation was often done in blocks. Sometimes, people were left homeless by such practices, because of the increase in rents that could attend them. These various practices also contributed to the constitution of the poor as dirty, immature and unable to care for themselves, and in need of moral, physical and bureaucratic interventions from the middle class (Finch 1993; Hall 1992).

Smith's rendition of health reform is influenced by a tacit acceptance of certain instrumental values. At issue are morbidity, mortality and migration; property ownership and the right to undertake traditional activities such as animal husbandry or local manufacturing; urban development and housing; philanthropy and compulsory education; devices to discipline and regiment bodies and populations in order to secure the health of the nation. Each of these matters demonstrates the existence of multiple points of power and resistance as new forms of knowledge come to play in the discipline of populations and territories. Yet underpinning Smith's analysis of these issues, is a prescription that the means justify the end. It is in how Smith writes his story that this capitulation

to an instrumental approach is made manifest. He seems to accede to the operations of bureaucracy, surveillance and intervention as exercises in discipline ultimately to be sanctioned because they produce desired health outcomes.

Anthony Wohl (1983) approaches the story of health and health reform in Britain somewhat differently. In 'Home Sweet Home', a chapter from his book *Endangered Lives: Public Health in Victorian Britain*, Wohl focuses on how the gaze of the sanitary movement fell on the domestic arena. Listing the symptoms of bad housing as if these were elements of a disease, he then notes:

> Bad housing became synonymous with slums ... As the century progressed it became increasingly apparent that the growing structure of public health rested on *domestic* foundations and that the nation could not be healthy unless it housed its masses in healthy homes (1983, 285; my emphasis).

This change reflects a particular politicisation of architecture that occurred from the late seventeenth century (Foucault 1980b), and depended on the use of pastoral and policing techniques of 'rational' government. These observations about pastoral and police care certainly are implicit in Wohl's understanding and use of historical documents, although he does not employ poststructural tools of analysis. In examining overcrowding and slum clearance, he focuses on the structural elements of public life and government, examining published advice manuals and reminiscences of celebrated professionals and experts who were typically (but not exclusively) masculine, along with the minutes of organisations, royal commissions, boards of inquiry, minutes of evidence and legislation.

Wohl's analysis also provides considerable insight into how surveillance and disciplinary control converge in relation to health reform. He notes the passage of various legislative controls on nuisance during the nineteenth century; a different expression of the regulation of bodies and populations. Chadwick's 1842 report led directly to the Health of Towns Act 1848, a two tier system of central and local boards of health that later was adopted in Australia between 1873 and 1902. Other pieces of legislation of the imperial parliament that were adopted include the Nuisance Removal Acts 1855, 1860, and 1863; the Public Health Act 1848; the Sanitary Act 1866 and the Public Health Act 1872. (According to Smith, the Public Health Act 1875 finally consolidates the "great mass of nuisance, public health, infectious diseases, sewers, slaughtering houses and water supply legislation for Britain and Wales for 60 years ..." (1979, 203). The Scottish legislation was consolidated in 1867.)

Political documents, and the medical and scientific treatises that inform them, typically are formulated in the public and masculine cultural sphere, although such does not deny the profound effects of the home and the feminine on the ways in which the public sphere is constituted. Dietrich Borchardt observes of these kinds of texts:

> [the] establishment of public inquiries into social and administrative issues for which the government is believed to be directly or indirectly responsible [is like] ... the voyeurism associated with the practice of public punishment ... which went out of fashion in the 19th century (1990, 5).

Among other things, accounts of health reform and its effects on domestic living are political stories of middle class religious and secular moral exhortations about the government of bodies and populations. Individual bodies are problematic: the sickly child, the wayward adolescent, the nervous woman, the drunken man, the destitute elderly. Collective bodies and spaces are also

difficult and unruly: the dangerous classes, the deserving poor, the slovenly room, the dirty cottage, the noxious street, the filthy slum, the derelict suburb. Finally, health reform regiments a range of bodies and spaces according to particular moral prescriptions that regulate the functions of health and the well-being of the body of the nation.

> When a man is emancipated from this physical degradation and exposed to air and light, his feelings are elevated, his health improves, his whole nature expands, and then, if there be the seeds of goodness in him, they swell, burst, grow, flower, and bear fruit (from 'Day and Night in the Wynds of Edinburgh and Blackfriars Wynd Analyzed'; in Wohl 1983, 327).

Beyond this moralistic tone, however, are strategies of economic and political gain. Wohl argues that urban 'improvements' in the form of sewerage and drainage, or in the guise of slum clearance and demolition, carried the possibility of stronger tax bases to be achieved by increases in the rateable value of property. These measures were meant to lead to potential savings in poor relief by relocating or reducing unemployment and ill-health among the poorest communities. Indeed, Wohl suggests that these 'improvements' reduced the level of financial embarrassment facing civic leaders of the middle class who variously constituted themselves as progressive, liberal, utilitarian and morally upstanding, but who remained centrally concerned with their economic security since it defined their class position. That slum clearance was largely ineffective in reducing the poverty of many in the working classes has not escaped Wohl. He argues that drives for compensation by owners, along with laissez faire approaches to the housing market and the state's reluctance to provide public housing, militated against slum clearance achieving the ends hoped for by some of the more dedicated and committed British sanitary reformers.

Wohl's use of particular documents and his concern to assess the 'progress' of sanitary reform leads one to ask what effects he has in mind when he concludes that the articulated housing policies of government had failed 'the people'. He is producing a particular and partial kind of knowledge about British health and health reform from a contemporary position. There is also a contradiction between Wohl's final assessment and that proposed by Smith, who uses the same sorts of documents. Both imply that sanitary reform had significant and far-reaching effects on bodies and populations, cities and towns, and the environment, and in these assessments they are doubtless correct. In relation to housing at least, Wohl concludes that reform fell far short of the mark. On the other hand, Smith argues that the quality of life of the British population rose steadily over the nineteenth century. Thus despite an overall accord, these two writers produce quite different knowledge using the same intellectual methods of archival survey and analysis to examine similar types of evidence. Notions of truth as 'out there' waiting to be found are challenged by this outcome. Yet this decentring need not be unsettling, for two spaces are created: first, a new terrain for narrative that is based on scepticism and, second, a site in which it becomes necessary to examine more thoroughly other stories - patient histories, women's knowledge, the experiences of people in domestic settings. Some of these are concerns for later chapters. In the interim, I want to place these analyses of British health history in the Australian domain[7].

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[7] The connection between British and Australian health reform is augmented, even partly constituted, in nationalist histories which then use it strategically to demonstrate strongly how Australia's 'birth' as a nation has been an endogenous struggle against a reluctant parent (mother). The histories of W.K. Hancock (1930) and Russel Ward

Australian Health Reform

In Britain, health reform is closely linked to two modes of discipline. The first of these regulates individual bodies by applying specific medical technologies, regimes, practices and theories; the second regulates populations and environments by deploying instruments of government. Foucault (1978) argues that, until the emergence of population as a social construct and entity that could be governed, the art of governing was modelled on the family as the smallest unit of [patriarchal] society:

> ... from the moment when ... population appears absolutely irreducible to the family, the latter becomes of secondary importance compared to population; as an element internal to population: no longer, that is to say, a model but a segment. Nevertheless, it remains a privileged segment, because whenever information is required concerning the population (sexual behaviour, demography, consumption, etc.), it has to be obtained through the family. But the family becomes an instrument for the government of the population and not the chimerical model of good government (1978, 99-100).

It is also the case that narratives of Australian health selected here examine the relationships formed by bodies, populations, conceptions of health and understandings of good government[8]. Yet these stories are contestable. Exposing the rules of discourse that Foucault (1972a) identifies and showing how power operates in and around them may demonstrate the range of possible interpretations of what health is and how it manifests in the Australian context [9].

John Cumpston's work, published in 1978, begins to exemplify these points of contest.

THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE
A study in federalism
by
J.H.L. Cumpston, C.M.G., M.D., D.P.H.
formerly
Medical Officer of Health 1908-1911
in the service of the Government
of Western Australia
and
Chief Quarantine Officer Victoria and Queensland 1911-1913
Director of Quarantine 1913-1945
Director General of Health 1921-1945
Chairman of the Federal Health Council 1927-1936
Chairman of the National Health and Medical Research Council 1937-1945
in the service of the
Government of the Commonwealth of Australia

Here is evidence of the authority of the commentator and his training as a successful and productive member of the bureaucracy. We are provided with the life of the author in shorthand, his roles and chronology laid out before us and his function as an accurate commentator on Australian health established.

(1965) come to mind, as do quite different poststructural critiques of such nationalist representations by John Docker (1991) and Kay Schaffer (1988).

8 This observation is also the case for other works that are not analysed here. These include texts by Erica Bates (1983), Norelle Lickiss (1984), Gillian Lupton and Jake Najman (1989), John Pearn and Catherine O'Carrigan (1983) and Tony Radford (1984).

9 Indeed, 'the Australian context' is a totalising concept. There are different public health histories for different areas of Australia, including those by Graeme Davison et al. (1985) on Melbourne's outcasts, Paul Hicks (1992) on the sanitary movement in Melbourne, Sandra Holton (1983) on the rise of social medicine in South Australia, Alan Mayne (1982) on fevers and public health issues in Sydney, Tom Stevenson (1981) on the application of miasmatic theory in Adelaide and Philip Woodruff (1984) on the public health of South Australia.

The construction of the author as a legitimising force continues in the book's introduction by Professor Michael Roe (1978). In a sixteen-page treatise on Cumpston, Roe contextualises the establishment, background and significance of the federal department of health, founded in 1921. His introduction, like so much knowledge that is produced (my own research included), is discourse on discourse, commentary on commentary, that describes and analyses yet other discourses and social practices. Roe's text produces knowledge and rarefies another text under consideration, normalising it with the rules of discourse established in the academy.

Roe goes on the establish other orthodoxies. After marking Cumpston "a pioneer resident and community leader ... a public servant of the highest rank, and an historian of considerable achievement ...", Roe argues that Cumpston's work is also a pioneering document, presenting a "comprehensive story ..." of a "neglected history ..." (1978, ix). Roe establishes the importance of such history by citing its broad base in bipartisan colonial and federal concerns about plague and quarantine (listed in s.51 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia). He fixes the chronology of progress, using the passage of time as a tool by which to measure success. Roe also notes the existence of debates about the interpretation of Australia's health history, arguing that the unifying agenda across the political spectrum has been that "individual needs and the national good ..." (1978, xv) have been served. Having established the emergence of health and the "prehistory" of the federal Department concerned with its governance, he goes on to constitute Cumpston as a biographical entity, tracing his life and works, his militant progressivism, his ideological agenda and achievements, and his liaison with other prominent colleagues.

Cumpston's own work focuses on the period from 1850 to 1945, after which he retired. His analysis of the foundations of health reform in Australia illustrates Roe's observations about his progressive bent. Of the period 1850 to 1900, he records the following:

> This was a period of most exciting and stimulating discoveries which opened almost limitless fields of new activities in medical science, and banished for ever the ignorance and superstition which had persisted from almost the beginnings of recorded history. But, as Tennyson wrote, "Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers" and it was not until the second period - the twentieth century - that the knowledge newly acquired was fully applied. There are many doctors living still, born for example in 1880, who, reaching manhood at the turn of the century and at the birth of federation, saw lingering evidences of the age of ignorance. It is reasonably true to say that before 1850 the true cause of every disease and of every epidemic was quite unknown. Two major factors still held their place in the minds of most people as those to which the occurrence of disease and epidemics must be ascribed. These were the wrath of God, and the foul air due to insanitary conditions. Effluvia, miasma (Greek - meaning pollution) were the words most commonly used in explaining epidemics: the word "malaria" means nothing else than "bad air" (1978, 1).

What sorts of observations can be made about Cumpston's text? First, in the opening passage describing the period to 1900 as one of medical and scientific progress, there is a distinction made between knowledge and wisdom, the latter being privileged as more valuable and permanent, and as marking the era in which Cumpston himself was working. The terms superstition and ignorance are also conflated. Such a convergence does not seem unreasonable and yet, in orthodox history, the 'medical' knowledge held by subaltern groups, and by women especially, has been categorised as belonging to the realm of superstition.

Cumpston suggests that knowing the true cause of disease forms part of the foundational wisdom of modern medicine (FIG 3). This observation is difficult to dispute. Diseases indeed manifest because of particular events or entities. We now know that tuberculosis is caused by a

specific bacillus, that AIDS is the 'blow-out' of a viral infection, or that cholera bacilli reside in faecal matter. What Cumpston leaves unsaid, however, is that certain conceptions and representations of disease remain whether the cause of the disorder is known or not. Tuberculosis continues to be associated with images of poverty and dirtiness, AIDS (in the west at least) with moral and sexual deviance, and cholera with under-development and an inability to care for oneself and one's economic well-being.

Cumpston also argues that medical 'superstitions' were widely held until the mid 1890s, particularly in relation to diseases that might be read for visible symptoms transmitted from person to person. According to Cumpston, disease transmission was contested terrain until the findings of Darwin, Pasteur and Lister were widely accepted. Miasmatic theory was the dominant, but not exclusive, model for understanding disease transmission until that time (Riley 1987). Speculation that unseen entities caused illness was considerable, particularly since technologies such as microscopy had allowed hidden things to become apparent to the scientific gaze.

Cumpston's work marginalises environmental symptoms such as odour and ooze from the diagnosis of disease. These kinds of signifiers tell much about the presence of sites of disease and disorder. Malaria does mean "bad air": the disease is carried by a living vector, yet that vector nevertheless is carried on the air; the nineteenth century 'reality' of bad air being equivalent to disease remains an appropriate metaphor for then as well as now. The point of noting this example is that 'superstitious' and 'non-scientific explanations' for health and disease provide other and 'useful' kinds of knowledge, although they remain outside legitimate terrains of knowledge.

So how did Darwin, Pasteur and Lister and the discourses and social practices produced by and about them contribute to the constitution of health in Australia?

> It was Darwin who from 1858 onwards freed the human race from the centuries-old fetters of tradition and superstition. It was impossible, after his unanswerable exposition of the universal struggle for existence in nature, for any man apathetically, with whatever sublime resignation, to accept disease or epidemics as manifestations of the Divine will ... By 1877 [Pasteur] ... had, through a brilliant series of experiments, identified the micro-organism which caused anthrax in animals and in man, and, going much further had shown that it could be isolated, grown on artificial media under controlled conditions, and its behaviour studied ... While Pasteur was thus scientifically proving that disease was a natural process, one living organism maintaining its existence at the expense of another, Lister in Scotland was proving that [wound sepsis] ... was due to infection from outside, because of the instruments used, the hands of the surgeon, and the dressing applied were not clean: that dirt, not visible dirt, but germ-containing material, was present (1978, 3-6).

In discussing the effects of the ideas of Darwin, Pasteur and Lister on the new constitution of health and disease, Cumpston's text exemplifies other normative understandings of history and progress. He writes of Darwin as saving humanity from tradition and superstition, ignoring the immense and often negative effects that science and medicine have on individual bodies and collective populations. He disregards alternative knowledges that are located in the domain of superstition, and he constitutes a divinity that is exogenous to nature. These observations are not surprising given the context of Cumpston's life and the discursive and social practices by which he was constituted. Nevertheless, we need to ask what effects arise from Cumpston locating spiritual will externally to things corporeal? This strategy perpetuates an idea of nature as object and, in my opinion, such a distinction constrains how we constitute ourselves in relation to nature, and indeed how we conceive of and treat nature itself. More specifically, this strategy normalises ideas of wellness and disease, ignoring the power effects that emerge because some disorders (such as

neurasthenia or hysteria in women or, more recently, AIDS in homosexuals) have particular political dimensions.

Cumpston attributes the ability to discover and manipulate the vectors of disease to Pasteur and Lister. Once hidden from the gaze of the scientist, micro-organisms began to 'exist' and were incorporated in representations of health and illness. Moreover, they could be segregated and reproduced under laboratory conditions. Their 'behaviours' could be placed under surveillance. New realities were created and new discourses came to constitute understandings of what it was to be embodied. Still, Cumpston leaves from his history the multiple effects of these medical and scientific advances on the practices and institutions of subalterns in the nineteenth century. In the home, for instance, the cleaning, dietary, clothing, sexual, reproductive and child-rearing regimens of Australian women have changed dramatically as a result of these discoveries. These feminised practices are supposed to contribute significantly to the initial health of new generations and to the maintenance of the health of existing populations. Yet Cumpston makes no comment about these issues until a later discussion on the falling birth rate in Australia in the years to 1945. Even then, his discussion is formulated in a manner that perpetuates normative understandings of the position of women, at a time when alternative discourses did exist, especially from the era of first wave feminism.

Slowly Taking Control? Australian Governments and Health Care Provision 1788-1988, is a book written in 1990 by Anne Crichton. It is a project that she describes as specifically focused on health care as negotiated compromise and political practice. Tracing this health care from 1788 to 1988, Crichton argues that the major transitions in Australian health reform are threefold. There is a move from a nineteenth century combination of class-based philanthropy and medical entrepreneurial activity to an early twentieth century concern with placing bureaucratic limitations on the power and practice of medicine. Finally, there is a partial transition from this bureaucratised medical model of health to one based on instrumental concerns with finding a balance between the public and private spheres. This last phase involves the rise of community health models oriented to more radical variants of structural and social reform, and of other liberal models constructing health as an individual responsibility.

In Crichton's work, medical care and health are viewed as moving from one state to another more bureaucratically and socially advanced state, albeit one striving to balance community participation, medical autonomy and state accountability. Crichton also notes that definitions of health have changed over time from an instrumental concern with helping populations to achieve their full potential (disciplining and normalising bodies for economic and social production and reproduction?) to a holistic concern with individual lifestyles (with the normalisation of whole bodies and whole lives?). No longer is health simply the absence of sickness; it is a state of being that encompasses social, emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical well-being. The whole body, and the subject contained within its fleshy borders, is now the object of surveillance and concern, but the prevailing medical metaphor of the body as a mechanism is weakened by the introduction of social and affective components into health. The organic metaphor re-emerges.

Definitions of health are also part of a postcolonial world. Crichton notes that it is the responsibility of the World Health Organisation to set international standards of health, but she does not acknowledge how the implementation of these standards can marginalise important differences

among peoples by neglecting to take account of context. Certain cultural practices of body-care may be anathema (clitoridectomy, infibulation and the slaughter of endangered species for 'remedies' come to mind). Yet colonising actions by the medical, political, aid and social welfare communities nevertheless need to be avoided because other local practices and 'pre-scientific' medical knowledges[10] are at risk of being lost or insensitively appropriated by modern international medicine.

Clearly, modern medicine does make significant differences to individual people in situations of privation. Nevertheless, there are complex and potentially explosive problems in internationalising ideas and ideals of health. Pam Gunnell notes:

> According to [Ivan] Illich, a professional and physician-based health-care system that has grown beyond critical bounds (as he suggests ours has) is sickening for three reasons: (1) it makes people sick clinically through the effects and side-effects of medicine; (2) it makes people sick socially through separating the concept of illness from the political conditions that to a large extent cause it; and (3) it makes people sick culturally through expropriating to itself the idea of healing power which formerly resided within individuals-in-society (1994, 3).

Although Illich's observations rest on an understanding of power as hegemonic, certainly it is the case that, in concert with insurance companies and hospitals, the Australian medical profession exercises a great deal of power in relation to health among the Australian community as well as among international aid recipients (Stamp 1994).

Much of the analysis of events in *Slowly Taking Control* focuses on changes to the federal political leadership. Thus, it is not surprising that Crichton sees distinct differences between a Liberal focus on the market (the issue of supply and the autonomy of medical professionals), and a Labor concern with national health systems (the issue of demand, community representation and accountability among medical professionals). Crichton's text focuses on power, economy and time; on inter- and intra-sectoral conflicts and compromises; federal-state relations; and tensions among health professionals, bureaucrats and the community. It traces "power shifts ..." (1990, 180) among different interests, examining configurations of pressure groups, interest groups, allies and of challenging groups, repressed groups and dominant groups. It asks "What effect are these shifts of power likely to have?" (1990, 194). Finally, it asserts the reality of heterogeneous health objectives and outcomes, and of processes and structures in the Australian health care system of the late twentieth century.

The link between health and environment is also made explicit. Crichton notes that environmental health emerges in discourses and social practices about Australian health mainly during the more recent Labor years, with concerns about environment being linked to those about health education and programs in policy. According to Crichton, Labour's stated aims include:

> A philosophy of health education which examines not only what the individual can do to prevent illness but also the need to control the promotion of hazardous products and other environmental/cultural factors which can militate against the best intentions of health education campaigns (1990, 161)

10 Recent work on the wisdom of indigenous peoples and on the knowledge some such groups have about the healing properties of plant and animal products found in endangered ecosystems is important. Texts by Peter Knudson and David Suzuki (1992), and by James Lovelock (1991) are particularly noteworthy in this regard. Yet these documents, too, pose a problem about authenticity and power/knowledge that is important in poststructural analysis (Jane Jacobs 1993). Certainly, indigenous peoples, and the elders in their communities, may be wise: but do we have a right to make them part of our past, the noble savage reborn and reified, and do we have a right to their knowledges and rituals?

and

> A properly conceived and executed public health program to ensure that Australians are getting the best possible protection through health research in unmasking toxic, carcinogenic, teratogenic and mutagenic health risks associated with drugs, pesticides, chemicals and environmental pollution (1990, 161).

This rhetoric of environmental concern is intriguing. There are indeed distinct links in the late twentieth century between the green movement and certain models of community health (Gunnell 1994). Nevertheless, in the arena of property development alone, tensions among local, state and federal governments suggest that 'economic imperatives' require expedience to hide such things as the presence of toxic waste dumps in new suburban developments (Stratford 1991).

Environmental health is often a marginal consideration when large amounts of money are at stake. As both McEachern (1994) and Peace (1994) note in relation to the rhetoric of environmental damage control and environmental resource management, developers, bureaucrats and politicians are able to adopt or co-opt the language of oppositional groups, normalising what were protest documents and actions. Marginal discourses are incorporated into mainstream agenda and sometimes their disruptive effects are jeopardised. Of course, this containment does not prevent the creation of new forms of transgression, but it can serve to slow the momentum of resistance.

Goals and Targets for Australia's Health in the Year 2000 and Beyond (1993) is a substantive report commissioned by the-then Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services, and written by a team of researchers led by Professor Donald Nutbeam. It is noteworthy that the federal department dealing with issues of health has been the same institution that has over-arching responsibility for housing and other community services. The implicit link between housing and health is made overt in this bureaucratic arrangement, the convergence representing a partial reification of the link.

Goals and Targets establishes as legitimate the long arm of pastoral and policing concerns of the bureaucracy. It is a report on the progress of the national population's health to the new millennium and beyond, relying on traditional ideas of what a population is and what its health should be. This report is structured to focus first on physical, psychological, bureaucratic and educational elements of health, and then on particular disorders such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, injury, communicable diseases, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, obstetric care, asthma, diabetes mellitus, mental health disorders, physical and developmental disabilities, oral health, diet and nutrition, physical activity, high blood cholesterol and pressure, substance abuse, sexuality, contraception and infertility, sun protection, safety behaviours, immunisation and health education.

Like Cumpston's (1978) work, this report privileges the commentary and the discipline of health using particular strategies. For example, it appeals to definitions and standards of health derived from international and national agencies. It notes the existence and efficacy of the National Better Health Program and the National Health Strategy, along with the instruments constituted to oversee their success. It accepts as unproblematic certain understandings of health as a commodity that can be attained with "good management practice ... strategic planning ... equity and efficiency ... resource allocation ..." (1993, 5). All this rhetoric sounds remarkably like that adopted in mainstream environmental resource management to discipline nature. Goals signify the desired pace and direction of change and improvement in health outcomes among the population. Targets represent specific and measurable amounts by which things change within a predetermined time frame. Both goals and targets are premised on a comprehensive understanding among health

professionals and bureaucrats of the combination of trends (of bodies, populations, disorders, diseases, medical advances); of assessments of these trends; and of research and development (of drugs, treatments, diagnostic procedures, environmental controls, technologies). The report uses terms such as best estimates, best practice, benchmarks, balance, revision, legitimation and net evaluations.

One conspicuous aspect of *Goals and Targets* is the proliferation of statements about institutional arrangements, projects, programs and strategies. In the report, mention is made of the World Health Organisation's 1981 report on *Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000*, and its 1986 Ottawa Charter for health promotion. There is the Australian Better Health Commission's 1985 report on *Advancing Australia's Health*, and the Commission's 1986 document on *Looking Forward to Better Health* in three volumes. There is the Health Targets and Implementation Committee, the Australian Health Ministers' Conference and its 1988 report on *Health for All Australians*. There is the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC); National Health Advancement Program; National Campaign on Alcohol and Drug Abuse; National HIV/AIDS Strategy; Women and Health Sub-Committee of AHMAC; the National Health and Medical Research Council and sub-committees such as the Environmental Health Committee; the Healthy Cities and Better Cities projects; the Australian Education Council; Worksafe Australia; the Public Health Education and Research Program; along with state and federal ministries; local government health initiatives; non-government and community organisations oriented to health; peak consumer bodies; and pressure and interest groups. Indeed there is a veritable cacophony of institutionalised discourses and practices that constitute the field of health in Australia at this time.

This growth in the number of bureaucratic structures needed to create health is part of governmentality as Foucault (1978) understands it. In his analysis of the rise of disciplinary society and the lapse of sovereign rule, Foucault defines governmentality as characterised by three things. First, it is the "ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power ..." (1978 102). Foucault argues that the target of governmentality is population, its form of knowledge is political economy and its techniques are the apparatus of security. This description implies the military, the bureaucracy, the police and the discursive instruments of social distinction such class, race and gender. Second, governmentality is a tendency for bureaucratic technologies and knowledges to become pre-eminent over long periods. Finally, governmentality is the outcome of a process whereby the exercise of justice is changed into the deployment of administration from around the sixteenth century.

Health and health care are issues of power and government intersecting with bodies, populations, communities and environments. The provision of bureaucratised health is a particular form of administration that sometimes can deliver effective services to the community, yet also serves to control definitions of health and illness, and how these come to be analysed as progressive through time.

TEXT AND CONTEXT: PREFABRICATED HISTORY?

The foregoing analyses of texts on health in British and Australian contexts produce several insights. First, health reform has been created in discourses, social practices and institutions that converge around the body and around terrains such as the home, the suburb, the town and nature. Second, narratives that interpret the rise of health tend to construct the passage of time itself as something that implies improvement in the health of bodies and in populations, along with the sites in which these two are located. Structures and practices attendant on health provision are indeed critiqued in these five texts. However, each text also demonstrates an implicit acceptance of the inevitability, if not the desirability, of surveillance, governmentality and discipline as instrumental tools that will give effect to desirable health outcomes for the greatest number of bodies: an ethical population. While I am not disputing that these techniques may be warranted in part to effect certain social outcomes, I am suggesting that we need to question how these outcomes are determined. How do we decide the meaning of wellness and illness, and how is it that these appellations are often attached to subjects according to other categories of meaning that are moral, categories such as race, gender or class? How is it that nature also becomes a symbol of disorder in our discourses on health? These various projects also adopt - without much justification - particular understandings about what forms of knowledge are legitimate; about which archival resources, statements, events, activities and outcomes will constitute the information on which histories are then built. One ramification of the deployment of these strategies is that other sources of knowledge become marginal. The production of historical documents is a partial exercise influenced by the diverse operation of power and given effect on bodies and subjects; it needs to be acknowledged as such.

These stories of reform generally appear to perpetuate specific stereotypes of the feminine, the home and nature (and, implicitly, of the masculine, the public sphere and culture) that were and are being challenged in other stories and in material ways. I have reached this conclusion not because these categories of meaning are discussed in any great detail, or in ways that appear surprising, in the five narratives. Women's health is portrayed exclusively as the health of child birth, child care, gynaecology, nervous disorders, nutrition, breast cancer, cervical cancer and so forth. The roles of femininity also signify certain kinds of health-related activity: nursing families, cleaning homes and such like. These tasks comprise some of those disciplines exacted on and by the feminine and they do occur in specific sites, yet they are not the only or essential ones. Nature (usually denoted as 'the environment') is also problematised in orthodox ways: it is constituted as an objective, external and measurable reality of instrumental value to people, but one that has certain elements requiring a range of interventions from management to conquest.

Finally, these texts present a generally uncritical acceptance of a series of binary oppositions that cannot create open sites and emancipatory analytical spaces in which to examine heterodoxies and heterogeneities. Health and illness, progression and regression, reform and disorder; each of these joins a range of other highly problematic binaries in the construction of much of the knowledge that comes from these texts. This observation is not to suggest that it is easy or even possible to stand back from particular conceptions and categories of meaning; it is not. For almost three decades now, poststructural theorists have been concerning themselves with theorising about the possibility of generating discursive and non-discursive spaces that do not rest on these binary oppositions. Even if its 'practitioners' are not able to move beyond the conundrum about

oppositional language, poststructural theory provides the means by which to begin a decentring analysis that does shake these binaries. The universal exists only as it is specified, a particularity that is always political (Gunew and Yeatman 1993). In the 'shake-up' there has been a movement towards the radical reconstruction of theory and history in ways that concede that all power and knowledge is contingent.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore how British and Australian stories of health and health reform are constituted various discourses that generally emanate from the public sphere. I have sought to ask how such stories contribute to diverse and problematic conceptions of the feminine, the home and nature. I have also written of these categories of meaning using the body as a metaphor and an important material site for poststructural theoretical analysis. As John Fiske (1993) notes, the body is that place where nature and culture converge, and where we negotiate the sameness and difference that these two categories present, also distinguishing between the individual and the social.

On the basis of the insights gained from these concepts, I have explored specific textual and contextual issues arising from these texts, commenting on how they deploy statements and reify events that privilege expertise, scientific knowledge and bureaucratic power. In the process, alternative narratives about general knowledge, folklore and localised and community power are delegitimised. In this way, I have speculated that these texts present only part of the story of public health in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. In Part II and Part III, other narratives are explored that may contribute to enhancing not only the history of health, but also of the feminine, the home and nature. It is to that task that I now turn.

FIGURE 1

Frontispiece, *Healthy Mothers and Sturdy Children*, 1903 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

☞ *The Australian Wife's Advice Book on the Management of her own Health and that of her Children, with some words addressed to her Husband.*

HEALTHY MOTHERS

AND

Sturdy Children.

A BOOK FOR EVERY FAMILY

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The Best Methods of Maintaining Health and Curing Disease,

AS TAUGHT BY EMINENT HYGIENIC PHYSICIANS.

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Melbourne:
TER & KNAPTON, PRINTERS, 290½ LITTLE COLLINS STREET.
MDCCCXCIII.

FIGURE 2

Mrs Donaghue in the Kitchen, Wanaaring c. 1905, in Alan Davies (1989) *At Work and Play: Our Past in Pictures*, p. 91 (Courtesy of the Bicentennial Copying Project, State Library of New South Wales)

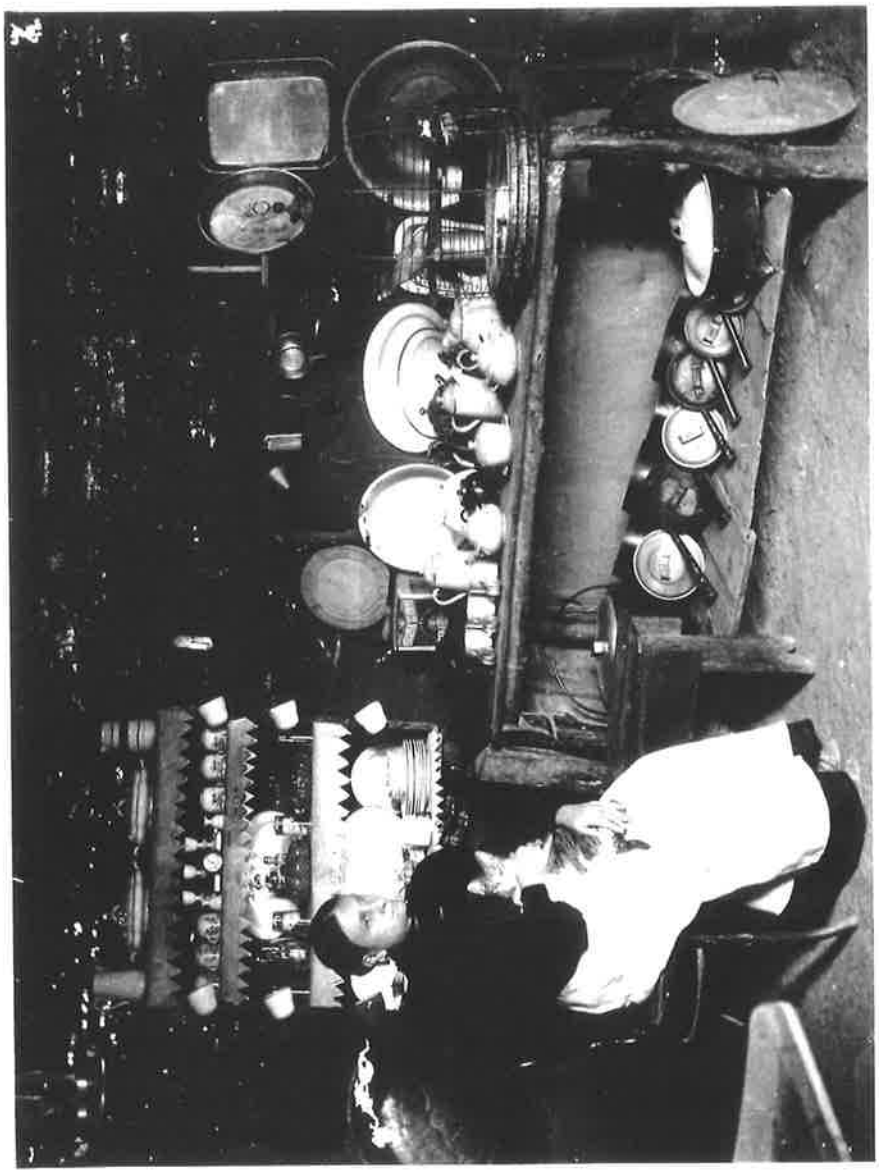

FIGURE 3

Advertisement for *The Australian Illustrated Medical Guide*, in *The Home Queen*, 18 February 1904, p.4 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

To Australian Mothers and Nurses

A correspondent, writing to the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" on the question of "THE DECLINING BIRTHRATE," says:—

"It appears to me that, while this subject has been argued from many standpoints, all sorts of side issues have been dragged into the discussion. At the same time, several important points have been entirely overlooked. Writing as a country dweller who has suffered more than a fair share from drought, flood, fire, caterpillars, grasshoppers, and other friends of the man on the land, I am certain that none of these troubles affect the birth rate so directly as the difficulty—ofttimes the impossibility—of procuring medical and nursing aid, when required, at reasonable charges, and of a reliable character. Thousands of our settlers live many miles from any doctor or certificated midwife. The cost of getting these from the nearest town is frequently prohibitive, and the local substitutes are in too many cases ignorant and utterly incompetent, and the lives of our young Australian mothers are too often sacrificed for the lack of skilled attention on these critical occasions."

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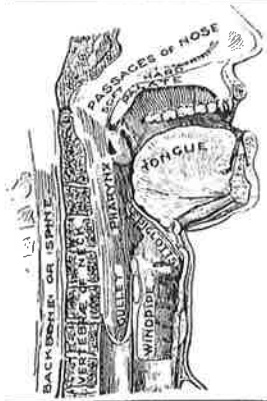

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PART II

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE FEMININE, THE HOME AND NATURE IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

PREFACE

Thus far, I have elaborated on two matters: explaining the theoretical foundations of the work; examining constructions of the feminine, the home and nature in contemporary texts of British and Australian health and health reform. I want now to analyse how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted in particular health texts written during the period from 1873 to 1903 in Australia. This first date marks the passage of the first Public Health Act in South Australia, and the second marks the formation of the Mackellar Royal Commission on the decline in the birth rate in Australia (see Hicks 1978).

The late nineteenth century looms large in the construction of our national identities (Goodman 1994; O'Farrell, P. 1994). It is a period that stands for the rise of the nation, the worker and the woman. Australians took stock of themselves; as political caricatures of the day suggest, some of this self-reflection and criticism was particularly sharp (Mahood 1973). Local art consolidated some independence from European role-models (Hughes 1980). Significant literary achievements were made by men women in exploring the particular qualities of what it was to be Australian (Butterss, pers.comm. 1994; Spender 1988).

Significant strides were made in science, technology and manufacturing, commerce and retailing, primary industries, transport and communication, housing and town planning, and trade (Kingston 1988). Between 1890 and 1900, locomotives were built, three cylinder planes invented, milking machines and milk processing patented, sheet iron and reinforced concrete used in building construction, electricity used in street lighting in Melbourne and in tram-cars in Sydney, cotton milling and gold processing introduced, railway expansion increased, local anaesthetics and antisepsis introduced, Iron Knob managed by BHP, the first all-Australian petrol car invented and gold discovered in Western Australia and the Northern Territory (Aplin et al. 1987, Brown 1986).

Politics diversified. Sections of the community embraced the labour movement, democratic socialism, communism and progressivism. 'Wowserism' also prevailed. Conduct, duty and reform became catch-cries - health reform, constitutional reform, reform of men and of women, reform of housing and of cities, reform of nature (FIG 4). The first national convention on federation was held among the six Australian colonies and New Zealand in 1890. Rose Scott and other feminists began to lobby publicly for woman's suffrage, gaining it in South Australia in 1894. Public health, contagious diseases and children's protection acts were passed to mitigate against such things as disease, abuse and baby farming. Governments passed legislation for cooperative settlement on Crown Land, and to encourage closer settlement. William Lane and his followers left Australia to establish a socialist utopia in Paraguay. Rural credit was established in Victoria. Anti-sweating and factory legislation was introduced in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales. The National Council of Women of Australia was established (Aplin et al. 1987, Brown 1986).

Philosophy was dominated by Christian (Protestant) idealism and influenced by Hegel, Kant and American moral philosophy (Chandler, pers.comm. 1994). Although the first retrospective analysis of Australian economics did not appear until Timothy Coghlan produced his multi-volume study after World War One, there was a vigorous debate in Australia in the late nineteenth century about the principles and practices of economics. As journals such as *The Bulletin* show, much of this discussion focused on the polarities drawn between free trade and protectionism, between the worker and the employer. Smith, Ricardo and Mill continued to dominate economic orthodoxy

(McLean, pers.comm. 1994), although the influence of Malthus, Marx and Henry George was significant in socialist documents such as the Fabian Tracts. The 1890s was also a time of considerable economic hardship. Declining economic conditions forced the cancellations of assisted immigration in 1890. In 1891, the Bank of Van Diemen's Land collapsed as did several land companies in Victoria, and in 1893, the Federal Bank of Australia closed, followed by the Commercial Bank of Australia and twelve other banking establishments. These various closures plunged the country into a severe depression until 1895 and 1896, when conditions began to pick up somewhat.

The late nineteenth century is also a time when white Australians gave different kinds of expression to their relationship with 'natural' landscapes they earlier found uncompromising and unattractive (Dovers 1994; Griffiths 1989; Powell 1994). Members of various colonial royal societies and royal geographical, geological, ornithological and other specialist societies began simultaneously to penetrate and construct the mysteries of the continent. Agricultural and botany departments were established at universities in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, and in working men's colleges. The rural sector was opened up before the closer settlement movement was established in the wake of significant rural depression. The disenfranchisement of the indigenous population was made complete.

Finally, evidence from the archives and from annotated bibliographies such as those produced by Lurline Stuart (1979) or Alfred Pong (1985) suggests that Australians were a population exposed to much in the way of reading opportunity. Libraries, book societies, journals, proceedings of professional organisations and a plethora of other materials made available (and within remarkably short times given the alleged tyrannies of distance) a wide range of historical and contemporary texts on a diversity of issues no less profound than those to which we are currently exposed. There was also in most capital cities a range of other cultural endeavours - universities, art schools, operatic and theatrical companies, orchestras and the like. Popular culture also thrived with sports, magazines, music hall and so forth. In all, it was an era of economic boom and bust, social and environmental dislocation, cultural experiment, contraction and expansion, and moves towards (white) national cohesion (Clark 1983; Hancock 1930; Palmer 1957; Reeves 1903; Serle 1973; Ward 1965).

However, certain recent analyses of Australia during this period are informed by poststructural concerns for writing stories of the other. Susan Magarey and her colleagues (1993) note that the 1988 bicentennial celebrations prompted some critical examinations of the 'legendary' 1890s, a process resulting in the production of texts about subalterns, and indigenous peoples in particular. Numerous poststructural studies of the margins of Australian experience also use textual analysis to show that history is not a uniform and continuous project[1]. Indeed, these works appear committed to illustrating how Australia is mythological.

Tim Doyle (1990) argues that myths have ideological functions, and are characterised as both exclusive and inclusive depending on context. They are economical and naturalise cultural constructions. They are instrumental and unconscious, widely understood, rarely questioned,

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[1] Works by John Docker (1991), Sylvia Lawson (1987), and Kay Schaffer (1988) are particularly noteworthy in this regard, focusing respectively on the juxtaposition of *The Dawn* and *The Bulletin*, on the 'figure' of J.F. Archibald of *the Bulletin*, and on the constitution of the bush in short stories by Henry Lawson and Barbara Baynton. Other works in which new histories of Australia are written include edited collections by Patricia Grimshaw et al. (1993), Susan Magarey et al. (1993), and Verity Burgman and Jenny Lee (1988), some of which, of course, adopt theoretical positions other than the poststructural.

unpredictable in their consequences, and necessary to culture (Barthes 1988). Many prevailing myths about Australia during the late nineteenth century conform to these characteristics. For example, in order for there to be a masculine bush ethos, other myths about the feminised, cloying and evil city have to be deployed (Schaffer 1988). The heroic bushman is juxtaposed against forms of inferiorised urban masculinity and against the feminine and domestic. These myths, are reified and politicised in ways that seem to me to be ideological and naturalised.

In discussing the methodology to *The Myths of Oz*, John Fiske and his co-writers argue:

> The only way we could make sense of these contradictions [in Australian culture] was to emphasise culture as itself dynamic, to see Australian culture not as a static collection of items but as a play of forces. We saw it as a set of ways of constructing meanings, not as specific objects or artefacts. In this view its meanings are not fixed and its values are not common (1987, viii-ix).

In terms of these plays of forces, there is now a growing variety of knowledge produced about Aboriginal peoples' experiences of white conquest (Bourke 1994), and somewhat more exists about the particular effects of colonialism on Aboriginal women than in the past (Jacobs 1993). It remains a challenge to avoid constituting indigenous peoples either as 'noble savages' or as degraded anomalies of an evolutionary process almost exclusively favouring the British and their descendants. Additionally, recent poststructural commentaries about such issues as 'the woman question', 'the Irish problem', 'the yellow peril' or the 'servant question', view gender, race and class as contested sites. The rich diversity of philosophical, political, economic and social positions is exposed more thoroughly, and dissent is made more audible. In the process of interrogating metaphorical, metonymical and other tropes in the writing of the narratives of history, new terrains of experience, new discourses and new positions are often uncovered, and this process is exciting and liberating.

My aim in Part II is to examine some of these issues in more detail by analysing particular texts from the late nineteenth century. The objective of chapter four and chapter five is to draw out some of the various positions on the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature as these are represented in health debates in the feminine popular press during the period from around the mid 1880s to around 1903[2]. The focus of chapter six is the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in texts about health emanating from the masculine cultural sphere. Such texts include short stories and articles from periodicals, public health legislation and parliamentary debates. Where chapter four focuses on the feminine body and chapter five concentrates on the home as body, chapter six is more concerned to examine nature as body, a problematic body that appears to be constituted as requiring constant monitoring and management by masculine professionals.

First, it will be useful to provide something of a guide to the texts selected for analysis in Part II, a kind of map to the narration and a statement of purpose. These chapters seek specifically to examine how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted in texts that deal with health and that stem from specific fields. Themes that emerge include the work of the Australian Health Society; the population question; the confluence of health and beauty as twin symbols of natural femininity; dress reform and freedom from cruelty to animals in fashion; child-care and motherhood; food reform and

2 In the years from 1903 to 1907, there is a fierce debate on population, the health of the race and the different roles of women and men. In 1907, in the Harvester judgement, the family wage institutionalised and reified the married man as family breadwinner and the married woman as dependent wife and mother. These issues are dealt with in some depth elsewhere (see Neville Hicks 1978; Patricia Grimshaw et al. 1993, Susan Magarey et al. 1993) and are not analysed here.

vegetarianism; home economics; the role of men's journals and the constitution of the public health at law. Throughout, it is my aim to ask how and where the bodies of the feminine are inflected with representations of domesticity and nature in the debates that are studied. Now, to turn to the question of how texts have been selected.

Both Dale Spender (1988) and Patricia Clarke (1988) raise the profiles of Australian women authors. Clarke notes that writing novels had been a fashionable activity among the minority of literate English women from around the turn of the eighteenth century, although she suggests that the number of women writing in Australia whose work was published was limited for several decades. Many women also kept diaries and corresponded with relatives, friends and social figures, without these documents ever being published. Few documents penned by women of the working classes exist from this era. The English diaries of Hannah Culwick, a servant who secretly was married for many years to a gentleman named Arthur Munby, are a notable 'offshore' exception (Stanley 1984).

In chapters four and five, analyses primarily concentrate on the women's popular press of the period from the mid 1880s to around 1903. Information about nineteenth century Australian periodicals is scarce, despite there being a large number of papers, magazines and journals produced or imported for professional and popular consumption. Lurline Stuart (1979) has written an annotated bibliography of such texts, focusing on those with a literary component. Publications such as *The Building and Engineering Journal* examined in chapter six fall outside such a parameter. Indeed, of the twelve periodicals from which material is analysed in these two chapters, only three are listed by Stuart. Alfred Pong's (1985) checklist also provides little information on the material examined here. Nevertheless, these commentators help to contextualise the importance of the popular press in Australia. Stuart notes that many of the most successful and popular periodicals were published overseas, particularly in Britain and the United States. Some, like the British journal *Tit-Bits* or the American *Scribner's Magazine* had Australian editions. These publications also had several commercial advantages over Australian productions, and their proprietors regularly had better access to more modern facilities and printing equipment, to skilled labour and supplies and, crucially, to a larger market. Generally, the production of Australian periodicals was concentrated in Sydney and in Melbourne. The press was also active in Adelaide and Hobart, but smaller markets kept the number of journals produced below those in the eastern colonies.

Stuart notes that there was at this time a wide variety of journals, many of them short-lived and of questionable quality. Although significant numbers of these papers are generalist in content, there were specialist magazines for select audiences. Many also carry copy that had been freely borrowed from overseas publications and other local papers. The owners and editors of these Australian periodicals were also hampered by financial problems, and they used advertising, competitions, discounts for advanced subscriptions and prizes to attract readers. Determination and defeat thus were hallmarks of the popular press during the nineteenth century.

What of the women's popular press? In the United States and Britain, women journalists and editors had been working since around the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The figure of American Sarah Josepha Hale looms as one example of an editor whose conservative position on women was preserved for many years in *Godey's Ladies' Book* (Ryan 1982). According to Patricia Clarke (1988), the figure of the woman journalist is not a universal source for discursive material

about emancipation; much that has circulated in the women's press also serves to perpetuate orthodox conceptions of the feminine, the home and nature.

Almost exclusively, the women's popular press in Australia is a manifestation dating from the 1880s and 1890s and here, too, the employment of women on the staff of newspapers from that time represents, in certain ways, a regressive step:

> Soon almost all women journalists were confined to the 'deadly, dreary ruck of long dress reports and the lists of those who "also ran" at miscellaneous functions'. Women journalists were not the only losers in this situation, for what they wrote tended to reinforce complacency in their women readers and to shield them from issues of some significance (Clarke 1988, 4).

With one or two exceptions, in chapters four and five I do not examine texts produced by women journalists working for mainstream newspapers or periodicals. Typically, the focus is on certain magazines dominated by women and women's issues. The best known of this type of magazine is *The Dawn*. Founded by Louisa Lawson in 1888, *The Dawn* was in print for seventeen years, the longest run of any Australian women's magazine in the nineteenth century. The standing of that magazine means that it is also the subject of significant contemporary analysis. Patricia Clarke (1988) provides a brief but comprehensive summary of the magazine. At the University of Adelaide, Penny Boumelha leads a team of researchers currently indexing *The Dawn*. John Docker (1991) also examines *The Dawn* by contrasting its messages and cultural meanings and those represented in masculinist pages of *The Bulletin*. Marilyn Lake (reprinted in Magarey et al. 1993) also refers to these two journals. John Docker (1993) responds to her assertions about the gender-blindness in most histories of Australia by focusing on some of the points of contest that exist in *The Bulletin*, arguing that Lake's analysis is only partial. Although her comments are in reference to *The Bulletin* exclusively, Sylvia Lawson's assessment of debates in the popular press is more widely apposite. She argues that there was, in operation:

> ... a huge active web of discourse ... [from which] we can claim a more eloquent and resilient past than the one our schoolbooks have handed us. There was, after all, no simple representation of a rugged bush or frontier ethic; nor were there single, stereotypical and uncontested notions of man and woman, bush and city, the roles and duties of the press itself. The inhuman, reactionary, and repressive voices were at times as loud as those calling for democracy (1987, 260).

Although these two magazines are important to the cultural construction of meaning about the feminine and the home in the late nineteenth century, they are not examined here. This decision has been a difficult one; I have read intriguing extracts from both *The Dawn* and *The Bulletin* during the research phase of this work. Nevertheless, there are numerous other journals - women's journals especially - that rarely have been the subject of contemporary analyses. It seems important to bring some of these texts out of the archives for their intrinsic value, perhaps rather more than for any possible contemporary impact they might have had. They, too, are part of the mythology of the late nineteenth century and especially of the energy and reform zeal of first wave feminism and its conception of the feminine, the home, nature and health.

One of the magazines listed by Stuart that is examined here is *The Woman's Voice*, founded in 1894 in Sydney by Maybanke Susannah Wolstonholme. Like Lawson, Wolstonholme was seriously committed to early feminist issues: suffrage; temperance; women's employment protection and rights; the peace movement; girl's education; prostitution, sexual abuse and sexually transmitted

diseases. Contemporary analyses of *The Woman's Voice* by Patricia Clarke (1988) and Susan Sheridan (1993) focus on such matters. The analysis undertaken here seeks to illuminate how health forms a significant concern in the pages of this and other magazines.

The Sun, The Society Courier, A Journal for the Home and Society is a second periodical examined here. It was published in Sydney from December 1888 to around February 1903. The paper was owned by three men between 1888 and 1899; George Bald, Frank Critchley Parker and Henry Hyde Champion, a prominent socialist married to Elsie Goldstein (Clarke 1988). Her sister Vida, a powerful champion for women's rights, edited *The Australian Woman's Sphere*, also examined here. *The Sun* was then purchased by Catherine Hay Thomson and Evelyn Gough, two active feminists, who printed and published it until it was incorporated into *Arena* in 1903. *Happy Homes: a Journal of Pure Literature for the Household* is another periodical used here that is also listed by Stuart (1979). Printed by Edward Teer Radcliffe, and published for less than two years, *Happy Homes* was owned and edited by Florence Hope through part of 1891, and by Mrs W. Keep through the rest of 1891 and in 1892 (FIG 5). For a short time, the paper then appeared as *Good Health: the Australian Domestic Journal*, but it folded in 1892.

The remaining items from which material is derived are not listed in Stuart's bibliography. They are papers from the Australian Health Society, *The Australian Storekeepers' Journal*, *The Woman*, *The New Idea*, *The Home Queen*, *The Band of Mercy Advocate*, *The Band of Mercy and Humane Journal*, *Australian Farm and Home*, and *The Australian Woman's Sphere*. Some of these periodicals lasted for a matter of months, others for several years. Some were owned and edited by committed feminists holding leftist politics and broad interests in the protection of nature, who were supported by sympathetic and like-minded women and men. Other papers were run by women and men whose politics were premised on an acceptance of more traditional and liberal understandings of the feminine, the home and utilitarian distinctions between society and environment. Nevertheless, in 'reformist' papers there are articles that normalise, and in 'reactionary' papers there are occasional heterodoxies that surprise the contemporary analyst, and disrupt conventional interpretations about the past.

The texts analysed in chapter six derive from the Australian Health Society, *The Building and Engineering Journal*, and the South Australian Parliament from 1873 and 1898. These texts, including a short story, articles, and debates and acts of parliament, are produced exclusively in the masculine sphere; all the writers are men and their concerns reflect the public and cultural perceptions of middle class masculinity. I have analysed these texts to ask how the feminine, the home and nature may be constituted in this realm, since it is different - though certainly not entirely separate - from the feminine concerns presented in chapters four and five.

In analysing various articles from these periodicals, I have kept in mind the kinds of questions raised by Foucault (1972a, 1972b) in his discussions about the discourse on language and the archaeology of knowledge, noted in chapter two. I have been particularly concerned to ask how the feminine, the home and nature come to be constituted in the texts and with what kinds of power effects. Where relevant, I have also indicated how I think these texts reflect certain ethical and moral positions that inform or are informed by concerns about health in Australian society at the time.

4

FEMININE SITES:
BODY AND HEALTH

> For a landscape to be regarded as the material of artistic discourse, the people utilising it need to identify with it, need to feel that they have control of that material, unless they want to signify nothing but awesome indomitability. The geography must have been domesticated (or at least regarded as such), rendered safe for human manipulation and consumption (Gibson 1993, 211).

> ... political theoretical investigation typically begins at the point of some problem in practical life and then becomes a search for the categories and methods by which the problem can be understood. The line of movement thus is from the concrete to the abstract, and to the illumination of the concrete by the abstract. Nevertheless, when the theorist comes to write about that illumination, the procedure very often is reversed (Joan Cocks 1989, 2).

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how the feminine is represented in poems, articles, letters and commentaries produced by women and men, and published in the women's popular press. I focus on the feminine - on the female body and self - in this chapter and, in so doing, I also actively read texts to examine how this category is invoked in relation to conceptions of the home and nature. In chapter five, I focus more on the site of the home, the domestic body and, in chapter six, I move out to examine the site of the urban environment, the public body of domesticated nature. It is my intention to draw particular attention to tropic devices such as metaphor, and to suggest how their use helps to naturalise what are, in my opinion, social constructions with particular and problematic power effects.

From these active readings, three particular themes arise in this chapter. First, I examine how the feminine is constituted in documents published by the Australian Health Society, a philanthropic organisation active out of Melbourne from the mid-1870s. Second, I explore some of the early debates on the population question, questioning the ways in which the reproductive feminine, the home and nature are constituted. Finally, I analyse the role of beauty and fashion in the manufacture of health, asking how the anti-cruelty and other movements may construct particular expressions of fashion and beauty as immoral and thus as unhealthy, unnatural and unfeminine.

THE AUSTRALIAN HEALTH SOCIETY AND A HEALTHY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

In the opening remarks of the Australian Health Society's twenty-fifth anniversary edition, the following observations are made:

> The closing quarter of the nineteenth century has been distinguished for many things, but perhaps for none more than for the variety and magnitude of its contributions to the great departments of public and personal hygiene. It is only when we compare the present with the past that we are able to realize the enormous advances that have been made, and the greatness of our indebtedness to modern science.

> Thus to the individual have now been brought home the supreme importance of heredity, the true position of diet, the value of exercise, the means and limitations of education, the interdependence of the physical, the mental, and the moral, the disease relationships of man with plants and animals, and the new world of friends and foes that exist in Germland, with information as to the prevention of hostile invasion, victory over or immunity against attack, rout at points of exit, and destruction in breeding grounds (Australian Health Society 1900, 4).

Here is mapped out the terrain of health discourses that dominate the discussion of health and sickness in the Australian popular press. There are issues of population and nascent eugenics, diet and exercise, and child-rearing and education. There is the constitution of subjects composed of the interconnections between mind and matter. By 1900, germ theory was established as an explanation for disease more credible than miasmatic theory. In so many ways, these matters find a confluence in bodies. There may also be a particularly complex convergence of such concerns in and around the surveillance and discipline of the bodies of the feminine, the home and nature.

The Australian Health Society was founded in August 1875 at a meeting in the Melbourne Town Hall. Three objectives steered the functions of the Society, broadly based around the banners of educating the public about sanitation, creating inducements by which the populace might come to adhere to the principles and practices of hygiene, and seeking the mitigation or removal of activities deleterious to the public health. The Society's members fulfilled these objectives by producing pamphlets for the general public, delivering public lectures, organising school competitions and prizes, participating in exhibitions, and lobbying politicians, the business community, clerics, the press and others on diverse issues pertaining to health and health reform.

The Society had a small library, composed of at least one hundred and seventy books and pamphlets, along with reports and publications from the Victorian government, *Sanitary Record*, *Vegetarian Messenger*, material from the United States, tracts from similar organisations elsewhere, as well as its own collection of publications, lecture series and fact-oriented wall-sheets. Thus, there was a plethora of texts constituting a divergent discourse on health held by the Society.

In 1883, the eighth year of operation, the Society's Ladies Committee began to organise "meetings for wives and daughters ... [in order to] create an interest in the aims of the Society amongst a class difficult to reach in any other way ..." (Australian Health Society 1900, 9). In 1888, practical cookery courses of six lessons were introduced to the Ladies Committee activities, although the jubilee report notes that the scheme was not overly successful. Then, in 1891, the Ladies Committee began a certified course of lectures for women on the basics of physiology, anatomy and hygiene. A year later, the Committee employed Dr Stone to present the course; in the report she was 'billed' as Australia's first woman doctor[1]. In 1894, the Ladies Committee developed two lecture series on personal and domestic hygiene. This latter subject had been dealt with in a number of the Society's general lectures, such as 'Dangers of Indoor Life' in 1893 or 'Comfort and Health in House-Building' in 1891. Yet, the development in 1894 of a course about hygiene in the home and the methods women could use to obtain it appears to be the first that

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[1] There is some confusion here about which Dr Stone presented the course. The Australian Health Society notes that it was Clara. The Australian Dictionary of Biography (1966-1991, 98-100) lists three Stones - Emma Constance (Australia's first woman doctor), her sister Grace Clara, and their cousin Emily Mary Page Stone, both of whom also became medical practitioners. Presumably it was Grace Clara who worked on this project with the Australian Health Society.

women had organised for themselves. In the intervening years to 1900, the Ladies Committee also ran numerous lecture series for women on a range of topics broadly related to health.

In presenting all these details, the jubilee report does a specific job, highlighting significant achievements of the organisation, noting key figures, major programs and the like. It is a reckoning, a survey and inventory of the body of the Society and its constituent parts. Reformist zeal and dedication to personal and public health are clearly evinced. It is significant that the Ladies Committee was created as an influential entity in the Society, for this group marked the women involved as bearing a different and new kind of femininity. Such women were being trained to manage new homes and to live in new and healthy environments where noxious dangers might no longer threaten the welfare of their families or themselves.

In her report on 'The Meetings for Wives and Daughters' (1884), Miss Niven, Secretary to the Ladies Committee, describes the ideal woman involved in health reform. She argues that women need to be curious and interested about health, and committed to assisting in its widespread adoption. Women also must exhibit the ability to speak the truth accurately and without being patronising, and must teach without seeming to. Niven acknowledges that women typically were not encouraged or required to take on public roles, and she implies that courage therefore is a desirable quality for women to bring to the task, since such roles would be a corollary of becoming involved in health reform.

Niven's descriptions also note how women philanthropists had to reassess their clients.

> The idea at first was to reach the respectable poor, but it was soon found that the mass of the people did not come under that category. They are working people, but they live in comfort, are well clad, and have houses decently and sufficiently furnished. The real poor are families who, by sickness, death, or vice have been deprived of their breadwinner; where the mother has to work from morning till night to earn the scanty pittance which serves to keep her and hers from absolute want. These poor women ... have no time to think of health or to go to meetings ... (1884, 5).

Here is a spirited assertion that real need for health education and reform exists in situations where the orthodox family has disintegrated. This comment was made in 1884; by the mid-1890s, poverty among women and children had reached alarming proportions, along with male unemployment which reached levels of twenty-five percent in some industries (Lee 1993). Even the Australian Health Society was wont to observe that its projects were in danger of collapse through lack of finances.

What remains partly hidden in the interstices of these Society texts is the link between degraded lives and degraded nature. Paul Hicks (1992) notes that Melbourne was a filthy city plagued by problems of rapid expansion during the boom of the 1880s and then by an economic downturn from the early 1890s. To those with an inclination to appreciate its more pristine characteristics, nature must have seemed a long way from the manure-filled streets, highly polluted waterways, noxious industries pouring forth odour and ooze, and inner suburbs choking with overcrowded and 'jerry-built' houses. Yet the effects of the degradation of nature in urban and hinterland sites contributed not only to the production of discourses on health and the roles of women, but also to social practices designed to ameliorate such effects.

In 'Unseen Enemies and How to Fight Them', another of the Australian Health Society's papers published in 1891, Dr John Springthorpe writes of contagious and epidemic diseases. Life is equated to a battle, bodies to fortresses; health to the status of a king; disease to rebel, robber,

plunderer and murderer. The text uses Edenic metaphors of the garden and the fall, bringing what at first seems an exogenous and spiritual nature into the analysis of serious health problems. Of diseases, Springthorpe says:

> No doubt the walls of Eden kept them out in the good old days of old, but we are outside the garden now, and our attitude must be ever that of beleaguered cities in a hostile land. For whilst in much of all that touches our daily life there is usefulness and beauty, in all there lurks the possibility of injury, and in a great deal we must expect the certainty of damage. Thus we cannot live without air, and yet the air may bring us disease and death. This fair garden that we call earth has well been named our mother, and yet Mother Earth may prove our destroyer and our grave ... (1891, 4).

Here is evidence of the paradoxical meanings of the feminine and nature, and of a feminine nature: nurturant but dangerous; domesticated but unpredictable. Enemies are in the air, the water, in vegetable matter, in animal products, in the earth, in the mechanisms of heredity and in the workings of immoral or untrained minds. Springthorpe suggests that there is a "circle of laws" in which "Man" should live; to stray is to suffer.

Interestingly, Springthorpe's wife predeceased him. Her body is buried in Boroondara Cemetery, Kew, in what Margaret Anderson (1993, 1) describes as "a memorial of extraordinary beauty ...". Constructed of marble and scalloped glass in red and yellow, the bier bears sculptures of a young dead woman, and of weeping angels and flowers. It is covered with inscriptions proclaiming her perfection and her return to the garden of Eden. Anderson also notes that nowhere on the grave is the name of the woman. Along with her body, any identity separate from her husband is buried and replaced with metonymical devices that mourn for a loss of natural innocence as much as for the loss of an embodied woman. Mrs John Springthorpe's name was Annie.

In sum, constituted under the auspices of the Australian Health Society, these various statements, texts and discourses about health relate to the deployment of pastoral concern, surveillance and discipline; middle class reformism is about creating an ethical and moral society in which healthy bodies and populations are central. Different locations are targeted by the disciplining gaze; the room, the home, the street, the suburb, the city. All the while, members of the rural sector continued apace to displace Aboriginal communities and to denude what was typically considered to be wasteland (Powell 1976); nature gone bankrupt. The health debate was constructed as one almost exclusively tied to the discipline of a corrupt urban environment and its vice-ridden poor. The most poignant victims of bad health were poor women and children, many of whom existed in deprived circumstances and suffered high levels of infant and maternal mortality and morbidity. Yet during the late nineteenth century, considerable debate also circulated in the popular press about the falling birth rate, and the alleged risk of a decline in racial health and vigour, considered essential to the drive towards nationhood.

THE POPULATION QUESTION

The Reverend Thomas Malthus is reputed to be the first modern thinker to problematise the relationship between population and resources. In three essays written in 1789, 1803 and 1830, he proposes that resources increase arithmetically while populations, when left unchecked, increase geometrically (Flew 1970; Malthus 1798/1970). Preventive checks on marriage include celibacy,

delayed marriage and 'vices' such as contraception and abortion. Positive checks include poverty, disease, famine and other effects of material deprivation, urbanisation and industrialisation. Malthus suggests that these checks add up to checks of vice or misery, and proposes a third measure by which to reduce the strain of population on resources; the check of moral restraint.

Malthus' thesis is complex and considered, and yet many of his colleagues and correspondents found it so depressing that he was dubbed the Dismal Parson. His work profoundly influenced Charles Darwin, Alfred Wallace, Herbert Spencer, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and, more recently, environmental doomsdayists such as Garrett Hardin (1968) and Paul and Anne Ehrlich (1977) or, more locally, Bob Birrell and his colleagues (1984). Both Malthus' ideas and critiques of them underpin much of the population debate that developed in various parts of the western world in the late nineteenth century.

In Australia, a complex set of issues about population began to converge around the bodies of the feminine and nature; generally, Malthusian arguments for restraint were unpopular and remained so well into the twentieth century. Part of the position on pro-natalism centred on the idea that the home was crucial to national health and well-being; a location from which might then come morally uplifted women and men who could 'settle' new frontiers armed with good health and social responsibility.

In the 1880s, the national birth rate was around 3.0 percent, yet it fell to just 1.07 percent in 1903. Migration was also erratic, falling from a net gain of 36,000 in some years in the 1880s to a net loss of 10,000 in 1903 (Hicks 1978). People began to delay marriage and have fewer children, and more women remained unmarried for life. The demography of the Aboriginal peoples was not considered in the collection of population statistics. Nevertheless, it is widely accepted that this population was being decimated by the effects of white conquest and colonial practices. Chinese and other non-Anglo races were also largely ignored in early statistical enumerations. These gross figures and generalised comments about social change hide all sorts of religious, political and class differences in how Australians viewed the population debate and wrote about it. Residential location and differential access of women to education and other services also influenced how they constituted themselves as feminine, and thus responded in particular ways to the prescriptions about their 'natural' roles and relations in life (see also Mackinnon 1993).

The issue of population embraces the continuing expansion of white conquest and settlement into rural areas, and a belief in that movement as essential to national well-being and progress. To fill and subdue nature in a land as massive as Australia, a large population would be imperative, and women would be needed to fulfil their roles as the mothers of men who would be required as indomitable breadwinners. A home provided by them for their wives came to signify the architectural essence of bonded and fecund marriage, and robust healthy nationhood in a land that had been tamed enough to allow for fruitful settlement.

In fact, women in the bush were few in number and their lives in these circumstances were often extremely difficult and dangerous. In establishing *The Dawn* in the 1880s, Sylvia Lawson also founded an outreach program for rural women, having experienced many of the hardships of such life before leaving her husband. Her son, Henry Lawson, encapsulates such trials in *The Drover's Wife* (1892). Nevertheless, rural women were also portrayed as the feminine in metaphorical decline, giving birth to and raising disordered families in a natural wasteland. Sue

Rowley (1993) argues that problems in urban landscapes actually provided many of the inspirations for these kinds of metaphorical treatments of rural themes and family issues. With desertion and destitution on the rise in cities in the economically depressed 1890s, the dislocation of the family unit became a matter of social significance, and its exposure in fiction and the popular press was an important part of the discourse on the health of the family and society.

Moreover, calls for population growth were premised on concerns about racial preservation. Low levels of population growth through natural increase came to be viewed as a threat to national security and to economic well-being. On the other hand, the immigration debate was more centrally concerned with ensuring the racial purity of prospective settlers. Nevertheless, through the proliferation of statements about Social Darwinism, nascent forms of eugenics, and of the 'natural' superiority of the white race, the birth process and the bodies of mother and child became contested arenas (Bacchi 1980).

Health is crucial to this debate: the healthy body of a woman best produces the healthy body of a child if protected in a healthy home environment, itself encased by a 'natural' environment relatively free of noxious earth, air and water, in a land where white supremacy was healthy and natural. Thus, discourses on racial hygiene also give rise to complex representations of the feminine, the home and nature in the late nineteenth century, constituting the woman's body not simply as a site of biological procreation, but as the domesticated and natural kernel of healthy social reproduction as well. Such moral prescriptions are fuelled by the prevailing gendered separation of public and private spheres. They serve to emphasise the putative chaste and moral superiority of femininity, and the unsuitability of the feminised body for the physical and intellectual rigours of public and cultural life. Clearly, many women founded discourses in opposition to this position.

In 1903, the government of New South Wales instituted a Royal Commission into the Decline of the Birth Rate in New South Wales (FIG 6), led by Charles Mackellar, a social conservative and pro-natalist (Hicks 1978). In its report to State Parliament in 1904, this Mackellar Commission argued that the fall in the birth rate could threaten the young nation, among other things by leading to an under-utilisation of natural resources and thus to a decline in material and attendant moral progress[2]. The decline came to be viewed as the result of the 'selfishness' of people of procreative age. These people were seen to be unwilling to deal with the strains and worries of raising children, as disliking the inconvenience of child bearing and child rearing, as wanting to avoid the difficulties of pregnancy, parturition and lactation, and as hoping to indulge in a "love of luxury and social pleasures ..." (Hicks 1978, 23). In response to these 'symptoms', the Commission called for a crack-down on the availability of contraception and abortion, for the improvement of medical and hospital practices and of the working conditions of women. Moreover, the Commission suggested that the New South Wales Government should encourage in practical ways the greatly increased use of more land for closer settlement.

In the work of the Commission there is a demonstrable link between certain social reforms and the constitution of the city as a place in which the feminine especially came to be removed

2 Neville Hicks (1978) provides evidence to suggest that many of the Commission's findings were overt manipulations of the statements of witnesses appearing before it; the Commission report reflecting in particular what Mackellar wanted.

from nature and from what were considered to be natural urges. Married women had been barred from the New South Wales public service in 1895 as part of what was called the protection of women's procreative well-being. Desley Deacon (1993, 58) refers to the legislation as something quite different, labelling it part of "the process of masculinist reorganisation during the 1890s ..." that led to the reassertion of masculine paternalism in the face of diverse feminist claims for equality. In combination with the Harvester judgment on the family wage in 1907, the net effect of juridical arrangements such as the Public Service Act, 1895, and discourses such as the Mackellar Commission, was a rise in the birth rate from something under 2.5 in the mid 1890s to 3.78 percent by 1912 (Hicks 1978).

Thus, discourses on population remain highly contested on matters such as resources, security, relations between the sexes, racial hygiene and eugenics. In the April 1st edition of *Australian Farm and Home* for 1899, 'Pansy' has penned an article entitled 'Pure Blooded Animals versus Pure Blooded Children' (p.157):

> In every paper one picks up we find directions as to the best ways and means of producing a finer, stronger and purer blooded class of farm animals ... How intensely proud a man is if his horses, cows, or any of the other animals take first prize against his neighbours'. He considers the expenses ... well repaid by the pleasure he receives in being the possessor of such valuable stock. At the same time this man's children may be weaklings. If healthy in body they may be dull of intellect ... Now, if the children were given the same treatment and care as these show animals had received, do you not think that they would be much improved thereby? It is no wonder that Australians are becoming an unhealthy race of people. Time and again we hear of the degenerating effect of the Australian climate. The climate would have little effect if the laws of nature and health were properly studied.

'Pansy' elaborates on how poor heredity results in poor stock, suggesting that it is the woman whose body and child-rearing practices then practically seal the fate of the offspring: "its frail constitution is almost worn out, leaving it neither physical nor mental strength capable of withstanding the harder conditions of life. The climate then steps in, takes the blame, and carries off the unfortunate being sooner or later ...". In suggesting that three healthy, attractive and intelligent children would be better than seven or eight dullards capriciously brought into the world by increasingly indifferent parents, 'Pansy' is advocating birth control. The methods by which such control might be achieved remain unstated (FIG 7). Finally, 'Pansy' suggests that parents must know about themselves and their own health in order to raise healthy and sturdy offspring. Thus, birth control is subtly advanced as a measure by which healthy populations may be bred, and the message is targeted to rural populations using a metaphorical correspondence between farm animals and children.

Health also figures in 'The Degeneration of the Race', an article in *The Australian Woman's Sphere* (2(21) May 1902, Supplement). Asserting that the Commonwealth's fate is to be found in the "common-wellness" of its population, E.M. Orgill suggests that the vigour of the race has declined over two generations. Numerous causes are suggested for such degeneration, especially the falling birth rate and the rise in incidence of cancer and tuberculosis. Other evidence supporting this assertion includes the rise in demand for hospital, asylum and charitable institution services, the increase in the use of surgery for minor ailments and the decrease in numbers of men fit for active service. Finally, Orgill argues that there was an increase in the rise of "imbeciles, cripples, deaf, dumb, blind and deformed creatures ..." which ought to "be checked".

This proto-eugenics is a discourse founded on concerns about sameness and normalcy, which are part of a wider concern with ethical conformity. Thus, in this article health is viewed as normal(ised) physical capacity. It is underpinned by a significant adherence to particular moral prescriptions about the sanctity of marriage, family and home as natural and good. Deviations from the norm should be checked, although how remains ominously silent. Women's bodies should give birth to children and, with femininity such a contested terrain in the late nineteenth century, there is an implicit understanding that the decline in the birth rate and the rise of feminism represent an unhealthy state. Thus, new forms of femininity (feminism) also are unhealthy.

Cancer and tuberculosis, to which Orgill refer, also require bodies on which to mark their passage; that these diseases often move hand in glove with degraded environments, diseased nature, is not made explicit by him (?). Increased health care derived from three bureaucratic practices new to the era. These practices involved managing the body of nature through legislative means, accepting and acting on the ideas behind germ theory and providing improved institutional services for the treatment of human bodies (hospitals having been notoriously dangerous places for the almost exclusive use of working class clients, and many people opting to be nursed at home or in sanatoria).

The population question and related health matters thus partly polarise around gender issues. The new woman and her male sympathisers came to be seen as anti-nationalist because they advocated birth control, the 'blissful unwedded state' and other emancipatory strategies. The traditional man and woman were concerned with the values of marriage, family, home and state, yet these generalised positions hid many contested terrains. In 'The Population Question' (*The Australian Woman's Sphere* 3(35) July 1903, 322-323) Hilma Parkes argues that increasing birth rates are indeed vital for the national progress, but she makes this assertion with the following qualification:

> ... I would nevertheless only advocate the greatest number of children consistent with the maximum of health and strength, which the nation can produce without injury or injustice to its women, whose duties to themselves, as separate entities, must not be overlooked. I think that mankind has been given an intelligence superior to animals, so as to wisely control this as other laws in nature, especially when it can be done without moral or physical injury to anyone.

Again, a series of statements is elaborated here in which Parkes advocates birth control through techniques that are morally acceptable because they appear to flaunt neither the natural nor the moral order. At the same time, the feminine is also distinguished as separate from nature on one hand, and from the masculine guardian on the other; the feminine is constituted as a mediator between nature and culture.

In the same issue of *The Australian Woman's Sphere* that carries Parkes' commentary, there is a letter entitled 'A Man's View' by H.B. (p.323). He argues that the *Sphere* is a valuable vessel for conveying women's issues, but suggests that women will not further the cause of birth control "by levelling all your guns at mere man ...". H.B. proposes that not all men exhibit "selfishness and bestiality ... [or an] objectionable attitude towards women in general and wives in particular ...". He argues that robust women have natural urges and that sexual restraint thus needs to be two sided. At one point, 'robust' appears to slip into a category of meaning that equates with the working classes:

> Many women in humbler walks of life make matrimony an excuse to gratify their lowest nature, without reckoning upon the consequences, either to themselves or to the unfortunate offspring they beget so ruthlessly. My observations and knowledge tell me that women are just as often to blame as men in this indulgence.

Yet in this final sentence, H.B. returns to a generalised category of woman, rather than to women of the working classes. His disclosure that women indeed have libidinal desires, while not new, nevertheless is telling in a women's periodical. It gestures toward the existence of more open dialogue on sex and the body and on the natural cycles of reproduction - what Foucault (1976) calls a proliferation of discourses on sexuality. H.B. also notes that the generation of unwanted children by unrestrained women results from a lack of information which should be provided by doctors.

Finally, links between population and resources are part of a politics of population that also begins with Malthus. H.B. says that whatever we do, whatever our actions, "we have to settle the bill with Mother Nature. She is an inexorable creditor, and must be satisfied sooner or later ...". This kind of environmental determinism forms an important stream in the discourses on population and resources. Here, though, nature is the reckoner, the subject which gazes at the actions of society, and the force which disciplines society. This reversal of the gaze makes the whole culture/nature debate resonate with contested meaning about the body, the nature of nature and its feminisation and domestication.

HEALTH AND BEAUTY THE NATURAL WAY

One of the claims made in the jubilee report of the Australian Health Society (1900) is the importance of diet and exercise for the production of health. This statement makes no particular distinction between the feminine and the masculine. Clearly there are standards of appearance for men. Yet indices of desirability are more shrill in relation to the feminine. The female body, and the dietary and physical actions of the woman, are viewed as sites that give effect to feminised archetypes of health and beauty. These models are related to expressions about sexuality and sex about which remarkable amounts were written; as Foucault (1976) indicates, the idea that discourses on sexuality are repressed is naive.

On this point, there may be all sorts of prohibitions about sexuality and sex, but there has been no lack of statements and texts on such prohibitions through which objects of desire and desire itself remain accessible. Indeed, desire is one issue that seems to link the relationships among health, the feminine, the home and nature. Frailty and delicacy had been hallmarks of attractiveness; in the late nineteenth century the arbitrary signs of beauty shifted ground; beauty came to be signified by a more robust and healthy appearance, a measure of what it was to be desirable. Importantly, health was linked to ideas of an authentic, pure and precious nature, the unsullied garden. Beautiful and healthy women representing the ideal feminine were desired and desirable, but above all they were natural. Thus, there is a complex constellation of signifiers that invoke the feminine, and that also converge on the symbol of healthy nature. Many of these signifiers were played out on the bodies of women.

The corporeal does not exist apart from its cultural significations (McNay 1992); the effects of power relations gain expression on the body and on the accoutrements used to constitute it., and the female body is ordered and controlled within a regime of femininity (Bartky 1988). Rituals of beauty and health produce this commodified body that can be desired and won, possessed and consumed. There is also a complex relationship between the body and other categories that might mark it as other than healthy and beautiful, unspoiled nature. Senescent, unruly or otherwise marked bodies are less healthy, beautiful and desirable. They transgress authentic nature, as it has been construed within a western theo-philosophical tradition.

During the late nineteenth century, statements and texts on how to attain health and beauty are found in disparate fields including public health, where advice manuals typically, though not exclusively, were generated by male experts. Another field for disseminating these ideas is the women's popular press. In journals such as *The Woman's Voice* or *The Australian Woman's Sphere*, where the early tenets of feminism were promulgated, messages about equality go hand in hand with columns giving advice to women on how to be beautiful. At that time, there was not the overwhelming push to advertise a plethora of beauty products such as we see now. Nevertheless, in the latter years of the nineteenth century, there was a nascent ethic of consumption that particularly encouraged women to seek out whatever products were available, often assuming that women would be largely led by the advertising presented to them, often linking messages about beauty and health to images of nature.

As Colin Campbell (1990) notes, a revolution in consumption was very much a part of a revolution in production that characterises the nineteenth century, although he argues that its analysis has been sorely neglected until recent times. Alan Warde (1990) also suggests that analyses of consumption must be gendered or remain ineffectual. This assertion is justified on the grounds that there is a long chain of activity undertaken by women between the extraction of raw materials and their final destruction. Warde argues that consumption is a form of feminised service provision by which many needs are met, particularly in the home.

That a revolution in desiring commodities existed certainly serves to support the argument that hedonism was as much a part of nineteenth century culture as prudery (Allen 1988). Importantly, just as moral restraint involves surveillance and discipline, so too does hedonism. Health becomes attached to beauty, beauty to nature, and nature to the good. The hedonistic play of consumerism that also reflected health was constituted as normal rather than as transgressive. Of course, contemporary commentaries also exist that attempted to marginalise these popular expressions of desire, Thorsten Veblen's prophetic (1899) critique of conspicuous consumption in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* among them. Nevertheless, the period is one in which neither the morality of scarcity nor the morality of abundance dominated.

During the late nineteenth century, one element of consumerism was the rise of therapeutic products whose sale was connected with a nostalgia for a time in which people were assumed to have been closer to nature (FIG 8). Juxtaposing health and an idealised pastoral idyll it also became possible to justify the abandonment of moderation: "Charging that the prudent man was only half alive, abundance therapy promised to reach untapped reservoirs of energy and open the way to a richer fuller life" (Lears 1983, 12). There is little rhetorical difference between these strategies and other marketing devices that encourage an ethic of ceaseless growth. Indeed, many

of the claims made about the attainment of health and beauty appear to rest firmly on claims about the boundless natural properties of the products being advertised. The use of nature to sell material clearly is by no means a recent strategy (Howlett and Raglon 1992), being evident at least since the turn of this century.

Consumerism is also a form of discipline, involving the consumer in the creation of self, others, products and sites such as the home. Mica Nava (1993) suggests that consumerism allows women especially to resist cultural invisibility; it can be a productive and transgressive act. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that consumerism is fraught with problems, privileging certain types of femininity over others and rendering differences among women silent. Moreover, consumerism is highly problematic in terms of resource depletion, a difficulty that some women in the late nineteenth century were aware of. Jacquelin Burgess (1990) suggests that this tension in part may be due to the production of problematic environmental meaning in the mass media.

The women's popular press of the late nineteenth century does not simply celebrate a consumer ethic. In addition, it is a diverse forum to discuss how consumerism gives effect to new kinds of femininity, and to examine many of the contested relations among health, the feminine and nature. In *The Sun*, there is a column entitled 'Toilet Talk': Written by 'Sunflower', the column guides women on how to conduct their toilet. An article from the September 4, 1896 issue deals with 'How to Retain Beauty':

> It may be affirmed with the utmost certainty that every woman, although she will not always care to confess it, is possessed with the desire to be beautiful, to attain which end she will strive to enhance her personal charms by every possible means in her power, and to render herself as pleasing and as attractive as possible. This is quite right; it is decidedly woman's mission to be beautiful, and as a French moralist has it, "her first duty". Therefore let me urge upon my fair sister the necessity of endeavouring to retain, by care and precaution, the good looks she may possess. Nature is not always generous in her physical gifts, but remember this, every defect has an opposite quality, and by attending to a few simple toilet rules which I intend to give in this column, everyone may not only be enabled to develop her attractions, but to resist the inroads of time and the fret and worry of life generally (p.3).

Several strategies of discipline are evident in this passage. It is argued categorically that women as a universal group desire beauty. This statement is not the same as to desire to be beautiful, for it commodifies beauty as something external to women but not necessarily fully located in nature. Indeed the prescription to be beautiful becomes more powerful if the pursuit of beauty is not simply a luxury but women's primary duty. Health, beauty and nature are terms made equivalent with goodness. Women's first duty thus becomes a goodness based on some idealised understanding of natural and aesthetic health. Yet 'Sunflower' also constitutes a paradoxical need for women to fight natural processes of ageing, as though senescence is part of that side of nature which is unruly, uncompromising and miserly. The beauty of healthy and natural femininity is a spring beauty, marginalising women whose bodies cannot disguise the marks and signs of ageing.

The editorial to the first volume of *The New Idea* (1 August 1902, 1) introduces the magazine as a work "devoted exclusively to the needs and problems of the Australian home and its mistress ...". A column titled 'Talks on Health' has several sub-sections: The Importance of Deep Breathing, Rheumatism and Digestion, Rules to Gain Flesh, Lack of Out-Door Life, The Value of Salt, Some Little Hints, and Athletics for Women which takes up almost a page and a half on its own (pp.17-19).

Excerpts from three of these sections show a confluence among health, bodies, the roles and duties of the feminine in the home, and the central position of nature and the natural in texts. First, for example, the automatic action of respiration is insufficient for the generation of health.

> Life's first act is respiration. Its cessation marks the advent of death. The act of breathing is, fortunately, largely involuntary. That is, all human beings breathe sufficient air to sustain life, without conscious effort on their part. But this natural respiration is not sufficient to maintain vigorous health, although it may suffice to prevent the breath of life from being extinguished [natural processes thought inadequate] ... Age, disease, and decay lurk in every non-oxygenated tissue. Health, youth, vigour of mind and body wait upon a healthy circulating system ... Not only should every woman who desires to promote her physical welfare insist upon perfectly unvitiated air in her home, but she should, every night and morning, in free, untrammelled garments, practise deep breathing exercise, until the lungs have been emptied repeatedly of every atom of impure air, and have thus been expanded and contracted to their fullest extent (p.17).

Debates about the dangers of corsetry are not mentioned in this passage, although it is suggested that loose attire should be worn when doing deep breathing, which seems to imply an understanding of the dangers of waist-binding. Nevertheless, the passage requires women to discipline their bodies using particular regimes. Such discipline is tied to other biopolitical discourses about the health and the welfare of both individual bodies and collective populations. Even so, it is construed as a positive form of discipline.

Second, health is also related to the figure of the highly domesticated woman. Even so, the message challenges idealised notions of the feminine as entirely located and thriving within the domestic arena. Again, the idea that homes might also be sick receives metaphorical treatment here: "Confinement to the house is responsible for many a faded face. Every woman should spend at least one hour of the day out of doors. The oxygen of the air is lung food ... The lassitude arising from confinement in over-heated or ill-ventilated rooms is the result of stagnation of the blood" (p.17).

Finally, physical exercise is linked to improved health among women. Boxing is acclaimed as an ideal indoor activity - for the public sphere remained a partially prohibited terrain for 'respectable' girls and women. Using boxing regimes, the body can be normalised into shapes that erase the extremes of fatness and thinness, as if to suggest that a homogenised body shape - gained because of the new actions of perfectly circulating blood - is desirable.

> The punching bag, otherwise known as the striking bag, solves the problem of indoor exercise for girls. By the use of this apparatus every muscle in the body is brought into play, and the stout girl grows thin, and the thin girl grows plump ... The mental effect of this exercise is exhilarating, as the girl must be constantly on the alert and her mind must have complete control of her body ... As girls well know, the object of all exercise is to make the blood circulate perfectly, and this cannot be better accomplished than by bag-punching. By this practice, the complexion takes on the velvety texture, and the peaches and cream tints which are desired by every girl - or, at least, the complexion comes as near this ideal by the use of the punching bag as it can by any means (p.17).

At the same time, the exercise is reputed to be exhilarating, breaking down sanctions about the feminine as subdued, calm, passive. However, traditional goals about the cultivation of beauty remain the end-point of the passage: the development of a beautiful complexion that is a signifier of desirability. In this case, nature is mere backdrop; the canvas on which the feminine is painted. Concerns for health and beauty also remain implicitly tied to the constitution of disciplined bodies that collectively contribute to the health and vigour of a budding nation.

FASHION, HEALTH AND NATURE

Interest in health and in nature does not stop at the fleshly boundaries of the feminised body. Relations among fashion, health and nature also converge on that body during the late nineteenth century. Dress reform and anti-cruelty are two matters of particular interest. These campaigns are not novel to this era, but they gain a certain resonance and power because they are part of the push by women to be heard in other political forums.

Dress Reform

The issue of dress reform in Australia is reasonably straightforward. A local flavour was imparted to the campaign, no doubt brought on by the peculiar demands of the climate. Yet, much of the impetus for the humane movement, to which dress reform is linked, derives from Britain. The first International Health Exhibition was held in London in 1884, its patron His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. Stella Newton (1974, 92) suggests that the event was viewed as immensely successful. Much of the Exhibition was "devoted to drainage, ventilation and anti-pollution schemes which the public were encouraged to examine, along with other more titillating innovations ...".

The section on dress reform presented a chronological story of costumes, allied technologies and publications, with the use of props from Madame Tussaud's. Costumes were rated as good or bad on the grounds of their health effects on bodies. Aesthetics, so important in an era when design was dominated by such figures as John Ruskin and William Morris, was given only second place in these ratings. Interior decoration was also analysed, prompting The *Daily News* to publish a piece by Mrs Gladstone on the perils of fashionable green wallpaper, which contained dangerous levels of arsenic. The dress section was also reviewed in *The British Medical Journal*, *The Times*, and *Pall Mall Gazette*, raising comments about corsetry, exercise and links between health and dress generally.

In her analysis of the Exhibition, Newton (1974) also outlines contributions to health debates made by Dr Gustave Jaeger, a Stuttgart medical practitioner who developed and was marketing a 'system' for health. The central tenet of this system was to wear wool next to the skin. Although he was not hostile towards vegetarianism, Jaeger rejected the use of vegetable fibres for clothing on the grounds that they harboured dangerous miasmas. Followers were dubbed Woolleners and wore nothing but clothing derived from animal by-products dyed with pure indigo or pure cochineal.

A different part of the dress reform debate comes from the Rational Dress Society, which also exhibited at the International Health Exhibition. Some of its main arguments are from texts by Mrs E.M. King. Presenting a paper entitled 'Women's Dress in Relation to Health' at the 1881 Health Congress in Brighton, King expanded her argument in 1882, publishing a pamphlet on 'Rational Dress or the Dress of Women and Savages' (Newton 1974). Her basic argument appears to be that fashion is a harmful form of ornamented self-mutilation. Given the anatomical effects of corsetry, these observations are not surprising. The metaphorical connection that King makes between this practice and indigenous customs of tattooing, scarring and body painting clearly is designed to inferiorise both. However, King does show a limited sensitivity to issues of gender

when she expresses an understanding that the feminine body is a text subject to the masculine gaze:

> Women always feel themselves in the position of being looked at rather than looking - the reverse is the case with men ... Nothing will restore to women the proper equilibrium and healthy tone of mind ... but a style of dress following equally and evenly the natural lines of the body (from 'Rational Dress', quoted in Newton 1974, 105).

Newton's analysis of dress reform exposes without fully examining several interesting and useful sites of contested meaning. For example, what does an exhibition represent? To exhibit means to show or display. It involves gazing at items, events, and series of statements, texts and discourses, imposing on them some massive unifying theme. Thus, it also involves summoning evidence of likeness, belonging and compatibility. An exhibition is a public display of objects and achievements. It is a celebration of disciplined bodies and minds and the deployment of their powers to produce the symbols of civilisation. Paradoxically, it is also a hedonistic display of the heterogeneities that spring from such discipline; a polyglot performance aligned to a disciplined universal theme.

The International Health Exhibition. Long aisles are marked out, stalls are set up, and boundaries are created between the public and the exhibitors; performance space. Items are chosen and organised for display around one main theme and an infinite array of sub-themes. Text and sub-text are played out on the bodies of individuals and populations, the assembled. The theme is about bodies, about how nature does things to bodies, about how bodies can do things about nature using culture. It is a biopolitical regime, where even the interiors of houses are gutted and laid out for examination. Reviews on the carnival become discourses on discourses, constituting new knowledges, new truths. The plant and animal kingdoms are set in opposition; vegetables are dangerously miasmatic, animal products are obtained with the greatest cruelty and the subsequent moral degradation of the slaughterer and the consumer. Even 'woman' is conflated with 'savage', with a wild and unrepentant feminine nature; rational dress for the rational woman is an enlightened expression of a civilised culture (that is, not insignificantly, masculine).

In the women's popular press, discourses on the connection between health and dress also circulated. The relationship is explored in one particular poem, 'The Song of the Skirt', penned anonymously and published in *The Australian Woman's Sphere* (1(7) March 1901, 56).

With fingers weary and cramped,
And a wrist that was stiff with pain,
A lady walked, in a Paris gown,
Down Bond Street in the rain.
Splash -- splash -- splash --
Through puddle and slush and dirt,
And half to herself, in a sobbing tone,
She sang this "Song of the Skirt".

"For fashion's sake" she moaned,
"Full many a cross bear we,
Like abject slaves we bow
To her every new decree.
But of all the cruel modes
With which we women are cursed,
Our walking gown with its trailing train,
Methinks is by far the worst!

Sweep -- sweep -- sweep --
Where the waste of the street lies thick;
Sweep -- sweep -- sweep --
However our path we pick;
Dust, bacillus and germ,
Germ, bacillus and dust,
Till we shudder and turn from the sorry sight
With a gesture of disgust.

O men with sisters dear!
O men who have well-dressed wives!
It is not alone an expensive mode,
It is one that hazards lives!
For malignant microbes swarm
In the triturated dirt,
And the dress that sweeps it up may prove
A shroud as well as a skirt!

Sweep -- sweep -- sweep --
As we walk o'er the West End flags,
For, however we try to carry that tail,
A part of it always sags -
The hem of it always drops
In the winter's greasy slush;
The hem of it sweeps the summer's dust
More clean than the dustman's brush.

Drag -- drag -- drag --
Whatever our strength or health;
We have to draw that heavy train,
Whatever our rank or wealth.
Whatever the dress has cost,
Fashion's laws we dare not shirk;
Old and young we alike must daily do
The scavenger's dirty work.

Oh, for one hour of ease
As I shop in the crowded street
With no drag upon my knees
And no pull about my feet!
For only one short hour
To be as I used to be,
When I wore a skirt of a sensible length,
Which left my ankles quite free!"

This poem is contained in a larger article entitled 'Fashion's Slaves', protesting against fashions that have seduced both women and men, despite many such people allegedly having forsworn uncomfortable and unhealthy fashion before. Clear links are made between regimes of femininity and the pursuit of prescribed beauty. These practices inscribe bodies with disease rather than with health, especially in urban areas, public places where nature is degraded and dangerous.

The woman in the poem is a slave to fashion who, as a slave, cannot provide her own freedom or redemption. Like nature, she has no standing without reference to the cultural terrain controlled through a masculine context. Thus, her appeals for help are made to the higher authority of man, the provider. Yet an irony exists within this appeal. If part of the pursuit of healthful beauty is the guarantee of a morally constrained yet interested and intentional masculine gaze, then release from the dangers inherent in such pursuit requires release from that gaze. In trying to appeal as a beautiful object for masculine consumption, there is a risk that the feminised body will perish, becoming a mere item of generalised desire or a casualty of illness and death. Since health and beauty are also referents for the good, and since both are aligned to notions of

what it is to be natural, the death of health and beauty signifies the death of nature on the streets of the cities.

Mrs Aronson's 'Fashion Fancies' in *The Home Queen* (18 November 1903, 9) notes how the perils of nature must be watched for at even the smallest of scales.

> Plain lawn blouses, tucked by hand of course, are among other fancies, also those of ecru muslin inlet with encrustations and medalions [sic] of lace or fine embroidery. These blouses are really built for our climate - they do not soil as swiftly as white, nor does that fiend dust, find such an easy resting place for its unpleasant germs.

Here is a clear contest between the desire for fashion and the desire for hygienic cleanliness, a rivalry that gestures towards faith in rationality to solve problems that are generated by climate, dust and other natural processes.

At the same time, Aronson also constitutes the pursuit of beauty as natural.

> Just as it is natural for the birds to sing so is the want to be beautiful, and therefore to desire the dressing which adds to the beauty and charm is only another bidding of Nature, and one that we may safely encourage with confidence. Beauty in our present century is almost as much an art as an inheritance, so where perchance our ancestors have overlooked their generosity, the thoughtfulness and originality of our fashion vendors step in, their wares, ideas and suggestions bringing with them a breeziness that at once becomes acceptable.

In this passage, beauty is both a natural desire and a cultural practice (FIG 9). The imagery is interesting; how different might the regime sound if the phrase was "Just as it is natural for the carnivores to disembowel their prey so is the want to be beautiful, and therefore to desire ...". Nature becomes a backdrop in front of which particular social practices are undertaken, knowledges exercised and truths produced. Like a stage-set, arranged on wood and canvas, conveyed through painterly artifice, nature comes to have multiple identities and uses; it is a construction where the feminine plays and is played out.

Confronting Fashion's Cruelty to Nature

People have long speculated on the relationships we have with animals. In her examination of *The Animal Estate*, Harriet Ritvo (1987) notes that the Victorian English (among which Australians might reasonably be considered) had complex relations with animals. Prior to the period between the early eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, for example, animals could be charged as criminals and suffer the same corporal and capital punishment as people; as evinced by one account entitled *The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals* and written in the late Victorian era by Edward Payson Evans (Ritvo 1987).

In these premodern juridical instruments, animals and people are embedded in nature (Cosgrove 1990; Merchant 1990). Ritvo suggests that the earliest British laws permitted people to bring animals into court as mute witnesses to crimes or as evidence for cases made by aggrieved parties. However, during the 1700s and 1800s, ethics towards animals began to shift ground as part of the effect of the general and widespread pacification of nature through science and technology. Humanitarian ethics released animals "from the burden of guilt for witchcraft, homicide, sodomy and other crimes ..." (Ritvo 1987, 2). Yet with independence of action removed, so too is the ability of animals intentionally to transgress; they are objectified. Powers

and characteristics that previously had been attributed to animals were relocated in people, and often in gendered ways. For instance, Ritvo notes how dog breeders in the nineteenth century made references to bitches in kennels needing to be managed like women in homes. The use of such tropes conflates the feminine, the domestic, animals and nature at large and serves to reify certain essentialist and highly problematic ideas about each category of meaning.

At the same time, a domesticated nature is no longer an adversary. Its objectification gives it new textual qualities. No longer primarily a threat, nature and its component parts now can be held in affectionate regard. Things one has feeling for tend also to be things for which one has moral responsibilities. Thomas Taylor's *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes* was written in 1798 in response to Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1798/1967). Taylor's text ridicules the notion that women should be given consideration equal to men, by comparing Wollstonecraft's argument with others that suggest animals should also receive equal consideration (see Singer 1975). In effect, Taylor conflates women and animals into one degraded category. Although some kind of moral protection must be forthcoming from masculine citizens to their unfranchised wards (women, children, the sick, criminal and insane, and animals), this regard hinges on the use value of these wards rather than on any intrinsic value they might have - but did not.

During these last years of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, the rhetorical and metaphorical treatment of animals and the feminine also involved a complex set of relations with peasants, indigenous peoples and wild places (see Schiebinger 1993). Domesticated women, children and animals were pets and resided in tame landscapes that were or should have been pristine and natural. Inhabiting places that are more natural, peasants and indigenous people became the other that allowed in the white male subject a nostalgia for lost innocence. Yet, where domestication and nostalgia were only partially imposed or where transgression might have produced uncooperative occupants they, along with uncooperative landscapes, came to be seen as a collective metaphoric wasteland.

Such views of nature reflect prevailing attitudes about human society, invoking moral hierarchies, imperial enterprises and concern for the maintenance of discipline and control. During the nineteenth century, some of the conflicts about these issues come to focus on the treatment of animals. Classically, the debate is presented as a dichotomous struggle between anti-cruelty lobbyists and the rest of English society. Nevertheless:

> Talking about them [animals] offered people who would have been reluctant or unable to avow a project of domination directly a way to enact it obliquely. This double function strongly suggests why animals figured so frequently and so prominently in the imaginative life of the most enthusiastically exploitative culture of the nineteenth century, perhaps it also suggests why they and the activities and institutions generated around them have been consistently neglected by subsequent scholars (Ritvo 1987, 6).

Ritvo's case is convincing. Caring about animals became a way to mark oneself as belonging to a particular class - philanthropic and morally upstanding. Moreover, it provided a set of social practices by which otherness was also marked. From a time early in the century when bull-baiting and other blood-sports were constituted as courageous and ennobling to a time late in the century when, along with other forms of animal cruelty, such activities were considered as brutal, the definition of what it was to be British changed. The British anti-cruelty lobby

constituted the essence of Britishness as kind, self-disciplined, controlled and liberal. These qualities were deployed through surveillance and regimes of disciplining knowledge production. For instance, having obtained particular juridical powers by the mid century, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had a private 'police' force whose members donned uniforms and wore insignia. They undertook certain tasks, including watching sub-groups of the population to ensure that cruelty to animals was avoided; where it was not, the force had powers of prosecution. Lay members of the Society also marked themselves as belonging to the organisation with badges and other signs, producing rhetorical and polemical tracts on why animals deserved kind treatment. Such tracts range from children's literature to natural histories for juveniles and adults that seek to demonstrate the 'correct' place of humanity in relation to nature. These measures were also staunchly resisted in various quarters, particularly among the rural aristocracy and peasantry, though for very different reasons that were informed by the class and territorial struggles of the era.

Interestingly, vivisection remained "the exclusive prerogative of the responsible and highly educated ..." (Ritvo 1987, 157) and anti-vivisectionists were marginal to the mainstream anti-cruelty lobby. The reason for this split is that anti-vivisection was promulgated in a way that was (and remains) against Science. Conversely, the mainstream, represented by such organisations as the RSPCA, read cruelty as a disturbing feature of the behaviour of common people, not of a scientific elite; its advocates fearing social chaos not scientific progress.

In this facet of the anti-cruelty debate there is also another, more complex, story that influences many other biopolitical debates. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* and *The Descent of Man* are among the first theories on biological evolution that were to be widely used in discussions on social issues by such scholars as Herbert Spencer, Henri Bergson, Lester Ward or, as is less well known, by socialist and feminist reformers such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Catherine Helen Spence. It is not uncommon to suggest that Darwinism and Social Darwinism are anti-theological but, as David Oldroyd (1980) suggests, this assessment is naive and ignores complexities of context and intertextual exchange; Social Darwinism at any rate being much more about the nature of 'man' than about the nature of nature.

When Herbert Spencer (1852/1972) coined the phrase 'survival of the fittest' in an essay on population, he drew on the lengthy debate about population and resources. For Spencer though, fitness and intelligence were equivalent terms. Unlike Malthus (1798/1970) whose prognosis for humanity's fate is pessimistic, Spencer argued that intelligence breeds improved stock which results in a decline in the need for massively high levels of fertility. Furthermore, intelligent society needs no state interventions to be made on its behalf: no regulation of social and economic forces and facilities is warranted.

Lester Frank Ward, a colleague and friend of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, argued that collectivist approaches and structural change are vital for social evolution to progress. Poverty was not the product of sin but of asymmetrical social relations. Good stock may well have been buried in a quagmire of social and economic deprivation rather than existing only where material privilege was found. With Spencer and Ward, then, there are at least two conflicting threads - libertarian and socialist - that constitute the unstable identity of Social Darwinism.

These various debates on population, resources, evolution, progress and social well-being are part of a constellation of discourses about the moral treatment of nature in general and animals in particular. 'Open Column' is a section of *The Woman's Voice* in which letters from the public are printed. There is a letter that Maybanke Susannah Wolstonholme, as editor, appears to have entitled 'The Evils of Fashion' (2(21) 18 May 1895, p.244). The letter is from Miss Frances Levvy, Honorary Secretary to the Women's Branch of the RSPCA in Australia. Levvy is discussing the contents of a letter in an earlier issue of *The Woman's Voice* (20 April 1895) in which one Christie Graham Gordon had suggested that the parade of cruel fashion in church be stopped.

Levvy writes that she made similar suggestions but that the aigrette hat, for example, was still worn by women in church. She notes also that kid gloves were being obtained by skinning baby goats alive, and argues that the alleged use of anaesthetics made the act no less an agony or sin against God and Nature. Levvy goes on to write that she has had cause to approach several preachers, asking them to present homilies on the immorality of consuming fashion gained through cruel means, but:

> ... none have ventured to do so. Perhaps they feel that the cruelties of fashion can be remedied by women themselves. Let women refuse to purchase these bloodstained fashions and men will cease to commit the atrocities by which they are procured, for King Mummon, with his fitting mate, Queen Vanity, are the instigators.

Levvy also proposes that men sympathetic to the plight of animals assist in their aid by publicly hissing at women who wear cruel fashion.

There are numerous points of contest in this letter. Boycott is suggested as a means to undermine the production and consumption of particular commodities. It is seen as a useful micro-political strategy encouraging women to question prescriptions of the feminine and the fashionable, and suggesting that beauty rests in being natural not in killing nature. Moreover, it is a strategy empowering women's rights to self-determination against the dictates of fashion. However, these suggestions also perpetuate the constitution of women as moral guardians. In redeeming themselves and in saving animals from slaughter for frivolous ends, women may also save men from committing sinful acts. But Levvy further suggests that this role be extended to the protection of the body of nature. Women become ecological guardians of a gendered Mother Earth, as well as moral guardians of a gendered Masculine Culture; the feminine mediates between dichotomous realms.

Another article protesting the use of bird feathers and carcasses in the creation of women's fashions appears in *The Woman*. Entitled 'Skinning Birds Alive', the article is quoted almost completely from Mr Waugh writing in the *Sunday Magazine* (1(2) 15 March 1892, 3).

> Winged creatures of rare plumage, full of grace and leaping life, and happy freedom are snared, trapped, netted, limed, and, to preserve their value for the ladies, skinned alive; for ladies must have their colouring full, vivid, brilliant and only by skinning while the body still quivers and the blood is hot can full vivid brilliance of the little creatures' splendour be preserved. For the same reason as for snaring, trapping, and flaying alive, the mating season is chosen for the atrocity. While proud and pleased with triumphs of love and cradle joys, the hues and fires of the beautiful birds burn with their intensest splendour, then is the time their murderers crowd around them.

Waugh argues that women who wear the products of many hundreds of thousands of birds slaughtered are sinful and cannot claim to be Christian. At the end of the article, the postal address of the Duchess of Portland's Society for the Protection of Birds is provided. That Society had, as at 1892, around 950 members, many of them women and men from the ranks of the upper and middle classes. Clearly, readers are asked to associate the campaign against the slaughter of birds with women (and men) of the greatest social standing, a status that also signifies - indeed requires - making and holding the high moral ground.

The passage is interesting for two particular reasons. First, it presents a partial argument for the intrinsic worth of animals. Many of the arguments that are mounted to justify the anti-cruelty campaign rest on instrumental ethics: if animals are killed, and if such killing is sinful, then killing animals harms people, since people and not animals are punished for transgression. Killing becomes unhealthy. Clearly, the tone of the passage suggests that birds are to be enjoyed for the aesthetic pleasure they give to human beings. Nevertheless, there is a tenor in the first sentence that promotes the idea that birds are worthy parts of creation irrespective of the effects their presence has on people. Their presence makes nature healthy.

Second, the passage sets up an argument that juxtaposes two kinds of feminine symbol. Vain women are marked as the unruly and wild element of the feminine that - like unruly nature - is red in tooth and claw. Breeding birds are marked as nurturant and domesticated nature, a feminine nature that is slaughtered by its counter-identity. This complex association between the feminine and nature thus involves a slippage between the categories in which certain kinds of behaviour are marked as undesirable, the pursuit of fashion by the death of nature being among them.

This debate continues in an article entitled 'Results of a Crime' in *The Band of Mercy and Humane Journal* (12(2), 23 February 1898, 23), a periodical in which Frances Levvy was heavily involved. The article joins a number of other papers over the decade that protest the killing of birds, but it does so using justifications that are not typical; interestingly enough, it leaves the sentiment behind. The article begins:

> The crime against the most innocent portion of creation is bearing some serious results to mankind. In the *Stock and Station Journal* (Sydney) we read that "OVER SIX TONS of grub beetles have been caught in one part of Mackay (Queensland), and funds are needed to continue the extermination." Where are the birds? The late Congress of Ornithologists (America) have [sic] been discussing the merciless slaughter of wild birds for women's cruel fashions. It declares that to England alone are sent 25 millions of slaughtered birds, Europe taking "300,000,000" for the decking of women - Christian by profession! In a previous paper supplied to us from England we find that 40 millions of birds are slaughtered for England alone from various countries, including Australia.

The article goes on to argue that many bird species in India have reached the point of extinction, and that the Indian government has legislated against such slaughter. Moreover, the article asserts that the methods of slaughter are extremely cruel, involving the wings of small brown birds being torn from their bodies while they are alive: "The tiny bodies are thrown panting and bleeding on the ground, to sob out their cry to their Creator - the Creator who hears, and will judge both the slayer and the wearer ...". This is an interesting message about the 'Creator' being for all creatures and not simply for humanity. Its tone challenges the hold of prevailing ideas in Christianity about

people having dominion over nature, emphasising traditions of stewardship in Christianity that perhaps are less influential (Passmore 1974; Ruether 1975).

The article also explores the issue of women's involvement in cruel fashion, arguing that there are many harmless accessories which could be employed in fashion, and chiding women who use birds: "Will nothing satisfy your cruel vanity but the blood-stained relics of happy mothers, of joyous songsters? In one of the English papers we read of a "beautiful balldress trimmed round the skirt and bodice with canaries." We were glad to read also that "not one gentleman asked this fashionable dame to dance!"

There are some difficult issues here. Women are taught to adorn themselves in order to attract men with an ultimate goal of appealing enough to secure marriage and a home. They are also viewed as being thoughtless about the ramifications of their fashion behaviours and choices. To be passed over at the ball would be seriously embarrassing for the woman concerned, clearly doing her best to present a series of metaphors: light as a feather, a beautiful and decorative bird, a song bird, a faithful companion, an exotic creature. The woman gazes at herself and creates a product; that it fails to be desired appears her fault. She seems cruel and unnatural; unhealthy. But one also needs to ask who constitutes the rules of fashion, the prevailing notions of feminine desirability and the idea that desirability is linked strongly to marriage marketability, itself also tied to issues of public and national health.

As if to steel the argument in ways that do not simply rest on animal rights, the passage also notes:

> This bird-wearing fashion is also a wrong to poor women. How many girls earn their living by making the beautiful artificial flowers, the silks, the gauze, the many lovely materials of which the most tasteful bonnets and hats are composed? Why not encourage these industries, and leave the savage death decorations to the savages who know no better?

Again, there is a complex set of issues in this text. The author makes a series of assumptions about class being a matter for social justice and moral concern, implying that supporting these working women will reduce the need to help them, since now they will be industriously employed, respectable and morally beyond reproach. Even the comments about savages being beyond help, while distasteful, are not surprising given prevailing beliefs about indigenous peoples being inferior. Nonetheless, the text evinces a tacit understanding that (middle class) women have a right to comment on, survey and even discipline (working class) women's activities, their moral standing and so forth by making relatively simple fashion choices.

Finally, the article returns to the idea that the slaughter of birds is bad for agriculture:

> It has been complained that birds eat so many seeds, &c. So they do, but the grubs will eat a great many more. ... They pay themselves in food, but for every grain of wheat or fruit they eat, they destroy a thousand grubs. ... Is it not time for the agriculturalist to demand that a "tax" shall be inflicted on the "bird-slayer", and on the "bird-wearer"?

Although birds do eat seeds, they eat many fewer and do much less damage than do the grubs that have been causing so much havoc. Here, too, there is a suggestion that people have political power to effect some change in how nature is viewed and treated. Unlike the moral sanction of hissing at women suggested by Levvy, this proposal argues for the use of tax as a financial

regulation to discipline members of the population to behave in ways that are prescribed as morally desirable.

'The Seal', another article from *The Band of Mercy and Humane Journal*, addresses the issue of sealing and fashion (12(5) 16 May 1898, 58). This article is interesting for several reasons. It, too, is a protest against the slaughter of animals for fashion; here, the subject of the protest is seals, walruses, elephants seals and sea lions. Again, a series of statistics is given about the numbers of animals killed: "Not so very long ago, 107 vessels returned from the sealing bringing 526,000 sealskins; in the same year, another fleet brought 200,000 sealskins; the Russians took 100,000 skins and the Greenlanders many more". The article notes the slaughter of mothers and the subsequent death of youngsters, arguing that this practice creates scarcity of numbers. Whereas 'Results of a Crime' goes into details about the slaughter of birds, this article notes:

> We do not go into the awful cruelty practised on these unhappy creatures, for the recital would sicken the hearts of our young readers, but, since the authentic details were published, we have never worn their fur. There is no necessity for the barbarity, for the hunters inflict it in order to save time and for greed of gain.

Finally, there is a statement mixing prescience and condemnation of particular kinds of women:

> But the old warriors are disappearing; the slaughter is too fierce. We hear that the elephant, the giraffe, and the lion are steadily disappearing from the world; the sperm whale is now rarely seen; the buffalo of America is becoming more and more scarce in consequence of the greed and cruelty of man, while many rare birds are almost extinct. We are assured that in many places where the forests were joyous with the songs of birds, there is now silence. For this destruction of birds we fear women are responsible; they prefer to wear the dead bodies on their heads to hearing the joyful songs and twitter of the forest. There is a Nemesis in all things.

These last two sentences perform disciplinary functions. Women are the target that is gazed at and found morally unruly. Nemesis is meted out on nature, and the implication is that it also will be (omnipotently?) exacted upon women who indulge in cruel fashion. By invoking the presence of some supremely powerful entity, the passage suggests that the failure of human intervention to stop these cruel acts will not be a complete one; ultimately, the transgressors will be disciplined.

'The Feather Cry' is one article that dissents from protests against the slaughter of birds for their feathers (*The Australian Storekeepers' Journal,* 6 August 1898, 26-27). This piece complains against meddlesome and moralising people who are said to lack common sense to balance their vigorous ardour - "and people who cry out about the destruction of the birds, which are supposed to provide the millinery adornments for our women, follow the rule ...". The article proceeds to equate these anti-cruelty protests with the "silly season ...".

Moreover, just as the anti-cruelty lobby relies on biblical utterances to justify its moral stance, so are such invocations employed in this article.

> If these people only consulted a book which we fear is too often neglected, they will find that dominion was given to man over "the fish of the sea, over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," and, we take it, to provide his food and clothing, so that the outcry against the [slaughter of the] feathered race would apply equally well to any other branch of the brute creation.

This article clearly represents the interests of certain retail and wholesale trades, for whom the anti-cruelty protest signifies potential or actual profits foregone. However, it also demonstrates

how the Genesis narrative and other moral codes that seemingly have been claimed by one camp are more flexible than they seem and come to be deployed in oppositional ways. In these anti-cruelty debates, dominion over and stewardship of nature are summoned as evidence for how people should behave. In the process, each group produces and deploys texts, discourses and social practices that come to be viewed by its adherents as the truth.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

In this chapter I have examined how the feminine has been multiply constituted as natural and domesticated in texts from the women's popular press of the late nineteenth century. I have argued that normalising images of the feminine have been resisted in the same press, sometimes by the same writers. Indeed, such paradox demonstrates how flexible meanings can be, particularly in times of rapid social change. The idea that power works in hegemonic lumps is only a partial explanation for the forms of cooperation and subversion that women entertained in seeking to live morally, in pursuing prescriptions about natural and domesticated femininity and in taking their place in a community where national identity was becoming increasingly important. Thus, textual analysis of some of the texts on health produced in the popular press during the late nineteenth century shows that significant ruptures were being made to the symbolic and somatic edifices that are constructed around the cult of domesticity and attendant moral frameworks.

I have also emphasised that health, beauty and fashion are inscribed on the feminine body. In adopting normative or transgressive expressions of what it might mean to be both feminine and natural, and in being able to make decisions about what might constitute a normalising or a transgressing act, women had exhibited understandings of what was considered morally responsible, had perceived that these prescriptions were far from uniform and stable and, most importantly, had decided that there was space for them to move among these various positions without necessarily sacrificing the essential moral standing that marked them as part of the accepted social fabric and not a delegitimated other.

5

"ANTICIPATING NATURE": SITES OF DOMESTICITY

> Work in the home is generally not conducted on a wage basis and most of it is done by women. In fact we would suggest that it is almost impossible to imagine a "home" in both senses of the word without imagining a caretaking woman in the setting (Saegert and Winkel 1980, 41).

> The assumptions which inform common-sense notions of childcare, child-rearing and education relate to particular definitions of what is natural, appropriate, moral or good ... Common-sense knowledge is ... often contradictory and subject to change. It is not always necessarily conservative in its implications. Its political effects depend on the particular context in which it is articulated. However, its power comes from its claim to be natural, obvious and therefore true (Weedon 1987, 77).

INTRODUCTION

Women and men are constituted by various forms of femininity and masculinity, and imprinted by the effects of other categories of social meaning. How such marks are interpreted often depends on the context in which they exist, for bodies signify vastly different things depending on their location. During the nineteenth century women were portrayed as most feminine and natural, as closest to nature, when in the home.

> Home is woman's realm. In the home, all that is characteristically feminine in woman unfolds and flourishes. Home without woman is a misnomer; for woman makes the home, and home is what she makes it. If she is illiterate, her home partakes of this quality; if she is immoral, her home cannot be the abode of virtue; if she is coarse, refinement does not dwell where she resides. If she is cultured, pure, refined, these qualities will characterise the home which she creates. The higher the degree of her culture, her purity, her refinement, the more will these qualities characterise the home of which she is the centre. The self that a woman takes with her in her marriage is her real dower. If her dower can be reckoned in numerals only, no matter how many they may be, wretched indeed will be her husband, impoverished will be her children. But if she possesses industry, gentleness, self-abnegation, purity, intelligence, combined with capability, she is herself a treasure of treasures (Anon, no date, 29).

The home represents the pinnacle of the private sphere, the inner sanctum of a man, his wife and children generally, though not always exclusively, of both parents. Home is where discipline serves to "reduce the possibilities of a collapse into the natural condition ..." (Hall 1979, 17).

'Public' and 'private' are problematic terms, suggesting the existence of boundaries between two separate spheres - one cultural and masculine, the other natural and feminine. Some feminist scholars have made searching examinations of the power effects that arise from the construction of the public and the private in various fields within the social sciences[1]. Although these spheres

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1 Feminist scholarship typically is divided into various 'schools' - liberal, Marxist, radical, socialist, environmental and poststructural among the most active. Critiques of the public/private dichotomy are not new to the era of second wave feminism either. Commentators such as Catherine Helen Spence (1888/1988), and Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1898, 1903, 1911) are critical of the false divisions made between gendered spheres of influence. More recent discussions about the public/private split are undertaken in various political contexts by Cora Baldock and Bettina Cass (1988), Christine Delphy (1984), Hester Eisenstein (1984), Ann Oakley (1974, 1976), Elisabeth Porter (1991), Rosemary Pringle (1988), Anna Yeatman (1986) and numerous other feminist scholars. The focus of such research is to unpick the philosophical and political threads that serve to naturalise the ties between women and the home,

'exist', their boundaries are blurred by complex institutional and social forces. Arguably, the public and the private are shifting rather than stable; co-extensive despite the power of physical and metaphorical boundaries.

Nevertheless, the division between these spheres is more than conceptual. In Australia in the late nineteenth century, there were both physical and social barriers to women entering certain parts of the public arena and staying there. By 1895, for example, the New South Wales Parliament had passed legislation effecting the removal of married women from the Public Service (Deacon 1993). By 1907, the Harvester judgement had instituted the family wage nationally, formalising economic dependence of wives on husbands. Thus, the political and economic gains made by women during the late nineteenth century were in tension with social regulations that laid out narrowly prescribed meanings of gender. Among other strategies, these juridical mechanisms demonstrate the existence of considerable and effective resistance to early feminist programs of reform intended to broaden women's horizons; in effect there was a clash of ethical standpoints. Women nonetheless continued to lobby for their civil rights, although until recently these points of resistance have been marginal to stories of Australian history.

Even so, the discourse of domestic feminism primarily aimed to improve women's domestic circumstances, rather than to challenge prescriptions and practices that informed gender roles and relations. Domestic feminism was characterised by concerns about "married women's property rights, divorce law, custody of children, drink, social purity - and the vote [was] seen in large part as a means to secure such ends ..." (Dixson 1986, 18). What Dixson does not mention, and what is explored here, are the connections between women's concerns for their health and their homes, and for various parts of nature, issues that influenced how gender operated in Australia at the time.

In Australia during the nineteenth century, being a woman generally meant being a wife and mother, although the appellation 'lady' was preferable (Kingston 1986). Many conservative views about the feminine stemmed from the cult of domesticity prevalent in Britain, North America and Australasia. The cult of domesticity describes a collection of discourses and social practices characterised by the constitution of women as morally superior to men, frail and tender, sentimental and largely without the ability to rationalise, and the natural custodians of the home and children. John Ruskin is among the most well-known advocates of separate spheres as an arrangement of different but equally powerful roles:

> Now their separate characters are briefly these. The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle, - and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision ... The man, in his rough work and open world, must encounter all peril and trial ... But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her ... need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offence. The is the true nature of home - it is the place of Peace (1907, 49).

During the closing years of the nineteenth century, many tenets of the cult of domesticity influenced prevailing ideas about the natural rightness of heterosexual bonding, nuclear familism and the sexual

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although the methods of analysis and results are often very different in terms of their philosophical and political assumptions and implications

division of labour between production and reproduction (Willis 1980). People questioning these prescriptions risked being viewed as unnatural, deviant and unhealthy.

The cult of domesticity is also marked by particular views of who stands outside these archetypes; women of colour, working class women, prostitutes and other women of questionable moral standing (Reekie 1994a). Paradoxically, these subalterns came from the ranks of women who worked in the public and the private spheres in both paid and unpaid capacities; prescription and practice are often at odds, and such women did not comfortably fit the stereotypical images of domesticated femininity. Much debate about the rightness and naturalness of gender divisions also centres on the constitution of the feminised family home as the best site in which untrained and amoral infants became disciplined and moral adults.

> The family is an institution of God, the archetype and foundation of all human government ... good citizens, noble women, patriots and saints ... do not spring from the social hot-beds of hotels and boarding houses; they grow in the fair fresh gardens of home, the only trace left to us of that beauteous and fruitful field wherein the first family of earth were set (Rose Terry Cook 1889, quoted in Strasser 1982, 150).

The home is corporeal, a body and text with different meanings in different contexts. Being construed as closer to nature and as maintained - if not created - by the feminine, the home is also viewed as a subjective place, except through the distant interventions of husbands and fathers, themselves stereotypical transitional figures using home as a dormitory. Witold Rybczynsky (1988) suggests that domesticity is a concept deeply imbued with notions of comfort, efficiency, safety, environmental health, well-being, privacy and intimacy; all intangible qualities that typically are provided by women. These tasks may bring comfort to the home and its occupants, but they also impose considerable discomfort on women doing hard housework.

Ruth Schwartz Cowan (1983), Caroline Davidson (1982), Christine Hardyment (1988) and Susan Strasser (1982) have undertaken feminist histories of housework in Britain and the United States. In their analyses, they suggest that during the nineteenth century ideas about the functions of the woman and of the home changed significantly to accommodate other shifts in society; the effects of industrialisation, urbanisation and improved levels of health and well-being on household management were profound. These transformations also fostered the rise of the 'expert'. Instead of women learning skills from mothers or other senior female relatives, many were separated from traditional systems of support and knowledge, having migrated from their places of origin. Experts in diverse fields came to be viewed as important sources of information for women trying to match the prescriptions of domesticity in contexts far removed from their native experiences. In describing this condition in the United States, Mary Ryan notes that as early as the 1850s "domestic discourse had been removed from the grassroots jurisdiction of parsons and the parlours of female poets to centralized offices of a national cultural market place ..." (1982, 34-35). Among other things, Ryan is referring to the proliferation of pamphlets, tracts, treatises, manuals, pocket guides, novels, poems, lectures and periodicals in which experts gave their advice.

Similar discourses were produced in Australia. Kereen Reiger's (1985) work on *The Disenchantment of the Home* is a forceful document examining changes to the constitution of the Australian family between 1880 and 1940. Reiger argues that considerable tension existed between the interests of experts and reformers desiring healthy and hygienic homes; families were managed

on rational and scientific lines, and sentimental ideals of domesticity portrayed women as people who did not labour but who signified the wealth and success of their husbands and fathers. Her observations are reminiscent of those made by Thorsten Veblen (1899) in his discussions about women symbolising through their 'consumption' the success of their menfolk in 'production'. Reiger's work is comprehensive, dealing with the rise of medicalised reproduction, rationalised child-care and sexuality, and the effects of domesticity on the management of the home.

Home economics was one significant way in which women empowered themselves in the domestic feminist debate.

> "Domestic Economy" is the name given to that study which teaches us how to dress healthily, economically and tastefully; how to choose and furnish a house; what varieties of food and cooking are desirable to promote perfect digestion; what personal habits are conducive to comfort, health and happiness; how to treat accidents, how to prevent disease, and how to fight it by good nursing; how to rear and train children; and how to save money. A wide subject, an intellectual subject, a downright practical subject, and distinctly a woman's subject! (Mrs Edgewood David, Examiner in Domestic Economy, Sydney Technical College, in Wicken 1891, vii).

Women "were not just the unwitting dupes of a male ruling-class programme ..." (Reiger 1985, 215); nor were they "Victim" or "Noble Victim" (Dixson 1986, 20), being active agents formulating and enacting change, although their exercise of power was constrained by their position in society.

Given this background, it is reasonable to suggest that the feminine was constituted as a term partially equivalent to home, and that women were viewed as natural occupants of the private sphere. Additionally, children were often viewed as natural and healthy or as pathological and ill because of practices of child-rearing (tactics of surveillance and discipline) undertaken by women in the home (see Foucault 1975). Indeed, the home itself was conceptualised as a site that was either pathological or well because of women's parental and managerial actions. What sorts of transgressions and orthodoxies have emerged to confront or to support these various disciplinary measures? How are the feminine, the home and nature conceived through these various discourses? The purpose of this chapter is to examine these questions and the site of the home in more detail, retaining from the last chapter a focus on the late nineteenth century and the women's press.

POOR LITTLE DEARS

Among other things, children are bodies through which the past gains access to the future. They are the fruits of biological and social reproduction. Importantly, they are a potential other of any heterosexual act undertaken by women (Dimen 1989), the always-possible product of a sexual union. Women also undergo a range of bodily experiences because of reproductive capacity: menstruation, contraception, miscarriage and abortion, pregnancy, parturition and lactation. Moreover, women are also exposed to the possibility of experiencing the fallout from certain other effects of reproduction, including infanticide, baby farming, adoption or child-care itself.

The relationship between mothers and children has been constituted as one that best represents a divine unit, Madonna and Child (Silverman van Buren 1989). This relationship is also viewed as pathological and psychologically fraught (Chodorow 1978; Rich 1986). The first of these interpretations relies on myths about the divine naturalness of the relationship between mother and child (King 1989). The other depends on specific and patriarchal ideas about the nature of

domesticated females and their offspring, and about the need for that relationship to be monitored and disciplined by experts (Sawicki 1991). These relationships are akin to those traced by Merchant (1990); typically nature is viewed as organic or mechanical, and either way as unruly and requiring culturally driven interventions. Mothering and child-rearing are given meaning in numerous fields of knowledge and experience; these roles are subjective, institutional and ideological. Moreover, mothering is construed as selfless and caring, attributes requiring a subjectivity that is entirely relational, something now also strongly advocated and celebrated by deep ecologists and ecofeminists. According to Joan Tronto (1989), such subjectivity is in conflict with, or at very least isolated from, prevailing cultural ideas about the central importance of economic exchange. To be selfless means exile from the market-place. Yet paradoxically, marriage and child-rearing are potent symbols of a bodily exchange that becomes economic; women are both consumer items and (re)production units.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman most stridently protested the marriage contract as a primitive form of economic enslavement. She argued that marriage is neither a noble reflection of, nor a cultural improvement on, mating and bonding arrangements that are seen to exist in nature. Although removed from the Australian context, Gilman's work was available in Australia in the 1890s and early 1900s. A socialist, novelist, essayist, public speaker and advocate of sweeping domestic reform, Gilman suggested that social relations between women and men derive from arbitrary physical spaces and the types of social interactions that these permit or suppress (Allen 1988).

In *Women and Economics* (1898/1970), Gilman used environmental possibilism to argue that we are products of our physical, social and economic environments. She suggested that inequitable distinctions are made between productive work and homemaking and child-rearing; the latter activities being labelled natural and thus outside of the realm of work. As Engels had done in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884/1972), Gilman proposed that these social arrangements universally lead to the dependence of women on men. This theme has been echoed by feminists such as Sherry Ortner (1974) in her pioneering though problematic analysis of the construction of masculine culture and feminine nature.

Much of the debate about gender seems to hinge on women's capacity to bear children. During the later years of the nineteenth century, this problem was further compounded by the ideas of Darwinism and Social Darwinism[2], placing additional pressures on women to be natural and healthy, raising children with such qualities. Indeed, Gilman (1898/1970) suggested that middle class women's confinement to the domestic sphere, a restricted environment and range, results in constrained environmental knowledge and experience, making such women poorly adapted for the rigours of natural selection. For Gilman, as for many other women and men in the 'progressive' movement, this possible effect had other ramifications in terms of the health of the race. As Beverley Kingston (1986) points out, many Australians were concerned to demonstrate how the confluence of environmental factors, heredity and social conditioning could lead either to a nation of healthy and intelligent settlers or to something quite 'second-class'. In the case of Australia, though, concerns for racial health led to the adoption of the White Australia policy. This policy was a juridical tool of exclusion by which to codify what is now (appropriately) termed racial prejudice.

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2 See Herbert Spencer (1852/1972) Population and Progress in *Westminster Review* or the General Summary and Conclusions to *The Descent of Man* by Charles Darwin (1883).

These various discourses on the relationships among motherhood, society and environment circulate around two poles, alluded to by Reiger (1985). The first of these is that motherhood is a sacred, natural and ennobling activity that women intuitively know about. Child-rearing is an act that requires no additional input, except perhaps through oral traditions from older to younger generations. The second pole is that, while being all these things, motherhood is also a cultural process greatly enhanced by medical, economic, scientific, educational and psychological interventions, since women are not fully equipped to train their children alone (FIG 10). These diverse discourses and social practices regulate individual and collective bodies; they govern the corporeal, and gain effect in the home through the micro-politics of architecture and education. Indeed, the exercise of these forces of surveillance and discipline is especially potent at the level of the family and the home (Donzelot 1980).

In *The Home Queen* (18 November 1903, 8) there is an article entitled 'The Mother's Column, by Physician', who metonymically represents all that is expert and professional. The article begins by asserting that proper knowledge of child-care is essential to the well-being of the individual child and the community. Maternal devotion and zeal are not enough, for "their well-meant efforts may result in disaster, for Nature is no discerner of motives, and treats the ignorant and the wrong-doer alike ...". Mothers have a duty of care whose failure cannot and must not be hidden behind an excuse of ignorance; to raise children without knowledge of scientific principles is to endanger them.

Here, nature is ambiguously constituted; it remains unclear whether the intention is to portray nature as organic but impartial (and therefore possibly as having some consciousness) or as mechanical (and thus as having no consciousness). If the former interpretation stands, then nature is constructed as something without feeling or compassion, as amoral and thus as a target for others' moral sanctions. If the latter interpretation stands, then nature is again something without cognisance or feeling, which leads to the same conclusion.

The 'Physician' then goes on to suggest that, without access to expert help, young women turn to:

> ... the old woman next door, whose qualifications are that she has had nine or ten children of her own, and has buried half of the "poor little dears" ... She has probably been the cause of the death of her own children, but instead of realising this, and being roused to a distrust in her own powers and methods, she affirms that it was the will and doings of Providence, and is more than ever prepared to apply to other people's children what was so successful with her own.

There are complex contests going on in this part of the text. First, the article is premised on an acceptance of certain binaries. Knowledge is distinguished as being either formal and legitimate expertise or as being informal and illegitimate folklore. Old age is viewed as a disadvantage and, coupled with femininity, it resonates with stereotyped images of the crone: lack and senescence. By implication, the text privileges youth (or young maturity) and masculine expertise.

The assertion that the elderly woman caused the death of her children through negligence is another case in point. What is affirmed here is the expert's adherence to the idea that individuals are responsible for their health. At no time does the 'Physician' bring to bear any discussion about the possible effects of structural and infrastructural impediments to health in the home and neighbourhood, failing to analyse, for example, the influence that surroundings have on morbidity and mortality levels in certain districts.

The 'Physician' constitutes these elderly women as "well-intentioned, but mischievous and dangerous counsellors ...". This description is used to justify a detailed call for enhancing the young mother's independent acquisition of proper, simply put, accessible knowledge about child-rearing written by both men and women who possess expertise in the field of knowledge[3]. Home health training will convince young women to be more studious and skilled in the jobs of their station and less inclined to get lost in "reading the latest novel or staring at costumes and hats in milliner's windows ...". Again, there is a contested terrain here: that the author should encourage the education of women is one thing; yet the domesticated position of women is maintained and certain types of knowledge are valued because they are provided by male experts.

My reading is equivocal because some of the advice given by 'experts' indeed had sensible foundations. It was proposed that women exercise before, during and after pregnancy. It was also recommended that women eat more nutritiously combined foods, show more physical and emotional affection to children, sterilise feeding equipment and water, and obtain unadulterated and healthy milk. All these are useful and even essential pieces of advice that likely contributed to reduced infant and maternal morbidity and mortality. Nonetheless, the celebration of expertise represents a partial rejection of folklore, sometimes no more dangerous than the procedures of allopathic medicine.

'Immorality and Prudishness' is a topic aired in *The Australian Women's Sphere* (1(3) November 1900, 25) expressing disbelief in stereotypes of deserving and undeserving poor. The piece examines the rise of the welfare state (my terms) and reviews the role of government in maintaining the well-being of the population. Poor training received by young people before marriage is viewed as a significant cause of social dysfunction, itself expressed through poor health outcomes. Women's education is advocated, and preventive rather than palliative approaches to health and welfare are seen as more appropriate for women's and girls' health education.

The language used in the article is colourful and descriptive, designed to interest, provoke and raise sympathies. The article responds to another report in Melbourne's *The Age* newspaper (dates unspecified), summarising opinions of clergy and women workers in the slums. In 'Immorality and Prudishness' the following conditions are described:

> Four and five brothers and sisters, with an occasional "lodger", sleeping in one room; jerry-built houses, badly ventilated, so damp that you may find watercresses growing in the cupboards; no decent sanitary arrangements; parents and children drunk early in the morning - the wonder is not that there is so much juvenile immorality, but that there is not more. Children living under such conditions grow up with an intimate knowledge of all that is evil before they have a chance of knowing there is such a thing as goodness.

Here, children are of primary concern, particularly because of crowding, mixed-sex sleeping arrangements, and the dubious identity of the "lodger". This consideration extends to the home and the lack of ventilation, dryness, sanitation and sound construction. The assertion is made that both adults and children are drunk very soon after rising and, given the links among temperance, the women's movement and issues of public health, this drunken state is highlighted as a particular concern. The final assertion is that children come to know evil rather than good, but the specifics of that evil remain implicit, although it is clear that these are moral discourses. These unvoiced issues

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3 These characteristics are reminiscent of those outlined by Miss Niven in her discussions of the types of women ideally needed for the smooth and effective operations of the Australian Health Society (see Chapter 4).

might well include incest, sexually transmitted diseases, infant and child mortality, above-average morbidity rates, inebriation and drug abuse, all of which were euphemistically referred to in other articles during the lifetime of *The Australian Women's Sphere*.

Health and morality are implicitly linked in this paragraph; it is a relationship informed by early determinist and progressive philosophies, and the author of 'Immorality and Prudishness' staunchly argues that "We cannot agree with those who say that social and economic conditions are in no way responsible for the evil; they have almost everything to do with it. Our selfish social and industrial system makes it so difficult for workers to obtain a decent living, that they have no time to think of higher things ...". The Anti-Sweating League and factory legislation are singled out as having "done a great deal of good ..." for women, although the plight of out-workers is noted as perilous. Clearly, most of these workers were women and many of them were mothers working up to eighteen hours a day for 15 shillings a day; others were charwomen working for only 2 shillings a day. Forced to work these hours, their children live on the streets:

> What time have these women to look after the physical and moral well-being of their children? All they can do is to rub and scrub and stitch from morning till night to provide themselves and their children with unwholesome and often, adulterated food. And people talk to us about "woman's sphere being the home," and "the sanctity of the home"! The mockery, the cant, the hypocrisy of it all!

In no other publication examined here is there such clear condemnation of aspects of the reform movement. The wisdom of using legal means to get children off the streets is also questioned. The homes of the poor are described as unbearably hot in summer and without any fire in winter - the streets being places to gain relief from the summer heat or in which to exercise and stay warm in winter.

Unruly nature is everywhere, and the undisciplined and unwatched domestic sphere spills onto the streets. Officialdom constitutes this flow as immoral and dangerous. No matter what its condition, the inside of the home is viewed as the exclusively fit and proper place in which to raise children; working class streets are unfit and improper places for children to play (Given the descriptions and photographic evidence of the worst slum areas, this assessment is indeed an accurate one. However, not all districts were in such state, and the writer's comments thus hold some merit.) In response to this boundary-riding, the writer of 'Immorality and Prudishness' argues that using the law to contain these children is "nothing less than cruelty ...". In other words, the normalisation of these people and their living environments by experts, middle class philanthropists, politicians and bureaucrats is being challenged from within as it were.

It is also suggested that women are not striking at the root of the social problems that confront them, that "we are powerless to lift a little finger to strike at the causes of the evils we are called upon to deal with ...". As if to corroborate this sense of powerlessness, in the final part of the article, the establishment of a Truancy and Juvenile Depravity Committee is critically assessed. Even the title of the group is telling, since it is premised on negative understandings of adolescent behaviours. *The Age* report is also criticised for justifying the appointment of an all-male executive committee on the grounds that the presence of women would stifle the full discussion of allegedly delicate issues. In 'Immorality and Prudishness', however, women are viewed as being capable of dealing with serious social issues:

> [The Committee members are all] ... estimable gentlemen certainly, but how many can speak with any authority on the problems they are called upon to deal with? and none of them would be accepted by women workers as an authority on girl delinquents. To quietly ignore women like Mrs Booth, Mrs Rolls, or Miss Sutherland is suicidal. The questions to be dealt with are serious ones, and must be dealt with in the spirit of scientific reformers. The evils cannot be remedied until they are courageously discussed. Does Melbourne propose to do what England and America have long since seen the futility of attempting - to solve perplexing social problems without the help and co-operation of women? There is no greater power on the side of evil than the mock-modesty which pretends that the wrongs from which some women suffer are too dreadful for other women to know about or discuss.

Masculine public authority is challenged in this passage, and questions are raised about the judgment of prominent men in relation to issues of community politics. Leaving informed and effective women out of the process is viewed as tantamount to suicide. By implying that alternative and radical action takes courage, the writer seems to suggest that the Committee is cowardly in its actions. By arguing that the committee's actions fly in the face of practices adopted earlier overseas, and by stating that these actions are empowering forces of evil rather than of good, she also suggests that the committee is separating women from women, silencing issues that must be studied and solved.

Another article in *The Australian Women's Sphere* deals with the conflicts that exist underneath the veneer of 'Home Sweet Home' (1(5), January 1901, 40). This 'fictional' story records an encounter between a petitioning suffragist and a working class woman whose baby had been still-born ten days before. The story is dominated by their conversation, examining the working class woman's conditions of living, and the stresses on her to maintain a family home. Later in the piece, when the suffragist calls on a neighbour of the woman, it is revealed that the bereaved woman's husband beats her, and that no one wishes to associate with them; so the woman has little if any help. The final part of the story documents an imaginary conversation held by the suffragist with middle class women - "the 25,000 women who don't want the vote, who have all the rights they want, who talk cantingly of 'glorious motherhood' and 'the sanctity of the home'!". The suffragist is arguing that traditional philanthropy is insufficient for the needs of working class women. The last interchange in this imaginary conversation is:

> [middle class philanthropic women] "... What more would you have us do?"
> [suffragist] "I would have you talk less about charity, and think more of doing justice. I would have you remember that you are in a very real sense, and not only in a philanthropic sense, your brother's keeper. I would have you remember that those who cannot help themselves look to you to give them not charity, but justice and freedom.
> [the women] "Oh, that's all rubbish! Besides, it's such a bother."

Two points arise from this passage. First, the article demonstrates that some middle class women were unsatisfied with traditional philanthropic roles upholding images of moral and domesticated femininity. These dissenters were progressive and sometimes radical reformers with ideas that wide-ranging structural change was necessary to alleviate the living and working conditions of poor women. Second, the article challenges normative ideals of motherhood and home, arguing that prescription and practice often remain poles apart. The most resounding allusion to this gap is the death of the baby and the much-remarked illness of its mother, events that illustrate some of the connections between poor health and poverty, and between domestic violence and the manifestation of trauma.

In *The Australian Woman's Sphere* (1(12) August 1901, 99), there is also a piece on the 'Prahran Creche' which illustrates the central place of corporeal and psychological discipline of children. The first two paragraphs set the tone.

> The Creche proper consists of two large airy rooms in a most delightful state of confusion, full of weird-looking wooden animals in different stages of disease and decay, and children tumbling all over the place; one or two babies were asleep in cradles, and one youngster, little Phil, was in disgrace in the corner. It appeared that little Phil had been tied up in the yard by one leg three times that morning for kicking "Matey", as the children called the matron, but that form of punishment proved ineffectual; he had then been tied up by both legs, but vigorous youth asserting itself he again broke loose, and the corner under Matey's reproving eye was found to be the only thing for Phil. Matey is one of those women who are simply born to mother a lot of children. Soft brown eyes, with the love of a Madonna shining out of them, and a perfect understanding of all young things. At times some queer little freaks of society find their way into this small haven. A tiny pair, brother and sister, were sitting hand in hand, one black, the other white. Black Bobbie's father was white, and white Mary's mother was black.

Several points are worth noting. The quality of the accommodation is stressed in the text. Airy rooms are well ventilated, bringing fresh and invigorating oxygen to young lungs. A healthy environment - idealised as a home away from home - becomes an important criterion in marketing the Creche. The rooms are described in ways that reflect some of the new child-care philosophies that had started to appear in periodicals and advice manuals (Wicken 1891), encouraging creative (morally instructive) time with children rather than discipline more suited to the pages of a Dickens novel. Loosening the strict regimes under which children were raised also suggests an acceptance of children in what is constituted as a more natural state. For example, in *The New Idea* (1 August 1902, 20), the woman reader is encouraged to 'Study Your Child!'

> All children have faults, but parents must treat them as symptoms, not diseases. In the physical body a headache is a sign of a disordered liver, indigestion, imperfect eyesight, or a variety of causes. It is a symptom merely, and much thought is given by the physician to determining the trouble it augurs. So in the moral nature lying is not a moral disease - it is a symptom. One child is untruthful through fear. It lies to escape punishment; another through an over-active imagination; another through nervousness. Each of these children requires different treatment. The same sun that melts wax, moulds clay.

Here, the study of the child suggests that individual needs must be respected; that uniform or draconian disciplinary regimes serve limited purposes; that youthful vigour is not ill-health to be cured; and finally, that the natural exuberance of children may be moulded - that nature may be domesticated.

At the Prahran Creche, when creative play turns into behaviour deemed inappropriate, discipline is instituted: being hobbled was less effective as a punishment for young Phil than being left untied but confined to the corner under the surveillance of the Matron. This scene constitutes the gaze of a feminine figure as a powerful tool; more powerful than corporal punishment yet benevolent and well-meaning. Matron stands *in loco parentis* to her wards; as a woman, she is constituted as being naturally suited to this task, even to the point of being able to love children not her own with a divinity that summons considerable power. Even more telling is that the power ascribed to her expands to accommodate a maternal love for 'freaks'. Matron's world is a haven, a garden, for the 'unfortunate' children of mixed races who are *the* archetypal representatives of a partial collapse of the rules of nature.

The final two paragraphs of the article note that the Creche had been established in 1890, opening from six in the morning until seven at night, except on holidays - an arrangement the

commentator finds regrettable, since it means mothers have no rest. One other regime is noted with approval; on being recommended by philanthropic workers and then accepted, children have their heads washed and their clothes replaced by garments owned by the Creche. They are fed bread and jam through the day and soup with meat for lunch. These precautions directly correlate to concerns about public health, safety and nutrition. Indeed, these details are about the production of a biopolitical regime. It seems safe to assume that children at the Prahran Creche would come from the so-called deserving classes, whose homes mimic those of the middle classes (FIG 11). Their mothers would be considered hard working and, through circumstances not of their making, unable to care for their children during the day. While this philanthropic intervention into family units is not state driven, and thus is not an expression of state welfare regimes, it indicates the power exercised by middle class reformers in distributing assistance to members of the working class.

There is an assumption that hygiene among particular classes will be unacceptable; no allowance is made for the possibility that women in difficult material circumstances could be cognisant of hygiene regimes and yet be unable to fully attend to their children's health needs. Here, the tension noted by Reiger (1985) in relation to natural and cultural motherhood is evinced. The idea that natural motherhood cannot provide the care that educated and culturally modified motherhood is claimed to supply is upheld by such texts.

'Anticipating Nature' is written by A.S. Atkinson, a medical doctor (*The New Idea* 2(1) 6 July 1903, 26). The article asserts the central position of wives and mothers in the home, suggesting that women create and preserve the nation; "the home is the nursery of the nation [and] must, in short, determine the character and mission of our whole race ...". The article focuses extensively on the child, noting that "In anticipating a child's character there is the threefold nature to consider. Mind, body, and soul are indissolubly united, and we cannot separate them. To develop one at the expense of the other is a sin against God and Nature ...". No matter how appalled she may be at the burden of her task, the young mother must not shirk her duty to her child, since both her punishment and her reward will be forthcoming in this world through the child's behaviour. In the threefold nature that Atkinson proposes, the child's body must be the mother's first consideration:

> The child is at first a mere animal, which must be nurtured and strengthened so that the body will become a pure, healthy habitation for the mind and soul. With sickly children the home must forever lack a certain element of happiness which predominates where physical vigour prevails ...

The mind is the second part of nature. Children should be kept calm and quiet to avoid nervous reactions while very young. When the mind and nerves are developed, the third part of nature, the soul, requires the mother's full attention:

> ... the mother finds her problem increasing in perplexity. The child is no longer merely an animal. It has developed the higher powers of a human being, and the first indications of its future are manifest. Constant watch and study of the budding inclinations of the little one will from this stage on be necessary to guide its life along the line of the highest development.

Ynestra King (1989, 130) observes that women have been thought to possess a secret function in the monolithic realms of the private sphere and the feminine psyche. This secret is held on behalf of the rest of society, and it serves to disguise the fact that "humanity emerges from non-human nature ...". This recognition gestures towards a construction of the feminine as something

mediating between nature and masculine culture, and it certainly is evident in Atkinson's understanding of women's roles in anticipating nature. Indeed, the views expressed in the article are part of a prevailing conservative view of nature as evil and of the instrumental value of discipline in dealing with such evil.

FOOD ADULTERATION

During the late nineteenth century, food adulteration receives considerable attention (Smith 1979). For example, butchers were subjected to greater levels of surveillance as health inspections became more common-place. Still, to hide the evidence of diseased meat, they might boil down carcasses and add the fat as an adulterant to butter, sausage and meat extract. Alum and sawdust regularly were added to bread. Tea could be adulterated with Prussian Blue (ferric ferrocyanide), lime sulphate, dried leaves and turmeric. Pickles were coloured with copper salts; sweets with copper carbonates, arsenates and lead chromate. Chocolate's brown hue was enhanced with the addition of red iron oxide. Beer could be adulterated with nux vomica (strychnine) or another emetic called cocculus indicus; both gave to beer an hallucinogenic effect.

With dangers such as these lurking in one's daily bread, food reform became important as part of the general thrust of progress and improvement during the late nineteenth century. It was milk adulteration that claimed the sharp edge of the debate. The purity of milk is essential for the well-being of children, and its adulteration with brewers' and distillers' wash, yellow ochre, formalin and boracic acid, or with unclean water, posed real risks for children's health (Smith 1979).

The issue of milk adulteration is taken up in *The Australian Woman's Sphere* (1(2) October 1900, 19). There is, for instance, a full-page advertisement for 'The Willsmere Certified Milk Company' of Melbourne . An accompanying photograph gives a sense of extended family - our corporate image is your family image and, of course, families are natural and healthy (FIG 12). The text comprises a set of assertions by an anonymous voice, followed by two letters from eminent persons; each of these is dealt with in turn.

The assertions used to recommend the Willsmere product include the following. First, "The ... Company has laid itself out to ensure protection from the many diseases which, as the report of Mr. Cameron's recent lecture shows [Australian Health Society, 29 September 1900], arise from a want of care and cleanliness in the supply of the great food of children ...". Here, the use of the phrase "laid itself out" implies social responsibility, exposure and trust. This strategy might be particularly effective given the public acknowledgment (in other contexts) of unacceptably high levels of infant and child mortality at the time, as well as of other public health issues, including the health of employees in shops and factories, or campaigns to curtail the spread of the tuberculosis bacillus.

Second, the company "now claims to have in operation a system of rigid supervision which absolutely guarantees (1) Health of Herds; (2) Cleanliness of Premises; (3) Health of Employees; (4) Purity of Milk ...". Here, the gaze has extended to the farm, the factory, the body of the employee, the body of the cow and the product itself. These techniques of the nineteenth century equivalent of an 'infomercial' suggest that particular herds are under surveillance - that there is a group of farmers from whom the company purchases all its milk. Presumably these farmers conformed to specific

codes of practice and behaviour, for the language used invokes relations of power involving rigid supervision, and promises an absolute guarantee of health.

Third, there are many details about process and procedure, about scientific practice, hygiene, measurement, quality control, consumer comfort and assurance. All of these items are important given how readily milk can transmit disease to vulnerable infants and children.

> Every bottle containing Certified Milk undergoes a treatment of four hours in the Cleaning Process. The milk is always kept below 60 degrees, even in the hottest weather. It is frequently tested, and none with an acidity above .25 per cent. of lactic acid, or with an amount of butter fat below 3.5 per cent. is allowed to go out for consumption. The sealed cans in which the milk is received at the depot are at once placed in a cool chamber, lime-washed daily and absolutely dust-proof, which is kept at freezing point. The milk is Pasteurised after being placed in bottles which are sealed and dated.

The advertisement asserts that Willsmere is the *only* company in Australia that "thoroughly safeguards the public against milk-borne disease ..." and that "holds a certificate from a thoroughly qualified expert ...". This assertion demonstrates a reliance on expertise, and on the exercise of authority and knowledge. The company constitutes its identity as a protector of the family, the community and society in a bid to be indispensable. Corporate image and health are linked in this exercise.

Two letters follow. One is from H.W. Potts, Government Scientific Instructor in Dairying and the other is from C. Cummins Cherry, Veterinary Surgeon, Board of Public Health. These letters provide more detail on the operations of the Company - like a story unfolding for the consumer/reader. Potts' letter is addressed to The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture and it intimates that he is responding to a request from the Minister to provide a report on the "system of milk distribution ..." used by the Company. The Company obtained its milk from five farms at Kew, and these farms had been scrupulously inspected for compliance with the "admirable rules prescribed by the Company ..." (rather than by any government instrumentality). The report argues that all five farms had been found more than "highly satisfactory ...", that the herds provided "pure, sweet, clean, cool and healthy milk ...", language more in keeping with an advertisement than with a letter to a Minister of the Crown.

Potts' letter details how the inspection process was extended to the Metropolitan Receiving and Distributing Depot, to check "the condition of the milk on its arrival, its cool storage, treatment, method of pasteurisation, bottling, and details of cleansing, all of which I have found devised and controlled on scientific lines ...". Potts goes on to recommend that a "special building should be designed and erected in a more suitable locality ..." to complete the Company's scheme of "distributing pure milk equal to any existing modern scheme, and one that must commend it, not only to the medical profession, but also to every householder in the community ...". In all this regulation, there is a concern to make the details of monitoring, proving, displaying and justifying particular regimens both public and accessible. Of course, such openness is also a useful marketing strategy.

Cherry's letter is not addressed to a particular office, but begins by certifying that he reeently had inspected the Company's "Branches No.2, No.3, No.4, No.5 and No.6, Woolert ..." and had examined cattle recently "submitted to the Tuberculin Test ...", noting that those which were not sound had been "disposed of ...", leaving the remaining cattle and their milk "highly commendable ...". Following this, Cherry implies that this inspection is not his first, observing that "Within the

space of a few months ..." the Company has made numerous improvements to sheds, stalls and milking yards, paving, drainage, and "lastly, on the principle that disease germs will not flourish where fresh air and sunlight penetrate, ventilation has been amplified ...". He notes that all udders are washed and dried, and that milkers also wash their hands. Milking utensils undergo cleaning regimens, refrigeration is scientific, cleaning after milking is immediate and the conditions are of a "high standard ...".

In a later edition of *The Australian Women's Sphere*, there is another article on the topic of food adulteration where the power of the feminine is invoked. It is entitled 'Food Adulteration' (2(25) September 1902, 202). Citing several examples of how food adulteration occurs, and calling for the implementation of a Food Adulteration Act, the article notes that:

> The adulteration of food is now carried on to such an extent as to be a peril to the future of the race ... It looks as though it would remain for the women of the State to rouse legislators to the performance of their duty in this matter - the duty to see that the food supplies of the people are, so far as legislation can make them, pure and wholesome. That this has not been zealously done in the past can scarcely be questioned. Municipalities already have certain powers in the case of food adulteration, but it is a rarity to see in the papers any mention of interference on their part except in the case of the dilution of milk. Here again the influence of women should be brought to bear upon municipal councillors for a more rigid inspection and analysis of food offered for sale. When the women of this State have been properly organised - the speedy consummation of which is devoutly to be wished - it is to be hoped that the central authority will appoint an active sub-committee whose special work shall be the investigation of food adulteration.

In this text, there is a concern about the bodies of individual people and families, particularly touching on the subject of racial health and national vigour. Women are constituted as able to exercise considerable power in lobbying government to fulfil a duty of care to the population. The article also implies that men should learn to demonstrate a morality of care in the public sphere that emulates how women (are meant to) act *by their very nature* in the private sphere. This alleged power of the feminine nevertheless is circumscribed by the gendered and spatially bounded roles and relations through which women and men function. Therefore, it is also constrained by the symbolic and inferiorised links between the feminine and the natural in the private sphere. It is this kind of constraint that some campaigners attempted to break by pushing into the public sphere the boundaries of a naturalised and feminised domesticity, thought to be ethically and morally superior.

THE RADICAL ANTI-CRUELTY MOVEMENT AND THE BODY OF NATURE

In chapter four, I discussed the relationship of the feminine body to fashion, and the pressures that women exert on themselves and have placed on them to be natural and beautiful. I also noted the rise of a discourse constituting cruel fashion as both unnatural and unhealthy for the body of the woman. Now I want to examine the anti-cruelty movement as women came to view and create it in relation to the health and moral well-being of other domesticated bodies - their immediate charges, their homes and communities, and the welfare of specific animals.

In expounding *The New Ethics* (1907, 15), John Howard Moore writes that "The inhabitants of the earth are bound to each other by the ties and obligations of a common kinship. Man is simply one of a series of sentients, differing in degree, but not in kind from the beings below, above, and around him ...". Moore's text is part of an ethical discourse on the relationship between people and animals that goes back further than Plato and Aristotle (Clarke and Linzey 1990). Moore, an ardent

vegetarian, traces his debt to Jeremy Bentham's essay 'An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation' printed in 1789. In this essay, Bentham suggests that animals as well as people may experience happiness and thus are deserving of moral consideration:

> What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or, perhaps, the faculty of discourse? But a full-grown horse or dog, is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal than an infant of a day, or a week, or even a month, old. But suppose the case were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer? (Bentham in Clarke and Linzey 1990, 136).

The modern humane movement began in Britain around 1800, and its advocates were active throughout the Empire by the 1840s. Among the hallmarks of this movement in ethics are the passage of the Martin Act, 1822 (An Act to Prevent the Cruel and Improper Treatment of Cattle); the foundation of the Vegetarian Society in 1847; the patronage of Queen Victoria for the Society for the Protection of Animals in 1840 (Ryder 1989); and the emergence of the anti-vivisection movement from the 1870s (Rupke 1987). Roderick Nash (1990) suggests that the vegetarian and anti-vivisection campaigns were highly anthropocentric, focused on the welfare of people and of domesticated animals, lacking both philosophical consistency and a grasp of the principles of holism. Yet Nash argues that these two elements of the humane movement deserve more recognition as "intellectual precursors of environmental ethics ..." (1990, 47). These movements were aligned to evolutionary progressivism advanced by Darwin and Spencer, among others. Nash observes that "there was an historical progression in the evolution of morality *that began closest to the home* ..." (1990, 48; emphasis added). This statement is ambiguous; Nash could be referring to Victorian concerns about heredity, and also to the belief in the moral superiority of women in raising new generations of healthy and ethical people in the home. Either way, he is gesturing at the links among the feminine, the home and nature during the nineteenth century.

There is no absolute moral position about the treatment of animals, but many organisations focused on how cruelty reflected back on the moral standing of the perpetrator rather than being intrinsically wrong against nature. The Bands of Mercy, active in Australia, allegedly were established in the 1870s by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts[4]. The primary function of these Bands was to influence the moral well-being of working class children (Tester 1991). Burdett-Coutts was adamant that bull-baiting, cock-fighting and other blood sports were morally degrading to the working classes who would profit by the reformist help of their betters. Yet she sanctioned hunting on her estates, including the use of impaled live bait for the hunt (Rupke 1987). Clearly such morality is constituted along lines of class distinction and the creation of the other, suggesting also that women's empathy with nature is not absolute and infallible.

Vivisection, too, is a multiply-constituted discourse. Nicolaas Rupke (1987) notes that women were among the first to protest the use of animals in experimental science, even where such experimentation was argued to be important to advances in medicine and public health. Mary Ann Elston (1987) suggests that for a movement not centrally concerned with women's rights, the anti-vivisection campaign attracted more women than most other issues involving a moral stance towards

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4 It is interesting to note that Tester (1991) credits Burdett-Coutts with the formation of the Bands of Mercy. In the first Australian volume of *The Band of Mercy Advocate* (published in Newcastle, New South Wales in 1887), the foundation of these Bands is attributed to a Mrs Smithie of Wood Green in Middlesex.

nature. Women were also among those supporting or undertaking vivisection. However, Elston maintains that part of the stimulus for more women to be involved in the anti-vivisection movement was the identification such women felt with nature.

An English feminist and leading anti-vivisectionist, Frances Power Cobbe is one figure who made strong discursive use of the link that is made between women and nature. In 1875, Cobbe was among the founders of the Society for the Protection of Animals Liable to Vivisection (the Victoria Street Society). Writing in *The Zoophilist* in 1893, she compares the practice of ovariotomy with vivisection, arguing the moral wrongness of penetrating nature and female nature, a claim also made through some of the 'new woman' novels that explored moral systems thought to be innately feminine (Elston 1987; see also Poovey 1986). In many ways, Cobbe's work anticipates that by Carol Adams (1990) on *The Sexual Politics of Meat.* Cobbe writes:

> Nature has veiled between her beautiful covering of skin her secret workings ... Not rudely and irreverently can those mysteries be explored without injury to the finer susceptibilities and modesties of humanity, least of all the young (in Elston 1987, 279).

Slightly over one hundred years later, Adams argues that:

> Through the structure of the absent referent, patriarchal values become institutionalized. Just as dead bodies are absent from our language about meat, in descriptions of cultural violence women are also often the absent referent. Rape, in particular, carries such potent imagery that the term is transferred from the literal experience of women and applied metaphorically to other instances of violent devastation, such as the "rape" of the earth in ecological writings of the early 1970s (1990, 42).

Keith Tester (1991) also studies our historical relationship with nature, using semiotic analysis. He examines the relationship between the anti-cruelty movement and the rise of the modern episteme that is identified by Foucault in *The Order of Things* (1970). Tester's work is useful because it acknowledges the messiness and complex moral diversity of the debate. He draws a distinction between what he calls the Demand for Difference and the Demand for Similitude. Following Foucault's work on life sciences and economy, Tester outlines how animals are differently constituted as other in the Renaissance, the neo-classical era and the modern period:

> The position of animals as representations of Otherness which help firmly classify the Sameness of human beings is ... historical. The deployment of animals as species which are different but organic living beings which are the same goes to the heart of modern taxonomy. The ambiguous status of 'Man' is the historical basis for the moral principle of animal rights ... The distinction between humans and animals is simultaneously clear and blurred; animal rights is one way in which the ambiguity can be confronted and reconciled. The animal has a mundane social meaning as the visibly different body of a similarly living organism, and that daily meaning is shaped by a complex historical context (1991, 87-88).

Advocates of the idea that human beings and animals are essentially the same willingly take on a moral position that disenfranchises them from eating flesh. Advocates of the idea that people and animals are different are able to justify that flesh eating is a morally benign act. Semiotically, Sameness and Difference are the raw and the cooked (Tester 1991), the natural and the social, nature and culture. Supporters of both positions argue that their stance is the more morally correct. Both use arguments that objectify nature. For instance, the Demand for Difference presents vegetarianism as physically unhealthy and debilitating, and as risking a fall back into nature. The Demand for

Similitude celebrates this return to nature, including a connectivity with animals that challenges normative ideas about the meaning of competition and the generation of a healthy race.

Henry Salt was one of the prime advocates for vegetarianism during the late nineteenth century, and was also a vigorous defendant of a position of sameness. In writing *Animals' Rights; Considered in Relation to Social Progress* in 1892, Salt argues that evolutionary progress need not mean that competition is absolute. Citing cooperation between women and men, workers and employers, Salt suggests that good relations between people and animals need not create a culture embedded irretrievably in unruly nature. For him, animal rights are premised on the notion of 'restricted freedoms' - that is, of liberties that do not infringe on the welfare of the whole community (in Clarke and Linzey 1990).

Australians, too, were writing on these topics. In the Australian women's popular press, calls for the minimisation of cruelty prevail and the ethics of hunting are questioned, even where strict adherence to vegetarianism is absent (FIG 13). In *The Australian Women's Sphere*, is an article entitled 'Food Reform by a Vegetarian' (1(12) August 1901, 99), suggesting that vegetarianism is about health, hygiene and economy, strongly founded on moral considerations about the relationship between people and animals. The Food Reform Movement is portrayed as a great humanitarian movement. The crux of the argument is in the following extract.

> A diet of flesh and blood involves the infliction of a most appalling amount of cruelty on the animal creation; totally unjustifiable, because altogether unnecessary bringing demoralisation and suffering on the human race [sic]. Those moving in this reform stand for the rights of animals, and the day is coming when these rights must be recognised instead of, as at present, ignored. It is not much more than fifty years ago that the negroes of America were denied humane treatment; to-day they rejoice in their emancipation. But there are other races who await their deliverance: the highly-organised animals, killed at the rate of one million per day, possessing the capacity to love, to feel and to suffer. It is time that men and women interested in the advance of all true reform should investigate this matter for themselves.

Two specific issues are raised in this passage. First there is a concern to enhance the moral well-being and social progress of people, and protect them from 'base' instincts. This position is problematic, being premised on a tacit acceptance of surveillance and discipline and, more particularly, on a dubious argument that we must pull ourselves out from nature to act morally towards it.

Second, there is a declaration that animal rights - rather than animal welfare - must and will be the order of the day, an announcement contradicting the instrumental values expressed in the sentences before. Advocating the intrinsic rights of animals necessitates a partial abandonment of instrumental values. Protecting animals for their inherent values requires an understanding that while such action may be morally uplifting for us, this halo-effect should be a secondary consideration.

In a piece entitled 'For Our Vegetarian Readers' (*The Australian Women's Sphere* 1(16) December 1901, 132), economical arguments for vegetarianism are combined with moral ones, reinforcing messages about women's managerial position in the home and their moral responsibilities toward nature in the community. The article notes the nutritional value of vegetable matter and argues that the consumption of flesh food is an extravagance catering only to popular appetites and ruinous of health. "Those who adopt this method [vegetarianism] not only save money on food, but are spared the expense of doctors and drugs, and the money thus saved may be

employed to greater advantage ...". Interestingly, this passage challenges the economy and efficacy of medical expertise, suggesting that health derives from some parts of nature rather than from medical ministrations or other, slaughtered, parts of nature.

The vegetarian theme continues in *The Australian Women's Sphere* in a letter by Isabel G. Noar in the January 1902 edition (2(17), 139). Noar discusses the merits of vegetarianism in terms of economy, food value and morality.

> Habit has blinded us to the horrors of the slaughter-house, but we cannot tolerate it within our sight, or within reach of our noses. We don't even like to hear it described, yet we demand its existence. But the most fastidious of mortals feel no disgust, but pleasure and interest in watching the farmer or gardener preparing food for us. We instinctively feel that the butcher's trade tends to degrade a man. Under no conditions of short hours or high wages could we think of it as fit for a refined man or woman. But the preparing of food from the natural products of soil is compatible with the highest delicacy and refinement. This is essentially a woman's question, and a question full of scientific and practical interest. I hope that some of the readers of the "Sphere" will take it up, and help to make us better acquainted with it. Yours etc. Isabel G Noar.

Here a class bias is implied in the passage. For example, it is not acknowledged that working class people cannot readily escape from the deleterious effects of noxious industries. Additionally, butchers are working class people, and their class position and profession doubly condemn them to an unhealthy and immoral existence. The garden becomes the Garden metaphor and is associated with 'refined' women and men, but especially with women. In this passage also there is a conflation of images; woman-nature, woman-science, woman-pragmatism. Despite their class conservatism, these images push against orthodox understandings of the natural and healthy woman in the home.

CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS

A husband is a man bonded to a house and a housewife is a woman bonded to a husband. Yet, modern housework is a nineteenth century invention dependent on the dislocation of 'work' from home, and on the naturalisation of separate spheres (Cowan 1983). Housework also disciplines disorderly nature, controlling the penetration of dust, dirt and disease into the private sphere, and to make it healthy and habitable for culture.

As noted in chapter three, during the nineteenth century considerable effort was expended in the public arena to improve and control the conditions of the poor, particularly in terms of housing and public health. Nevertheless, significant pressure was brought to bear on women to be responsible for the creation of safe, hygienic and morally irreproachable houses. These expectations exist elsewhere. For instance, in the American context, Helen Campbell wrote in 1907 that "To keep the world clean, this is the one great task for women ..." (in Ehrenreich and English 1988, 158). Housework was viewed as a way to discipline shiftless women, to help unfortunate women help themselves, to help women empower themselves and, finally, to maintain the identity and separation of nature and culture.

Home economics is another method by which women were constructed as housewives. On the one hand, home economics was designed so women could enhance their own positions, move into the public sphere as teachers, scientists and lobbyists, and seek to challenge the idea that housework was neither work nor difficult. On the other hand, however, home economics reifies the

connection between women and the home. The celebration of efficient and industrious housewifery, informed by science, also signifies a domesticated nature.

Clearly, the home is a contested arena, particularly in terms of the power effects emanating from the establishment of home economics as a means to organise women, families and 'natural' and 'cultural' physical spaces. Home economics was also formulated according to certain moral, medical and social precepts influenced by prevailing ideas about the meaning of health, the feminine, the natural and the private. At the same time, some of its advocates were committed to developing new ways to liberate housewives from drudgery and boredom, while preserving the sanctity of the home. For example, Ellen Swallow Richards was the first female chemist to graduate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A teacher of home economics to college women, she was also an early and well-known advocate of women's involvement in conservation (Hynes 1985). Richards was not, however, a supporter of feminism (Hardyment 1988), arguing that women's primary place was in the home.

According to Kereen Reiger (1985), in Australia domestic economy - as it was called - began with the introduction of cookery classes in colonial elementary schools in the 1880s. It was allied to technical education for boys and the new kindergarten movement (FIG 14). The drive to establish domestic economy as widely as possible throughout the education system in Australia had at least three bases: a popular and state-based concern about the health, welfare and moral well-being of the family as the basic social unit; the bipartisan desire to maintain protection of male workers by perpetuating the sexual division of labour; and the desire to retain men's pleasure and approval as heads of households on whom women depended. A fourth reason that Reiger is not alone in recognising is that home economics was a reaction to the effective penetration of the market economy into the home, and to the reconstitution of women as primary consumers (Hardyment 1988). Consumption is a pursuit linked to desire and thus to potentially transgressive behaviour. The home is a palette, on which can be shown the culmination of the desirability of the feminine as wife, mother and homemaker; the conduit through which men and children gain and maintain health and well-being. It is to the constitution of the healthy home as a feminine enterprise that the discussion now turns.

In *Health Lectures for the People, Second Series* (1889, 91), the Australian Health Society has incorporated a short passage entitled 'Note on Cleanliness' by one A.N. Pearson.

> The importance of thorough cleanliness cannot be too strongly enforced. It is an old saying that cleanliness is next to godliness; we may go further, and say it is a part of godliness. Thou shalt be clean, is one of the primary moral commands; and whoso accumulates dirt sins against his neighbour. Filth is a nidus of devastating disease ... The rules of cleanliness apply to the person, the clothing, the food, the house, and the general surroundings.

The article goes on to discuss which parts of these items should be cleaned, with what, how often and for how long. In other words, it presents a disciplinary regime. The purpose of this cleaning is not simply to avoid disease but to give women the opportunity to become morally uplifted by imposing order and discipline on chaos. There is also a call for sanitary reform to be formalised in legislation, and for such legislation to be given effect through the work of inspectors and other sanitary professionals. These are practices of surveillance; a government of individual bodies and of collective populations.

Clearly, none of these suggestions is particularly invidious; indeed hygiene and health are vital components of a high quality of life and this point is not at issue. What is more important is the manner in which sanitary reform was established and gained credibility. The attack on dirt and disease took place in multiple sites. The Australian Health Society alone conducted its reform campaign in schools, newspapers, lecture series, and by lobbying government instrumentalities or co-opting professionals in a range of fields. Its agenda was nationalist, designed to protect existing and future generations of Australians from environmental hazards and from their own ignorance. This type of rallying cry wielded considerable influence: through innocence or malice, to avoid the call to health was to perpetrate acts against the welfare of the state. Where members of the deserving poor could not fully participate, they were helped. Yet this assistance was not extended to those considered undeserving, and significant social divisions and inequities remained unchallenged in the reform process. Moreover, in considering nature to be a source of miasma or germs, reformers concerned with the cleanliness of the home discounted many sources of disease stemming from structural inequalities in society.

'Healthy Homes' is another topic in the second series of lectures published by the Australian Health Society (1889, 1). Here, Dr John Springthorpe argues for the need to discipline nature.

> Everybody nowadays admits that we are what we are mainly owing to two mighty influences - inheritance and environment. In the case of the former we have no option but to accept the limitations within which our ancestors have more or less thoughtlessly confined us, though it is left to us, if we choose, to widen these limits somewhat for the good of posterity. But environment is a matter over which we can still exercise all the control which comes with knowledge; and no small part of our environment is bound up in the sum of life-long associations which we call "home". The knowledge, therefore, of what constitutes a healthy home is one of the most valuable acquirements which any individual, anxious to influence his own destiny, can secure.

Springthorpe suggests that a healthy home stems from "a healthy site, pure air, a pure water supply, a properly constructed house, the proper removal of excreta, proper surface conservancy, and healthy surroundings ...", and the article provides detailed information about each. For example, soils are said to be a much neglected element of nature, given their potential impact on the homes that overlay them. The presence of microscopic plants and animals in soil is discussed; their existence linked in some instances to the presence of disease in the home. Furthermore, legislation is suggested as a means by which to prevent shoddy building practices. Finally, Springthorpe suggests:

> Such are the main conditions necessary for the health of the home. Nature is governed, fortunately, by law, and if we break these her sanitary laws we must suffer for it. If we do not prevent the entrance of subsoil air and damp into our houses, we must expect fevers, catarrhs, neuralgia, rheumatism, and consumption. If we do not pay attention to ventilation, we must expect anaemia, neuralgia, weakness and consumption. The householder who allows stagnant water to collect in his front garden or back yard, who lives in a house build upon rubbish heaps, tips, or undrained ground, who drinks unfiltered water, who has no dust bin, whose house drains are imperfect, not disconnected [sic], improperly laid, with leaking joints and bad fall, and whose closet is too near the house, with the pan ill-fitting and unventilated, the ground beneath it sodden and polluted, and deodorants conspicuous by their absence, must not expect to enjoy an immunity from typhoid fever and diphtheria. The aggregate of householders who permit of [sic] houses being constructed upon polluted ground, who do not attend to surface conservancy, efficient drainage, proper guttering, and the removal of excreta, and who allow open lands to be made the receptacle of all kinds of filth and garbage must pay the price of such conduct in ever-recurring outbreaks of the same diseases (p.15).

This passage reflects two particular points. First, and despite the call for legislative mechanisms to regulate building trades, the responsibility for the health of the home and its occupants would be placed on householders. In legal terms, these people would be male heads of household. In practical terms, the care of the home and the family rested with women, either directly or through the employment of servants. Either way, it is in keeping with observations already made that the feminine should mediate between nature and culture in this fashion.

Second, the home itself is constituted as a body over which anatomical studies are conducted. This body part is ill, this one is deformed, this one is dysfunctional. The job of women is to heal, manage and tend these parts, to discipline and control them, using both natural instincts (for the feminine knows what domesticity requires) and scientific means (for this intuitive knowledge, like nature itself, may be improved upon using the powers of science and rationality).

Not all feminists would adhere to this discipline and normalisation. In *The Woman's Voice*, there is an article entitled 'Co-operative Kitchens' (1(4) 22 September 1894, 52), written by one E.H.M. on the benefits of co-operative kitchen schemes (see also Gilman 1898/1970, 1903/1970; Hayden 1981; Spain 1995). E.H.M. outlines one scheme by a Mrs Lewis "from the pages of the *Nineteenth* more than a year ago ...". Housekeeping is seen to remove women from the "mental and moral education ..." of their children, and from endeavours to benefit themselves as well as others. E.H.M. suggests that co-operative kitchens would go some considerable way to alleviating the problem of too many chores in the day.

> The remedy for this, and for many other evils attendant on our present system, is, we are told, to be found in co-operation. Several schemes have during the year been under discussion in London. Of these the most agreeable seems to be the one pointed out by Mrs Lewis. This lady would like to see a culinary depot established in every street, from which meats would be sent out ready for serving and prepared by none but thoroughly expert cooks. The *menu* for the day could be sent round every morning and orders taken, just as they are taken now by the various tradespeople. Customers could, of course, fare as sumptuously or as simply as they chose, but in any case they would have the comfort of knowing that everything used was the best of its kind, bought in the best market, and prepared with the utmost regard to sanitary science. To ensure all this, it would, of course, be necessary to employ competent supervisors and managers in the various departments. Are there not, as Mrs Lewis suggests, many ladies working for their living who would be glad of such posts, or glad to act as buyers, account-keepers and so on? (original emphasis).

E.H.M. continues that the scheme would rid homes of servants, who were considered to be poor influences in the home, and in so doing, she (?) perpetuates stereotypical attitudes about class that divided women and rupture ideas about the feminine as homogeneously moral or worthy.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

In this chapter, I have examined meanings attributed to the feminine, the home and nature in discourses and social practices centred on the home, its occupants and some of the material practices by which it was to be maintained. Transgressing conventions that were reified by the cult of domesticity, women took their moral campaigns from the confines of the home to address a diverse range of issues in the public sphere. These matters included the nature and culture of mothering, child-birth and child-rearing; the health and welfare of families, communities, the white race and nature; the injustice and moral turpitude of cruelty to animals; and the creation and maintenance of healthy, hygienic and well-managed homes whose occupants were well and safely fed.

By turns, these issues also embrace or reject expert and folkloric knowledges. They challenge masculine domination of major philanthropic committees. They call for the education and training of girls and boys, women and men, to augment nature's manifold blessings. Moreover, these issues touch on the lived experiences of individuals and of the population, the food that is required to sustain these bodies, the shelter that surrounds them, and the animals and plants that are needed to maintain them either physically or spiritually.

Clearly, the period is one in which complex discourses and social practices constitute the feminine, the home and nature in diverse and often transgressive ways. In chapter six, analysis moves to examine some of the nineteenth century texts on health that may be classified as masculine and that also serve to constitute the meaning of the feminine, the home and nature.

6

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED ...
BUILDING HEALTHY NATURE

> A minimal, and reasonably non-controversial, definition of law is that it is something which orders society. Law regulates human behaviour, and the relationships between members of a society ... Hans Kelsen ... said that the "norm functions as a scheme of interpretation". The term norm ... simply refers to a rule, standard, law or principle, and is related to the word "normal" (Davies 1994, 5).

> It is the fear of collapse, the sense of dissolution, which contaminates the Western image of all diseases ... But the fear we have of our own collapse does not remain internalized. Rather, we project this fear onto the world in order to localize it and, indeed, to domesticate it. For once we locate it, the fear of our own dissolution is removed. Then it is not we who totter on the brink of collapse, but rather the Other (Gilman 1988, 1).

INTRODUCTION

It is problematic to suggest that the feminine, the home, nature and health are stable categories. Even so, I have been compelled to use these terms in ways that convey just that sense of stasis; it is difficult to speak outside of the conventions of one's language, even while seeking to challenge them. I continue to assert certain assumptions about how important it is to disrupt the ethical, moral and political foundations of binary oppositions. In chapters four and five, for example, I examined how the feminine, the home and nature were variously constituted through debates about health in texts from the women's popular press of the late nineteenth century.

In making this decision, I labelled that popular press a feminine discourse. Certainly, the presses and papers were sometimes owned and managed by men; neither were men always discouraged from contributing letters and articles to these periodicals. These are texts that nevertheless may be characterised as heterogeneously feminine. The division between the private and the public sphere is challenged by this analysis of health debates. In conjunction with their work alongside men in sectors of business, government, industry and agriculture, women's work in the home and in small community settings became embellished by the issue of how to develop and preserve a healthy society. Indeed, just as groups of women monitored and worked in the public arena, so too groups of men monitored the private realm, although men's work in that sphere was and remains constrained for various reasons documented elsewhere[1].

In this chapter, I examine what I characterise as masculine discourses; texts from the masculine cultural and public sphere that were written by men. Again, I analyse documents that relate to health and seek to establish how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted. Specifically, I explore a short story from the Australian Health Society and articles from the *Building and Engineering Journal.* I also analyse two pieces of South Australia's health legislation from 1873 and 1898, along with the relevant parliamentary debates. Other colonies enacted public health laws

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[1] See, for example, Caroline Davidson (1982), Christine Delphy (1984) and Belinda Probert (1990) on how housework has remained defined as a feminine task, despite the movement of women from the home into the formal workforce.

during the late nineteenth century: Queensland in 1884, Victoria in 1890 and New South Wales in 1902. Since the South Australian Government was the first to legislate, and because much has been written already about the eastern colonies' health histories, I have restricted my gaze to the South Australian statutes. Finally, I comment on possible connections between law and mythology.

CAREY AND THE BAD SMELL

In August 1880, the Australian Health Society published a short story entitled *A Bad Smell.* The story seeks to provide a moral lesson to readers, encouraging the adoption of particular habits meant to enhance health outcomes. Written by Alexander Sutherland, the complete story is reproduced below to convey the full measure and impact that the story likely was intended to have:

> "What a bad smell!" said Carey to his fellow-workman, as they came up the right-of-way on their road home after the day's work was done.
>
> "Pooh," said the other, holding his nose with his finger and thumb, "Isn't it horrid? What is the good of smells? What are they made for?"
>
> "Well," said Carey, "that's just what I would like to know."
>
> Who could wonder that there was a smell! for down the right-of-way there flowed a dirty, slimy drain, all black and foul and filthy; and then, when Carey said good-night to his friend and opened his own back gate, he still had the smell around him; for he stepped into a yard that was just as filthy and bad. A drain started from near the kitchen door, and wandered unevenly towards the gate, but lost itself among the rank, unhealthy grass that flourished along the fence; so that where a pretty little garden plot ought to have been, there was nothing but weeds, with oozy black mud at their roots, and cakes of the same mud baked hard in the sun. Of course, in such a place there were always those bad smells, but Carey had grown so used to them that it was only on these very warm days that they troubled him.
>
> Within the house the smells were almost as bad, though he himself never noticed them. For everything was dirty and untidy, and although he earned a good wage, there was no appearance of comfort or cleanliness. You would have wondered how people could have been happy in such a filthy home; and yet somehow they were happy. He and his wife and children were all very fond of one another, and that, perhaps, was the cause of their happiness. But little did he know that one of the most cruel things he could do was to let his little ones play about in that filthy back yard, which a day or two of easy labour on his part would soon have made sweet, and clean, and cheerful.
>
> "What is the use of smells?" he wanted to know. He had no idea that they were there to give him warning to clean up his place, and get himself ready to receive an enemy who was on the road. Why, only six months ago he had Bessy and Joe in bed for five weeks with the typhoid fever, and not two years ago little Katie, his pet, had died from the same disease. The smells had been there long before that to warn him, and save him from his grief, but he had never known the meaning of their warning. This very evening, as he went up the yard, they were still there to give him notice of a dreadful calamity which was about to happen, but it never occurred to him to do anything but hold his nose, and hope that the hot weather and the smells would soon be over.
>
> "What is the use of smells?" Let me tell you by means of an example. One evening, just about dusk, two friends and I were going across a common near Sydney. At a certain place one of my friends parted from us to strike off to the right. We said good-night, and went on for a few paces until my friend called after me, "Don't forget about the book." I continued to walk on but looked back to answer, "All right, I shall let you have it next -- Oh!" I shouted, and a very big oh! it was, for my arm was pinched as if a horse had had it between its teeth. I stopped instantly, and said to my friend rather sharply, "What is the matter?" But he had no need to tell me, for there just at my feet lay a deep quarry, and a step more would have taken me over. These dangerous places were afterwards all fenced in, but at that time it was a very treacherous spot.
>
> During the week my arm grew blue, and then a great black patch appeared. It was very painful, and I began to think my friend might have given me a gentler warning; but when I read, a morning or two later, how a clergyman had, in the darkness, left the road and driven his buggy over that very place, how his wife was killed on the spot, and his only child died a few hours afterwards in the hospital, I realized more clearly the danger I had run, and went over to see my friend and thank him more heartily than I had at first felt inclined to, for the kindly pinch that had made my safety certain.

> Now, the use of a smell is exactly of the same sort as the use of that pinch. Carey was on the brink of a precipice, and he knew nothing about it. In that foul drain and dirty yard, death lurked as surely as it had waited for me at the bottom of the quarry. I had had my warning pinch, and had stopped just in the nick of time. Carey had had his warning smell, but, poor fellow, had no idea what it meant; never guessed that his home was soon to be bare and desolate.
>
> However, one Saturday his little boy, Dick, being at home from school, spend the forenoon in searching for a penny he had lost among the grass. He raked and poked among the black mud, and found his penny, but he also found something that he was not in search of. For it is just in these foul-smelling places the fevers lie concealed. The seeds of them are there being nursed; they only want a little stirring up, and they spring upon their victim when he least expects them.
>
> So Dick next Monday refused his breakfast, and in the afternoon was kept from school; at six o'clock in the evening came the doctor, and he shook his head. Not the slightest hope; it was malignant scarlet fever. Poor little Dicky knew nothing of what was going to happen, and wondered why his mother's eyes were so red, and why she buried her head so often in the bed-clothes; but midnight had scarcely ceased chiming when a rapid change began, and in an hour poor Dicky had ceased to wonder or do aught else.
>
> The funeral was over, and the house was settling down to its ordinary ways, thought still with its mournful gloom hanging over it, when Bessy sickened, and then John; and a week later poor Carey followed them both to the cemetery. The frightened father and mother carried Joe away to the seashore, in hopes to save the last of their flock; but he carried the deadly poison with him, and they brought his body back to be buried beside the rest.
>
> What is the use of a smell? Its use is to warn people of their ill-kept houses and filthy drains, of rotting heaps and stinking cesspools; for in these places grow the poisons that give rise to dysentery, and scarlet fever, and measles, and diphtheria, and typhoid fever.
>
> How they get there no one, as yet, can tell. Most likely the seeds come from distant places, carried about by the wind. The seeds that fall on clean and sweet-smelling spots find nothing to grow upon, soon die, and do no harm; but when they fall on filthy places, where there is a bad smell, they soon take root and grow, and after a time there is a fine crop of disease ready to seize on man, woman, or child.
> But the smell that always comes from such places gives us ample warning, so that the duty of a wise man, who wishes to preserve his own life and that of his family and neighbours, is to see that he never has a bad smell about his place, to remove anything that would cause a smell, and do all in his power to have his house, his yard, his right-of-way, and his street all clean, and tidy, and sweet-smelling.
>
> Poor Carey now knows the use of a smell. Poor fellow! He sometimes sighs and says he wishes he had known it before.

There is a wealth of information in this story of loss and sadness, much of it embedded in metaphor and metonymy. To begin with, the odours that cause such consternation come to stand for disease in a metonymic relationship. They mark its presence and passage. The term smell is used in a double fashion; signifying the existence of disease while representing that sense of the body able to detect the presence of disease and make it possible to act on the information thus gained. In different contexts, then, smell is both the complaint and the way to ameliorate that complaint[2]. While both Carey and his friend recognise that the smell is offensive, they do not understand that the odour signifies the presence of potential disaster; they have no frame of reference to decipher the codes that are embedded in the messages from nature.

In the early and middle parts of the story, the surroundings of Carey's house are a kind of metaphoric map. The right-of-way is a node for the collection of ooze from which the odour emanates. This term, right-of-way, is interesting: an alley between back yards for rows of cottages,

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[2] Alain Corbin's (1986) book about the history of smell and its relation to public health in France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a fascinating treatise. Written in a fashion that is indebted to Foucauldian insights about discipline and normalisation, Corbin's work also demonstrates how interdisciplinarity brings a wealth of eclectic methods and sources to one's work.

such a pathway conveys a sense of common passage, a means of communication and access, for whom no one in particular is responsible. The right-of-way is also a powerful metaphor for the pathways of disease. Along with the flowing drain that follows its contours, this alley connects the world outside of the home to the world within the domestic sphere, suggesting that nature is domesticated in the suburbs. Unruly nature, like disease, comes from foreign places, a point reiterated at the end of the story. Domesticated nature falls prey to these distant and unwelcome visitors if it is not maintained at a particular standard, and people must preserve their own civility and domestication by adopting a range of habits and practices to protect them from unruly nature.

Carey's back yard is another landmark on the map. From the kitchen, through the grass and along the fence-lines, the waste products from physical and domestic activities that are undertaken in Carey's home flow out from the private to the public sphere. There is a pathway of mischief from the inside to the outside and back again. A strong moral prescription is proposed, with the use of an "ought" in relation to the disorderly garden patch. The house, too, is part of the map that marks the path of chaos. Carey and his family are happy with each other, although their home is said to be in filthy disarray. Notwithstanding this closeness, their happiness comes to be seen as built on the muck around them. Pending and harsh discipline is made more poignant by the knowledge that Carey has already lost one child - his pet Katie - to typhoid fever.

At this point, the writer enters the narrative as a character to present a parable about the foolishness of ignoring signs warning of the presence of danger. Although the environment in which he finds himself is common land where responsibility for the land is blurred, and although he is limited because of the darkness that surrounds him, he does have the distinct advantage of having a friend to help and protect him. As he learns of a tragedy that was not averted in the same place, he comes to see that friend as a true benefactor. Carey has no such assistance; trapped in a metaphorical darkness of ignorance, he is "on the brink of a precipice, and he [knows] nothing about it ..." (FIG 15).

It is in the nature of parables that some disaster befalls Carey so that he learns the moral lesson required of him. After playing in the mucky back yard, and to the inexorable toll of the clock at midnight, young Dick dies an innocent victim; his mother left disconsolate. This passage is the only one in the story where her presence is active and, even here, she remains nameless. Bessy and John soon follow their brother to the cemetery, perishing with malignant scarlet fever within a week. Despite his parents removing him to the seaside, Joe dies soon after. Four children lost in a short time, and five in all gone forever.

Beyond the cold comfort of a lesson well learned, there is little redemption in this story. Where some other plot may have let young Joe live, enfeebled but still a blessing to his parents, this one exacts a heavy toll. Indeed the question "What is the use of a smell?" rings out like a bell, repeated throughout the story. Odour warns people not to transgress the laws of hygiene and safe living, allowing untamed nature to create havoc in domesticated sites.

The moral of the story is a complex of lessons: cleanliness is vital for health, well-being and even familial happiness; caution and education are crucial to avoid unnecessary loss of life and the imposition of misery; unruly nature blows in on foul winds and is sown and reaped at our expense. Respectable, poor and hard-working, Carey did not work hard enough and he was not wise enough

to keep his home and family safe. Nevertheless, he remains a victim of ignorance, deserving of pity rather than of condemnation.

Carey's story challenges two particular boundaries of gender. First, the loss of children is a favourite theme in the women's popular press; the emotional state of fathers is explored infrequently. Nevertheless, except for a brief reference to the bedside scene at Dick's death, this story is about Carey, not his wife. Second, the domestic arena is stereotypically portrayed as a feminine realm and indeed the story suggests that Carey should have known that it was his duty to clean up the yard; by implication the inside of the house is the responsibility of Carey's wife. Even so, the story links a man to his home in sentimental ways. In the last paragraphs, the writer describes the duties of "a wise man ...", suggesting how adherence to these duties and knowledge about the certain disaster that accompanies a bad smell might have saved Carey from the tragedy that beset him and his family. In this conclusion, a final boundary is drawn constituting the ethical man as provider, protector and mentor. Surely this role is as oppressive in its own way as other orthodox gender roles, even though patriarchy affords the masculine so many privileges not generally available to the feminine.

THE BUILDING AND ENGINEERING JOURNAL

The *Building and Engineering Journal* was founded in Melbourne in 1880, ran for twenty-four volumes until 1905, and thus was one of the longer-running periodicals of the time. Lurline Stuart (1979) does not list the publication in her annotated bibliography and Alfred Pong (1985) merely notes the dates above. Fortunately, since I am concerned here with textual issues rather more than with personalities, this information suffices. A number of the members of the Australian Health Society contributed to the *Journal* (also known as the *Building, Engineering and Mining Journal).* For example, Walter Butler's address about healthy homes, noted in chapter one, had been given to the Australian Health Society and the document from the speech was reprinted in the *Journal.*

I have already explored how women began to occupy a public role in the popular press. Men have always had access to the production and consumption of the written word, although I recognise that class and other circumstances do mediate this generalisation. Yet, through their writing men have advocated greater participation by women in the drive toward health reform in Australia. These various messages, and the ways they were sometimes constrained, are explored below.

In the edition of 21 July 1888 (p.31) is an article entitled the 'Ladies Sanitation Association', about an organisation of philanthropic women whose main concern was to lobby for sanitary reform in Melbourne. Initial comments in the article argue that women and women's concerns should be incorporated in the journal and, more generally, in the considerations of builders and engineers. The article goes on to note the vital importance of health, safety and "sanitary science ..." to the whole community, a project in which women are considered central:

> we know of no method in this direction more likely to succeed than that of the employment of the ladies as apostles of health, and teachers generally of that cleanliness in all things, which, we are told, is second only to Godliness.

In this passage, the confluence of femininity and morality is achieved in a specific fashion; the feminine becomes a metonymic device standing for health. Meanings of the feminine are linked to a series of other problematic assumptions, such as the spiritually superior nature of the feminine and the natural talent of women as teachers of cleanliness and health. The text alludes to the possibility that, by undertaking such tasks, women will strengthen their moral position next to godliness by working in the ranks of the health reform campaign.

Clearly, these messages have also been produced and circulated by women, as I suggested in chapters four and five. They have also been produced by men in ways that ignore the operation of gender entirely. For example, one three-volume public health treatise edited by Stevenson and Murray (1892), written entirely by men associated with such bodies as the Royal Academy, is devoid of any reference to women, exploring the highly scientific components of health as it relates to such things as air, soil, water, town planning and architecture.

This article on the Ladies Sanitation Association also suggests a need to train the "soldiers of such a crusade ...", using a military metaphor linked to the idea of disease and raw nature as foreign enemies on native soil to be vanquished at all costs. Military campaigns also have about them notions of exactitude, precision, ruthlessness, nationalism and loyal service. Successful campaigns bring glory and honour to those women and men who do 'join up' in the campaign against disease.

This passage really does gesture towards a distinct connection between health reform and the nascent drive towards national identity and spirit, discussed early in chapter four. By implication, there is some acceptance of the needs to bring women out of their natural habitat in the home and to extend the realm of culture and the public sector into that realm. There is, if you will, an exchange of terrains taking place in this passage, and it is one that transgresses the apparently rigid boundaries between binary oppositions, along with practices of normalisation and spatial separatism that attend them.

Following this discussion, the report summarises a lecture by the Honourable Dr Renwick, MLC, to the Ladies Sanitation Association, on topics such as preventive medicine, the control of human surroundings and the benefits of architectural engineering to the attainment of healthy living. Here, the reporter argues that doctors know little about the last topic, urging the Ladies Sanitation Association to invite members of the building and engineering professions to speak to women's groups on this matter.

As noted in earlier chapters, this report constitutes the role of the masculine expert in the public sphere of professionalism, although strict boundaries are drawn between different groups of experts. There is an implicit acceptance of the need for women to be more fully informed about issues typically not seen to be part of the province of feminine interests. Nevertheless, there is no suggestion that the exchange of information could be multi-directional; the experiences that women have of living in and working around domestic structures, of dealing with noxious chemicals and unpleasant tasks such as cleaning the water closet, or of finding new and better ways to deal with health problems are marginal to the writer's concerns. Indeed, in advertisements for cleaning products, women who cleaned were sometimes parodied as somehow being as gross as the jobs they undertook (FIG 16).

'Houses We Live In', by Mr G.V. Blackburne, was read before the Architectural and Engineering Association on 22 February, 1892, and reprinted in the *Journal* (27 February 1892, 85). Blackburne starts by focusing on the connection among housing, health and nature:

> Mr President and Gentlemen,- In taking up the old story of the "Houses we live in", I am quite aware that it is a subject that has been largely and well written upon, and that perhaps all I have to say may only be the echo of what has been said before, but the reason I have done so is that I feel that there are many points that cannot be too constantly hammered into the profession, and through them I trust to the public, in regard to the erection of houses, and to sanitary matters in connection therewith in particular. It is to be wondered at that the fiend typhoid fever stalks through our fair land, sparing neither friend nor foe, old or young, and seeming to revel in striking those who look the most healthy and in the most healthy spots, when we allow every hollow in the suburbs to become an open cesspit, every river that should flow with health and life through our midst into an open drain, every creek instead of being a charm and a benefit is a thing to be avoided as a fever bed, when the filth and refuse of the houses flows along the streets under our noses in villainously constructed channels, filling its everlasting crevices and saturating its so-called grouting with putrefying abominations. When it has actually been proposed by a body of powerful and presumably sane men that the sewerage of a city like Melbourne (or any other city) should be cast into the sea to return to our shore and along our coast, I say can it be wondered at that we suffer? Is it not a disgrace to our 19th century civilisation, with its wonders of science, chemistry and machinery ...

The text implies that the installation of ocean outfalls for sewage is the idea of madmen who register little or no concern for the amenity of the coast or the health of the people. Although the text demonstrates some understanding of the qualities to be 'offered' by nature, this position remains instrumental rather than focusing on intrinsic value of rivers, creeks or other parts of nature. It is also extremely prescient.

Blackburne notes how important it is to consult women over the matter of the design of the home, arguing that women best know and endure the defects of housing, a point omitted from the earlier report on the Ladies Sanitation Association. He suggests that refusal to comply with women's requests in the construction of the home could result in the loss of reputation "in that quarter for ever ...". This comment alludes to the recognition that women are often viewed as powerful adversaries in the home when their wishes are overlooked. More than that, and however clumsily, Blackburne is attempting to acknowledge that women do have particular levels of expertise that need to be recognised more fully by male professionals in the public arena and by spouses in the private realm.

The rest of the article examines issues such as those raised ten years later by Walter Butler (1902) dealing with site, construction materials, interior layout, ventilation, sanitation and external appearance. One assertion gives voice to a subaltern who is usually vilified, namely the domestic servant:

> No doubt we have a great deal to complain of, in relation to *domestics*, but I am quite sure that their troubles are not as a rule half thought of by the builders of residences. The conveniences of working in their department should be studied in a business light, just as a man would study the conveniences for working his business or machinery, and I think were this the rule and not the exception, the relations between all parties would be on a better footing ... (1892, 86; emphasis added).

This passage notes a common concern about the health of the middle class family and home (there are no examples of concern for sound working class house construction). It also records an ongoing commitment to middle class ideals of domesticity and health. The only time working class

women are considered is, as noted above, in relation to the effects that better working conditions would have on their relations with the employer.

The concerns raised in these articles suggest that the drive for health reform in Australia during the late nineteenth century was one that galvanised diverse sections of the community. Clearly, the campaigns that men and women mounted in their various circles influenced and were influenced by political and legislative reform, to which discussion now turns.

LAYING DOWN THE LAW: TWO COLONIAL PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

The South Australian Public Health Act of 1873

On 18 December 1873, the Parliament of South Australia passed "An act to make provision for the Preservation and Improvement of the Public Health ...". This piece of legislation was the first to be enacted exclusively on the matter of public health in Australia. Not until 1884 did the Queensland Parliament follow suit; it took Victoria until 1890 and New South Wales until 1902 to enact similar legislation. Meanwhile, in South Australia, the original Act was revoked and replaced by the 1898 Act of the same name. Much has been written and widely circulated about the public health movement in Victoria and New South Wales. To that end I will focus my analysis of the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature on the South Australian debates in order to glean from these texts some idea about the kinds of health and social issues that were of specific interest to masculine political figures at the time.

During the first reading of the Public Health Bill of 1873, the Chief Executive of the House of Assembly of the Parliament of South Australia (the Honourable A. Blyth) moved "That it is desirable to introduce 'A Bill for an Act to make provision for the Preservation and Improvement of Public Health' ..." (SAPD[3], 28 August 1873, 251). In outlining the principles of the Bill, Blyth noted the existence of community concern about the effects that such legislation would have on trade and commerce, with many senior executives and employees of noxious industries voicing concern over possible restrictions on their actions.

Blyth also anticipated a devolution of responsibility for the administration of the act to Central and Local Boards of Health, a move paralleling that used in the British context. He summarised the gist of other regulations under the legislation, such as the prevention of the spread of disease to the mitigation of the effects of noxious industries; breweries, distilleries, slaughter and meat-preserving houses particularly are noted. The Chief Executive also indicated that "A provision would also be found dealing with the general question of filthy houses, compelling the owners to whitewash them, and attend to sewers and drains, and that the houses should have earth closets ..." (p.252). He went on to suggest that overcrowding had been a significant contributing factor in high levels of morbidity and mortality among the South Australian population. In responding to this opening statement, Messrs Townsend and Boucaut applauded the introduction of the bill, asking whether compensation would be awarded to industries suffering financial inconvenience as a result of the Bill's effect. Little concern was voiced for the well-being of householders who would be troubled by implementing the requirements of the Bill.

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[3] Referred to in the Bibliography as South Australian Parliamentary Debates.

On 11 September, the House of Assembly met again for the second reading of the Bill. Blyth noted that the legislation was indebted to the English Acts. He argued that, of all statutes, this one "must be dealt with entirely apart from politics (Hear, hear). If one wanted a motto one could be given from a book which has lately been much quoted in the House, "Let him that is filthy be not filthy still" (Hear, hear) ..." (SAPD, 11 September 1873, 403). Indeed, this symbolic removal of the legislation from the 'dirty' realm of (party) politics is indicative of the reformist enthusiasm that attended its passage. The health of the citizens of the colony was considered an issue above politics, impinging on all of society, and its acceptance effected a range of important social issues and ambitions. Political decisions characterise the rest of the passage of the Bill.

During the second reading, Mr West-Erskine alluded to the existence of venereal disease among the population, suggesting that innocent women and children are its most tragic victims. He suggested that one of the duties of the State is to deal with issues such as these, although he presented no further ideas about how to address the problem, moving on to discuss the possible introduction of drainage systems. Hansard notes that "Since the discovery that the germs of cholera, typhoid and other zymotic diseases might be conveyed in water, he thought the question of drainage by flushing might be considered ..." (p.404).

The second reading debate continued on 9 October 1873. Among the various commentators was Mr Rees. He raised several issues, including one about where drains would empty their effluent; he assumed the River Torrens but made no further explicit comment about the desirability of that action. Rees argued that a more comprehensive approach to the issue of drainage was needed and that, in his opinion, deep drainage works would be the most efficacious in the circumstances. He spent considerable time outlining the advantages of the water closet, suggesting that most householders would prefer it to the earth closet because of its flushing action, clean style and self-containment, in contrast to earth closets requiring the services of night-soil men with horse and cart. Arguing that use of the various other styles of privy should be done away with, Rees strongly recommended that the exclusive employment of the water closet be sanctioned; any risks attendant on their use could be eliminated if householders [women] were encouraged to be careful and make sure the appliance was clean.

The second reading debate continued in mid October. Mr Bundey argued the following:

> The city may be correctly described as 'a city of stenches', and these are of the most disgusting kind. It is impossible to walk through any of the streets (especially after sunset) without being sickened by the smells from closets, stagnant water, and decomposing matters in the watertables. Within the city, offensive trades are carried on, to the great annoyance and injury of those residing near. The suburbs, which ought to be healthful places of resort, are in the hands of fellmongers, tanners, bone-boilers, manure-manufacturers, and proprietors of boiling-down establishments, who appear to be privileged to create any nuisance they please, without the slightest regard to the health or comfort of the citizens (SAPD, 14 October 1873, 752).

This focus on the city as a dangerous place perpetuates an anti-urban sentiment that characterises public health debates. Even the suburbs, intended as safe havens from the noxious activities of production, are viewed as endangered. The debate continued along these lines on 11 November and on 2 December, and then was put to the vote on 4 December; with 17 members assenting and 6 dissenting. The Bill gained Royal Assent on 18 December 1873.

What does the Act itself contain? As Smith and Pose (1988, 337-340) note, legislation contains several parts, each signifying different functions. In addition to short titles, there are also long titles, the purpose of which is to suggest the contents of legislation. All Acts carry dates after the long title indicating when Royal Assent is granted. There are also preambles that, in former times, set out in some detail the reasons for the legislation and the diverse objectives such statutory mechanisms were to address. Smith and Pose (1988) write that the current practice of limiting or avoiding preambles has been lamented by the judiciary, whose members have used these statements to guide their interpretation of the law.

In the South Australian Public Health Act of 1873, the preamble is truncated, noting only that the purpose of the legislation is "to provide for the preservation and improvement of the public health ...". The Act is composed of seventy-nine sections. Section 2 sets down how particular terms used in the statute are to be interpreted. For example, the word "town" is to be understood as a town or city or other place that is incorporated under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1861. "Person" is meant to include bodies corporate as well as individuals. "Owner" refers not simply to the property holder but also to the occupant of the dwelling. "Land" is broadly defined to encompass the 'built' and 'natural' environments, water bodies and easements.

The Act then sets out the appointment and cumulative powers of the Central and Local Boards of Health with Chairman and officers of the Board; the formation, dispersal and enforcement of regulations; documents; expenditure; rate collection; nuisance abatement; penalties for breaches of the Act; the method by which to report and respond to the outbreak of contagious disease; and quarantine. At ss.44-46, the Act begins to provide considerable detail on legitimate and illegitimate actions:

> 44. ... The said Board may, by such regulations, provide for the effectual cleansing of streets and public ways and places by those entrusted by law with the care and management thereof, or by the owners of houses and tenements adjoining thereto; for the cleansing, purifying, ventilating, and disinfecting of houses, dwellings, churches, schools, places of assembly or entertainment, and all other buildings by the owners or persons having the care and ordering thereof; for diminishing, lessening, and regulating the number of the inmates and occupants of lodging-houses or other public buildings; for causing public and private privies, waterclosets, and earthclosets to be established and properly constructed and maintained in any town or other place, and in any house or other building; for the removal of nuisances; for the speedy interment of the dead; and generally for preventing the spread, and mitigating the effect of such epidemic, endemic or contagious diseases in such manner as it may seem expedient. The said Board may, by any such regulations, authorize, require, and direct any Local Board of Health or officers specially appointed for that purpose to superintend and see to the execution of any such regulations, and to provide for the dispensing of medicines, and for affording to persons afflicted by or threatened with such epidemic, endemic or contagious diseases such medical aid as may be required, and to do and provide all such acts, matters, and things as may be necessary for executing or superintending and aiding in the execution of such regulations; and such regulations shall extend to all parts, towns, or places including in any Order to be issued by the Governor as above said, unless such regulations shall be expressly confined in some of such parts, towns, or places, and shall continue in force until such Order be rescinded in the parts, towns, or places to which such regulations shall extend.

> 45. If any candle-house, melting-house, melting-place, or soap-house, or any fellmongery, slaughter-house, or any building or place for boiling meat, offal, or blood, or for boiling, burning, or crushing bones, or any manufactory, building, or place used for any trade, business, process, or manufacture whatsoever causing effluvia, which established before or after the application of this Act to the town or other place in which the same is situated be at any time thereafter certified to the Central Board of Health, or any Local Board of Health by any medical officer, or any two legally qualified medical practitioners, or by any six householders, or by a qualified analytical chemist appointed by the Central Board to be a nuisance, or offensive to the inhabitants of the neighborhood, or others living adjacent thereto, or so near as to be affected by the influence thereof, or injurious to their health, the Central Board of Health, or the Local Board of Health, shall cause to be summoned before any two Justices the person by or in whose behalf the work so complained of is carried on.

> Those Justices shall inquire into such complaint, and if it shall appear to them that the trade or business carried on by the person complained against is a nuisance or causes any effluvia or fumes offensive to the inhabitants of the neighborhood, or others living adjacent thereto, or so near as to be affected by the influence thereof, or injurious to their health, and that such person has not used the best practicable means for abating such nuisance or counteracting or destroying such effluvia or fumes, the person so offending (being the owner of the premises, or being a foreman or other person employed by such owner) may be convicted by the Justices of such an offence, and shall, upon a summary conviction for such offence, forfeit and pay a sum of no more than Five Pounds, or less than Forty Shillings, and upon a second conviction for such offence, the sum of Ten Pounds, and for each subsequent conviction, a sum double the amount of the penalty imposed for the last preceding conviction; but the highest amount of such penalty and not in any case exceed the sum of Two Hundred Pounds Provided always, that the Justices may suspend their fine determination in any such case upon condition that the person so complained against shall undertake to adopt within reasonable time, to be fixed by such Justices, such measures as the said Justices shall judge to be practicable, and shall order to be carried into effect for abating such nuisance or mitigating or preventing the offensive or injurious effects of such effluvia or fumes ...
>
> 46. Upon the certificate of the officer of health, or of any two equally qualified medical practitioners, to any Local Board of Health that any house or part thereof, or any outbuilding connected or used therewith, and situated in the town or other place in which such Board acts, is in such a filthy and unwholesome condition that the health of any person is affected or endangered thereby, or that the whitewashing, cleansing, or purifying of any house, outbuildings, or part thereof would tend to prevent or check the spread of infectious or contagious disease, such Local Board shall give notice in writing to the owner of such house, outbuilding, or part thereof, to whitewash, cleanse or purify the same, as the case may require. If the person to whom notice is so given fails to comply therewith within such time as shall be specified, in the said notice, the Local Board may cause proceedings to be instituted against such person for an offence against this Act, and may cause such house, outbuilding, or part thereof, to be whitewashed, cleansed, or purified; and the expenses incurred by such Local Board in so doing, shall be repaid by the owner, and recovered as hereinafter mentioned.

The Act regulates for the management of sewers, drains and houses; the provision of privies for all houses, including earthclosets, waterclosets and privies with proper shutting doors, coverings, drains, and cesspools; the optional provision of public privies by the Local Boards of Health; the mitigation of overcrowding in dwelling houses; the mitigation of health hazards in public and private buildings; the paving of slaughter-houses and abattoirs; the proper development of lands and yards; street-cleaning and rubbish removal; the seizure of adulterated and unwholesome foods; work to be undertaken by occupiers as well as by owners; penalties that may be incurred for non-compliance; and appeals against judgments, among other things. This kind of thoroughgoing disciplinary tool will be addressed again shortly.

The South Australian Public Health Act of 1898

In debating the Public Health Bill of 1898, the members of the South Australian Legislative Council and House of Assembly spent almost six months refining the one hundred and seventy-three sections that comprise the final Act. The Honourable V.J. O'Loghlin, Chief Secretary of the Legislative Council, sought permission to introduce the Bill for the first time on 5 July 1898, and the first reading occurred on 27 July. The second reading debates began on 2 August and continued through Committee stage to the third reading, until the Bill was referred to the House of Assembly in November. Second reading debates, Committee work and the third reading proceeded in the House until 14 December when, having been passed in the House, the Bill was referred back to the Council. On 20 December the Bill was passed, and gained Royal Assent on 4 January 1899.

On 2 August, while more fully introducing the Bill to the Legislative Councillors during the Second Reading, the Chief Secretary noted that the legislation was an old friend in new form,

although greatly improved in scope and clarity. Suggesting that by incorporating the best principles of health legislation in the colonies and in Britain, the Chief Secretary argued that the Bill "placed the health laws of South Australia in advance of anything they had yet in the British Dominion ..." (SAPD, 2 August 1898, 69). The Bill was proposed to improve and protect the public health. Attention was paid to the question of how to deal with the management of tuberculosis, the mitigation of nuisances from noxious trades, the regulation of the meat, milk and food industries, and water and sanitation issues, especially in overcrowded areas. A final issue that took up considerable time was the debate about jurisdictional and administrative matters, particularly the different powers of the Central Board of Health and Local Boards of Health and the proposal to amalgamate local boards as county boards and suburban boards as a metropolitan board.

In responding to the Chief Secretary's preamble, the Honourable Dr Campbell commended the Colony on the progress made in public health since 1873[4]. His specific concern was with the proper and effective management of contagious diseases, especially tuberculosis; it was a topic that challenged the parliamentarians until the Bill was passed. Campbell pointed out that the tuberculosis bacillus had been isolated in 1884 by Professor Koch of Berlin, and that it was recognised as a highly contagious disease. He recommended that this malady should be dealt with exclusively by the Central Board of Health rather than by Local Boards; specifically, notification of the existence of cases of tuberculosis should be made to the Central Board and victims should be isolated from the general community. Furthermore, he argued that public health concerned the whole community and that contagious disease, as something that could decimate that community, should be centrally managed and mitigated.

The next day, Campbell continued to outline his plan about how best to deal with tuberculosis, and Hansard reported that "He appealed to the members that the people had confined to their care the public health just as much as they had confined public education ..." (SAPD, 3 August 1898, 73). Yet each notification of a case of tuberculosis allegedly would cost half a crown, a figure baulked at by some of Campbell's colleagues, provoking them to reconsider the scope of their duty of care to the population.

There are three significant issues that stem from these initial comments. First, some members of the Government appeared reluctant to 'overspend' public monies in order to mitigate the disease. Further, concern was expressed about the practical and political implications of centralising the procedures required after notification. Finally, certain members argued that tuberculosis is a disease that could take many years to kill the patient and that isolation would be a cruel and unnecessary step. These issues also continued to trouble the Councillors over the months during which the Bill was discussed.

Hansard also provides some interesting evidence about how tuberculosis was constituted in these debates as a disease entity on and in the bodies of people, the home and nature. For instance, on 3 August, Campbell read a passage from a report by the New York Board of Health in which the home - in this case an apartment - is metaphorically conceived of as a sick body:

> The house was built in about 1865, and was generally in good sanitary condition. The particular dwelling in question was badly ventilated and lighted. It was occupied from 1865 to 1873 by three

[4] A medical doctor, Campbell was one of the main instigators of the Bill. He died during the session of Parliament at which the legislation was debated.

> families in succession, who were all healthy. In 1874 a family named Nestle entered in which the mother was already consumptive, and had lost a son from the same disease. She died there from phthisis, and shortly afterwards the family left, having lived there for one year only. The next occupants were a family (Gotz) of seven persons, all in good health, though there was a history of that disease in the mother's family. After one year's residence in this dwelling they left, and at a later time it was found that the father, mother, and one son had died of phthisis, and a fine boy of chronic peritonitis. The third family occupying the dwelling were healthy on arrival, and had no hereditary taint. A child born in the house died of meningitis, another child died of 'marasmus', another boy acquired hip joint disease. Later on the father died of phthisis, another child of meningitis, the mother became phthisical, and bacilli were found in the sputum, two children died of meningitis under one year old (SAPD, 3 August 1898, 72).

Interestingly, at no time in the New York report is it suggested that structural and infrastructural impediments to healthy living may have contributed to the demise of so many people. A likely answer is that the apartment was located in an area with poor and limited water supplies, poverty, malnutrition, polluted surroundings and other factors. Thus, there would be little wonder that the morbidity and mortality rates in this case were so high, especially since a disease as contagious as tuberculosis could be treated with limited success using fresh air, good food and water and rest. The report implies that bodies are tainted, that dwellings are sick and that these two pathological bodies alone account for the frequency and variety of disease experienced. Campbell suggested that this story strengthened his argument that vigilance in the control of tuberculosis must be absolute in South Australia.

On 9 August, the debate continued. In addressing the matter of smells, the Honourable J.L. Stirling suggested that not all odours were dangerous, although many were distinctly unpleasant. Hansard cites an example of his visiting:

> an artificial manure factory in the North of Ireland, and certainly in one corner the smell was enough to knock him down. He was, however, assured by the Manager that the men who worked in that department were peculiarly healthy, and their physique bore out that statement. [and goes on to say that] There is a new era dawning with regard to the inspection of slaughtering cattle. He would read a few facts and statistics with regard to tuberculosis which had astonished him, and would no doubt astonish the Council. Those who bred cattle had been under the impression to look for tuberculosis only in an ailing beast, but that was erroneous. Tuberculosis was as generally found among healthy looking cattle as among others (SAPD, 9 August 1898, 82).

What is ironic in this statement is the way in which bodies are so differently used as markers of health and illness. The factory workers looked well and therefore surely must have been; their natural physique made this so. Yet it is accepted that disease should be found most often among those cattle whose appearance was robust. The constitution of health and disease in this text appears to be influenced by other considerations, not least among them political and economic ones.

The discussion about tuberculosis continued in committee the following week in a lengthy exchange among Campbell, Chief Secretary O'Loghlin, Stirling, and the Honourable members Robinson, McGregor and Ward. Campbell strongly recommended that it should be a requirement of the Bill that all contagious diseases be notifiable, in part to promote higher levels of awareness in the community about disease and its mitigation. The Chief Secretary noted that Campbell's position was at odds with that held by the Central Board of Health for several reasons, including the Board's opinion about the alleged cruelty of isolating tubercular patients and the senselessness of alarming the population. Other members argued about which clause was best suited to deal with the management of tuberculosis - a general or a specific clause on the particular disease. Hansard also

records the reluctance of some members to acknowledge the very existence of the disease as it was constituted in the terms of the debate:

> The Hon. E. WARD said the term "tuberculosis" was not contained in the dictionary which he had secured from the Library, though it was popularly understood to mean consumption. The Council ought to thoroughly understand the meaning of "tuberculosis" before including it in the Bill. Hĕ was convinced that whilst what was ordinarily known as consumption was hereditary, it was not communicable by one human being to another, and the Council would be making itself a laughing-stock if it included consumptives in this clause. His gorge rose with the indignation he felt at Dr. Campbell's inhuman proposal (SAPD, 16 August 1898, 100).

Clearly, in this statement there is pronounced resistance to the introduction of novel forms of legislation and new conceptions of diseases and their management. Campbell defended his suggestions about notification and isolation as essential for the continued increase in the health outcomes of the colony. Interestingly, he argued that most germs are, in fact, friendly to people; that nature is often composed of germs that are "the best friends of humanity ...". Nevertheless, in his estimation, the twenty-seven or so germs that had been identified as "positively dangerous ..." (SAPD, 16 August 1898, 100) should be dealt with summarily. For him, tuberculosis was first among these enemies.

Later that day, the issue of notification of measles arose. The Honourable J. Warren argued that the Council should legislate to make such notification compulsory, justifying his reasons on the grounds that:

> In the outlying part of the colony, where people had not the proper care, many died from that disease. Some years ago an epidemic passed over the colony, and many people, especially aboriginals, died from the complaint. There was some measles which was serious. Even if it was not fatal it might leave something behind. They should act upon their experience (SAPD, 16 August 1898, 101).

This reference to the indigenous population is one of two made during the passage of the Bill to assent. Indeed, it generated no response whatsoever from the other Councillors, suggesting that the well-being of this subaltern group remained completely marginal to the prevailing concerns of the day. Nevertheless, the Council agreed to amend the Bill to include measles as a notifiable disease, a change that was later to be eroded in the House of Assembly. The only other reference to Aboriginal people occurred in the House on 2 December. In lamenting the amount of meddling that seemed to characterise the provisions of the Bill, Mr Caldwell told how he had drunk water with "50 per cent. of animalculae ..." in the Macdonnell Ranges and survived. Invoking all manner of racist determinism and rural-arcady mythologies, he went on:

> David Lindsay, on a trip from Queensland, used some water from a native well to make damper. The first two mouthfuls had made him feel ill. Two natives had been burned beside that well. Their juice had found its way into the water. According to the doctors there would have been germs enough there to have killed a city. Yet Mr. Lindsay looked as healthy as one could desire. When we wanted physique did we take the scientific men of the cities? No, we went to the farms for clear heads and strong bodies (SAPD, 16 August 1898, 1013).

The matter of tuberculosis was raised again in committee on 22 September 1898. The predominant themes of how to define, identify and manage it remained. The Chief Secretary maintained his stand in support of the Central Board of Health whose President, Dr Whittell, disagreed with Campbell's insistence that tuberculosis should be a notifiable disease. O'Loghlin

reiterated several reasons for this position, among them the chronic nature of the disease and the cruelty of isolating patients from the general community for what might be long periods of time. In return, Campbell argued that it is this very characteristic of chronic illness that made isolation of patients so important, because they could recover from the disease if properly treated during the early stages but, if left without medical aid, would advance into a terminal stage and might possibly infect many people.

Notably, this general debate continued in the House of Assembly from 24 November 1898, and for much the same reasons. However, on 2 December, Mr Carpenter began to discuss the connection between the incidence of tuberculosis in people and the prevalence of disease in livestock. Quoting Thomas Borthwick, a prominent figure in health and demography in South Australia, Carpenter suggested that tainted meat, milk and butter are particularly effective in the transmission of the disease to humans.

In committee, other members also used various forms of documentation to bolster their positions for or against increases in the stringency of the law about the pasturing, care, transport, herding, inspecting, killing, storage, handling and preparation of animals and animal by-products. Such texts ranged from the British Royal Commission on tuberculosis in animals, to Danish and American studies reporting field and laboratory experiments using animal subjects.

Other matters of concern to the House included whether or not farmers and other owners of livestock should be compensated for the loss of diseased stock that would be destroyed and, if so, for how much; whether it was a central or local responsibility to undertake inspections, notifications and culls; and, still, whether particular reports about the dangers of tuberculosis were facts or fictions.

The welfare of 'the people' continued as a theme in the House debates about the Bill. Certain members were concerned that the legislation should be strict in order to protect the population; indeed they saw this magnitude of severity as a duty of care, especially where tuberculosis was concerned. They suggested that this reason justified the concentration of power in a central authority. Others were worried about the effects the legislation might have on the freedom of sub-groups in the community. Mr Archibald implied that notifications for measles was unnecessary and insulting to women:

> It was difficult for a man to keep a straight face while contemplating such a thing. Nine women out of ten would never think of even calling in a doctor in cases of measles, and it was surprising how well our grandmothers got on without the scientific treatment, and trained nursing, which were deemed so essential today (SAPD, 2 December 1898, 1010).

Even so, Archibald also defended nursing staff, suggesting that the work they did and the hours they were required to keep was tantamount to sweating.

On another matter of women's well-being, during committee proceedings on 8 December, Mr Price supported Mr Copley's call for compensation to individuals for the loss of animals. Price argued that:

> Suppose a poor woman in West Adelaide (Mr. Coneybeer - "Oh, the poor widow again!") - had only two cows, and they were destroyed in the interests of the State, she should be compensated ... [and thereafter] Mr HUTCHINSON said that if Mr. Price's "poor widow" had supplied him with diseased milk and his children died in consequence would he expect her to pay him compensation? The fact was that there were risks in all trades and this was one of them (SAPD, 8 December 1898, 1046).

Hutchinson argued for equality of treatment whereas Price advocated that the legislation take circumstance and context into account.

Apart from the issue of disease and its mitigation in human and animal populations, the House also addressed the issue of overcrowding in its deliberations of 8 December. Various members cited different examples of how the legislation should control the incidence of overcrowding in a number of places, arguing that homes were not the only buildings in which overcrowding occurred. Others recognised that by stipulating particular dimensions and numbers of occupants the legislation might severely disadvantage people who "through no fault of their own could not live in a room which had 500 cubic ft. ..." (SAPD, 8 December 1898, 1051). Some even suggested that the Bill was all bluff; intended to frighten people, but lacking the means by which to enforce the various provisions.

Discussion also revolved around who should be responsible for health and hygiene (FIG 17), about how best to inculcate new habits among the public, and about the cost of providing better accommodation for public servants. The Bill was read for a third time on 14 December and was carried 24 to 14 before being referred back to the Council for consideration on 20 and 21 December. What, then, does the final legislation contain?

The Health Act, 1898, repeals the Act of 1873 and two amending Acts of 1876 and 1884. The statute constitutes the Central Board of Health, Local Boards of Health and County Boards; outlines the responsibilities and duties of officers; legislates with regard to naming and removing insanitary conditions and to the conduct and submission of reports and inquiries; makes regulations about sanitation of air, food and premises; legislates with regard to infectious diseases; and makes provision for the creation of other regulations for dealing with miscellany.

Furthermore, the Act stipulates the meaning of certain terms. For instance, City and Suburban Boards are nominated to be those of the Municipal Corporations of Adelaide, Brighton, Glenelg, Hindmarsh, Kensington and Norwood, Semaphore, St Peters, Thebarton, Port Adelaide and Unley, and the District Councils of Burnside, Campbelltown, Marion, Mitcham, Payneham, Prospect, Rosewater, Walkerville, West Torrens, Woodville, and of Yatala South (s.5).

Those infectious diseases that are named are:

> leprosy, plague, yellow fever, small-pox, cholera, diphtheria, membranous croup, erysipelas, scarlet fever, scarlatina, and the fevers known by any of the following names or descriptions:- Typhus, typhoid, enteric, relapsing or puerperal (including all puerperal conditions depending on infection), and also any other disease which the Governor may, by Proclamation, declare to be an infectious disease (s.5).

Notably, the wishes of Campbell and others have gone unfulfilled in this Act; tuberculosis and measles remain diseases that are unlisted and that are not to be compulsorily notified.

In contrast to the 1873 legislation, the term "owner" no longer signifies occupier; rather, an owner is someone entitled to be in receipt of rent or profit from the property in question. There has been a shift in the demarcation of primary responsibility for the provision of healthful premises away from occupiers and owners to owners alone. Moreover, the delineation of space is broader in the 1898 Act than in the 1873 legislation. "Public places" are defined as any spaces to which the public has access under ordinary circumstances; "private places" are those places which are not public.

The Act allows that no other procedures under other acts will be affected, and it makes buildings that are Government or statutory property fall within the bounds of the legislation. The

Chief Secretary is designated the Minister of Health. The legislation also charges the Central Board of Health with the responsibility of administering the Act and with "securing the proper sanitary condition of the province ..." (s.12). Local Boards are required to undertake the same responsibilities for their districts, and to follow and carry out any directives that are received from the Central Board. Local Boards are also given the ability to declare rates to undertake sanitary measures permitted by the Act. The Governor is granted the authority to designate two or more contiguous Local Boards as County Boards with the same powers as Local Boards and with an additional power to "establish and carry on chemical and bacteriological laboratories ..." (s.35-II). Officers of the boards are granted considerable powers to enter into, inspect and work on any premises and to require that owners also undertake certain works.

Part V of the Act deals with insanitary conditions and their removal. Boards shall declare sites to be insanitary after certain steps have been taken:

> 47. If any inspector shall ascertain the existence of any insanitary condition, he shall forthwith report the circumstances to the Local Board.
>
> Such report shall set out as far as possible -
>
> (a) The nature of the insanitary condition:
> (b) The apparent cause thereof, and the suggested remedy:
> (c) The description and situation of the premises:
> (d) The name of the owner; and
> (e) The name of the occupier.

Occupiers are required to provide the name(s) of owners to the authorities and if the inspector assesses that the condition should be removed without delay, the owner or occupier can be served with a notice to undertake the work immediately. Where no owner or occupier can be located, the inspector is granted the authority to have others do such work. Penalties and summary proceedings are also provided for in the Act.

Part VII deals with Sanitation. In Division 1, certain provisions are made about air. Local Boards are given responsibility for the construction and maintenance of sewers and drains, with the understanding that effluvia cannot be directed into "fresh water running streams ..." (s.75). Section 76 prohibits particular actions such as directing effluvia from private to public drains without permission of the Local Board; damaging of any drains or sewers; leaving stagnant or waste water in cellars or around dwelling houses; allowing privies and cesspools to overflow; allowing the collection or deposition of "drainage, filth, water, night-soil, or matter ..." in any unauthorised place; leaving dead animals in any unprescribed place; allowing any place to become a nuisance; carrying noxious and offensive matter in the streets or other public thoroughfares; and removing night-soil from authorised sites.

Several sections deal with the management of human excrement, the provision of public conveniences, and the regulation of privies in private places. Other sections legislate for keeping livestock and for the proximity of pig-sties to dwellings. Provision is also made against noxious trades if, in the opinion of the Local Board, or two medical doctors or six householders, the trades are causing dangerous and insanitary conditions. Certain trades remain protected under the provisions of The Manufacturing Districts Act, 1881.

Division 2 is concerned with the public health and food. Regulations are made about keeping food and manure separate; about protecting water and water supplies from pollution; about the regulation of meat and meat supplies, slaughter-houses, the testing, treatment and/or destruction of diseased animals and the payment of compensation in full for carcasses found to be disease-free if destroyed by inspectors on suspicion of carrying disease; about preventing the sale of unwholesome and adulterated foods; and about the treatment of milk and the registration and licensing of dairies.

Division 3 regulates for the maintenance of sanitary conditions in premises. Section 116 notes:

> Any Local Board may, by notice in writing, declare that any building, or any specified part thereof, is unfit for human habitation.
> The notice may direct that such building, or part thereof, shall not, after a time to be specified in such notice, be inhabited or occupied by any person.
> The notice shall be affixed to some conspicuous part of the building.

Local Boards are granted the power to require owners to remedy the insanitary condition or to undertake this mitigation where owners cannot be found or are unable to do the work; penalties are provided for. The boards can also declare lands unfit for construction, insist on certain specifications in the building of new premises, and require that all houses are furnished with proper conveniences. The Division also regulates the conditions of factories, prohibiting overcrowding and unhealthy environments in these and in lodging houses.

Part VIII provides for the notification of infectious diseases. Several parties are made responsible or partly responsible for notifying authorities about the presence of infectious diseases in any building or any part of any building. These people include:

> I The head of the family:
> II On his default, the nearest relative of such inmate present in the building or being in attendance on such inmate:
> III On default by such relative, every person in charge or in attendance on such inmate; or
> IV On default of any such persons, the occupier or owner of the building:
> And in any case
> V Every medical practitioner attending on or called in to visit such inmate ... (s.127).

Tuberculosis is specifically and overtly dealt with in three sections:

> 128. Every medical practitioner attending on or consulted by any person suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis shall, so soon as the fact becomes known to him, report the same to the Local Board of the district in which the person resides: Provided such notification shall not be necessary if the case has been previously reported to the same Local Board ...
>
> 131. If the officer of health or any legally qualified medical practitioner shall certify in writing to the Local Board that the cleansing or disinfection of any building or part thereof, or any bedding, clothes, or other articles whatever, would tend to prevent the spread of tuberculosis or any infectious disease, the Local Board may order and supervise the use of disinfectants, and take such other sanitary precautions as it may deem necessary to cleanse or disinfect such building or part thereof, and articles, and for that purpose may remove such articles.
>
> Any expenses incurred by the Local Board may be recovered from the owner or occupier of such building or part thereof, or the Local Board may itself, if it see fit, defray such expenses or any part thereof.
>
> 132. If at any time any legally qualified medical practitioner shall certify to the Local Board that any person suffering from any infectious disease or from pulmonary tuberculosis is residing in a building or part of a building used for the storage of milk, or for the storage or manufacture of butter, cheese, or other article of human food, and that there is reason to believe that such milk, butter, cheese or other

> article of human food may be contaminated by such disease, the Local Board may, with the sanction of the Central Board, order the owner or person in charge of such building to close the same until the officer of health shall certify that such person has been removed from such building, and that all necessary precautions have been taken to prevent such contamination.
>
> Any person neglecting to comply with such order shall be guilty of an offence under this Act. Penalty - Twenty Pounds.

Other sections of the Division regulate for disinfection and compensation after notifications; for preventing children from attending school when infected (although tuberculosis is not mentioned here); for interring bodies; for quarantining premises, people and districts; and for licensing hospitals and maternity homes. The Act goes on to make provisions for the enactment of regulations by Proclamation and to deal with various miscellany.

There are several points of commonality and difference between the 1873 Act and its 1898 replacement. In both, the administration of public health is organised around the creation and empowerment of particular statutory bodies, whose constitution is based on the idea that artificial spatial boundaries, namely municipalities and district councils, determine the reach of the authority of these bodies. The Central Board is responsible to the entire Colony, the Local Boards to jurisdictions within that larger space.

Moreover, both Acts legislate to control particular human behaviours and actions by the use of incentive and punishment. Specific offices come to be identified as vested with legitimate power; others with particular disorders requiring the attention of these offices; in other words, bureaucratic mechanisms are constituted. Certain things are viewed as problematic in both statutes: the human body, the dwelling place, the urban environment, the rural environment, animals and other potential or actual foodstuffs along with elements of nature such as air, soil and water. These things come to be scrutinised because they are able to bear disease or, indeed, because they are viewed as disease entities, and thus as requiring constant and vigilant monitoring and management.

I suggest that two issues arise from this description of these pieces of legislation. First, law and legal processes invoke certain kinds of 'reality' in which various categories of meaning come to have new and often seemingly rigid boundaries. Second, despite this appearance of solidity and stability, the law may be understood as a product of mythologies and narratives about authority, normalisation and transgression, and as a result of the divisions between such categories as the masculine and feminine, the public and private, and culture and nature. Discussion now turns to examine these issues.

MAKING THE LEGAL WORLD

Along with enforcement agencies, law is composed of two branches, both of which are critical to the reification of certain ethics and moral codes. The legislature creates statutory law and delegated legislation in the form of regulations. The judiciary is said to 'discover' natural and common law and to interpret statutory law, as well as creating new law through the accumulation of precedents.

In examining these two Public Health Acts of the late nineteenth century, I am concerned to ask how meanings are constituted by privileged white men. The legislature makes law first by enacting legislation in Parliament, second by declaring regulations to be used by the bureaucracy and

third by amending both instruments from time to time. I think it is reasonable to assume that, in the nineteenth century as in other times, the law reflects the social context in which it is made; it is a product of those who draft, debate and pass it.

This assumption does not detract from the substantial input made behind the scenes by women and other lobbyists; it does recognise that such tacit involvement may not always be recorded, these contributions tending to fall into the cracks of history. Indeed, much of women's history, which is also domestic history, has disappeared in this fashion because of the predominance and privilege awarded to archival documents - to writing - in which women's involvement in social and political change is marginal or absent. Of course, non-human nature cannot make itself understood. Thus, its meaning, history and future are formed - some would argue exclusively - in the realm of culture, among people.

Laws use incentives and regulations to make people do or not do, act or not act, in ways that are determined to be moral or immoral. Incentives offer rewards for appropriate behaviours and actions, whereas regulations provide penalties for inappropriate behaviours and actions. "May" and "shall" become techniques of voluntary and obligatory discipline. Laws constitute rightness and wrongness, fairness and bias, morality and immorality. They also involve the surveillance of self and of others; indeed they contribute to the creation of the other, the subaltern, and they legitimise particular forms of control.

Certain ideas in poststructuralism may be useful in analysing the nexus among language, law and mythology. Pierre Bourdieu (1991, 42) argues that all linguistic exchanges bear traces of the social contexts that they create and are created by. He argues that:

> Legal discourse is a creative speech which brings into existence that which it utters. It is the limit aimed at by all performative utterances - blessings, curses, orders, wishes or insults. In other words, it is the divine word, the word of divine right, which, like the *intuitus originarius* which Kant ascribed to God, creates what it states ...

The limit is a notion that also fascinates Foucault (see O'Farrell 1989). Typically, the law is viewed as a unified body of knowledge upholding other equally hegemonic institutions. Foucault (1976) argues that the world is not so sharply divided between those wielding power and those succumbing to it. Discourses are internally diverse, gaining expression through a range of strategies. As one such discourse, the law circulates and operates through cooperation and coercion. Moreover, Foucault suggests that law and its effects are experienced at different sites in different ways; as silence and as shadow, and not just through declaration.

All manner of limits apply to how we live our lives, pursue the goal of health and relate to the environments in which we find ourselves. Yet, the drive for health reform in the late nineteenth century did not rely solely on the enactment of specific forms of legislation. There was considerable space in which to manoeuvre around such legalistic forms of biopolitical surveillance and discipline. Indeed, the 1898 Act was drafted because of alleged flaws in the 1873 Act, especially with regard to monitoring, inspecting and mitigating insanitary conditions. It had been argued that health officials were granted insufficient power to ameliorate such conditions.

While this assessment may be reasonable, it does not take account of the highly contingent ways in which legal instruments may be interpreted and enforced. Furthermore, it does not take into consideration the diverse styles of living and acting that exist in any given community. Finally, the

assessment fails to acknowledge that the law, in large measure, is a rhetorical exercise (Goodrich 1987). Such rhetoric is based on the constitution and maintenance of certain mythologies that uphold normalising oppositions such as the feminine and masculine, the public and private, and nature and culture.

The law is based on a thoroughgoing concern for the multiplication of details. For instance, in the South Australian Public Health Acts from the late nineteenth century, there are many details about bodies. To begin with, in both cases the legislation is designed to have effect on different assemblies of bodies; it is an anatomo-politics of the individual and a biopolitics of the population. Additionally, it is formulated in such a way that other entities also become metaphorically constituted as bodies. Dwellings, part dwellings, areas, regions and nature itself are viewed as bodies for the containment and transmission of health and disease. Particular bodies tend to succumb to particular disorders in specific places, and mythologies emerge to explain how such conditions are natural and essential: the working classes are dirty by nature; because of its essential character, the urban environment must always be degraded; women are the better sex to implement certain local reforms, men the better sex to oversee more global ones; slum areas are naturally disease-ridden; middle and upper class women are essentially delicate; nature is pathogenic.

Moreover, the legislation employs diverse metaphors and metonyms for certain functions and characteristics, many of them closely associated with the notion of the body. In a range of disparate contexts, reference is made to circulation, flow, leakage, seepage, stagnation, sludge, slime, ooze, odour, size, shape, number, frequency and duration. There is a concern to measure these things, to count them, collect and store them, assess them, and keep or destroy them. In effect, there is an urge to survey, discipline and normalise that which is meant to be the other.

In making this observation, I am not suggesting that harmful diseases and emissions should be permitted to decimate our species, although there are some intriguing debates in the literature on animal rights about how we accord value to different organisms (Singer 1975). However, I do want to stress that the law is value-laden. Some of these values contribute to the construction of masculinity and femininity, public and private spaces, culture and nature as essentially different and thus as 'requiring' often very divergent forms of control.

The law is an exercise in nominalism. For example, in the South Australian legislation, there are soap boilers and candle makers, tallow melters and blood boilers, chairmen and inspectors, patients and medical practitioners. I suggest that this act of naming ties individuals to categories, reducing them to functions. However, this gesture of naming also occurs in statutes that make the named responsible for this or that. Thus, the law maintains some idea about such individuals being what Foucault (1972a) calls founding subjects. These subjects are also constituted as possessing uniform, originary and stable traits. By embracing the more essentialist elements of the subject, the law neglects any notion of heterodoxy or changing subjectivity. Indeed, the legal system cannot comfortably accommodate these transgressions.

Paradoxically, nominating the processes of administration by naming the object who will undertake them tends to obliterate the subject in these Public Health Acts. For example, certain activities are named as prohibited, permitted or required in order to mitigate insanitary conditions. For instance, some sections prescribe the cleansing, ventilating, whitewashing or purifying of things or places, sometimes by owners or occupiers and sometimes by health officials. Just as often,

however, these processes are to be undertaken without naming the responsible party. It is reasonable to suggest that the process of cleaning homes, factories, shops, offices, restaurants and many other buildings in order to maintain them in a healthy condition was (and remains) largely the province of women. The absent referent, the feminine vessel, indeed has made cleanliness next to Godliness. Furthermore, the imposition of health regulations on 'householders' has been (and continues to be) the province of men; the masculine vessel that is directed to direct.

The Acts also record the details of punishment. Alleged offenders are people who have not complied with legislative provisions. Inspectors are people who monitor and catch alleged offenders. Boards are composed of people who hear the inspector. Judges are officials who listen to the testimony of the relevant parties and decide on the guilt or innocence of the charged individuals. If named as actual offenders, these individuals are made to forfeit certain things, usually either money or freedom; or they are compelled to do certain things, usually to mitigate the insanitary condition and to pay for the costs of the exercise that has found them wanting.

In short, the Acts uphold the idea that power is possessed by some and enacted on others. They imply that there is a need and an ability to train bodies and to normalise actions. They make us the subjects of what Foucault refers to as "[h]ierarchised, continuous, and functional surveillance ..." (1984a, 192). Again, my point is less to challenge the idea that some of these techniques are necessary in relation to health reform, and more to suggest that values brought to the legislation view bodies and experiences in a particular light. The law is intended to normalise and, as such, is poorly equipped to accommodate subaltern positions. My suggestion is that this inability perpetuates certain discourses and practices in which subalterns continue to be silent or absent, their diverse interests uncatered for and their potential contributions to the community ignored or hidden.

Furthermore, the statutes uphold a specific view of nature that is based on a curious combination of myth, mechanism and instrumental values. Nature is invoked as something that is out there, away from us, a pathogenic sink and source of disease. Paradoxically, it is also in here, inside us, in our essential characteristics and traits. To complicate matters further, it is also in our built environment, flowing and oozing and emanating around us. Moreover, it is something that exists for us, for our use and enjoyment; necessarily, therefore, we must manage it because it is unruly without our domesticating hand.

Again, I accept that many of the health reforms that have come to us since the late nineteenth century are useful. Nevertheless, it remains important to examine how we come to relate to nature in this as in any field in order to understand better how we have come to be in the world, a world we suggest is in crisis. Holistic medicine and allopathic medicine are indeed very different ways of looking at the world; the first assumes wellness and seeks to maintain it, the latter presumes illness and searches for cures for the various maladies that befall us. All too often, our allopathic methods of health care, reified in our legal systems parallel our approach to the management of nature, something we assume is also ill.

The law is a legitimating force that also privileges the act of writing. Until relatively recently, this skill has been the province of certain classes and especially of men. Writing is a form of appropriation characterised by the myth of permanency. We *take* knowledge from some *a priori* state or place and, engraving it on stone, clay and paper, we make it so. Writing is an act that seems to transcend the boundaries of space and time while nevertheless marking their inexorable passage: it

is a performance in which these very boundaries take shape and solidify; it constitutes structures, the law being foremost among them. Yet, as Jacques Derrida argues, structure:

> ... is ultimately a reflex image of the visual and spatial metaphors to which Western thought has so often resorted in its quest for understanding. To think without the aid of such figurative props may well be beyond the powers of the mind. To accept them, on the other hand, without deconstructing their effects is to risk being interested in the figure itself to the detriment of the play going on within it metaphorically (1978, 16).

In this context, play refers to the deconstructionist tendency to undermine the idea that meaning, in writing especially, is permanent and stable.

One other characteristic of the late nineteenth century legislation is its reliance on natural law; this debate dates back to the Scientific Revolution when concerted effort was made to determine what was a law of nature and what a natural law. According to Margaret Davies (1994), natural law theory refers to the idea that laws made in the legal system are embedded in laws that exist in a pre-linguistic and eternal natural system which must surely also be a moral system. For instance, in a complex discussion about the constitution of the inside and the outside, Davies argues that the naturalisation of stereotypical class and gender roles and relations is encapsulated at law. With regard to women, she observes:

> And then there are women, who, being inside the home have traditionally been regarded as being outside the protection of State law and incompetent to benefit from it on our own behalf, being "protected", defined, and provided for by their husbands (1994, 14).

Caroline Cottrell (pers. comm. 1995) argues that Davies overstates her case at this point. There has always been a significant body of law for women - *femme covert, femme sole, dower* - although Cottrell does acknowledge that such law was hardly equal to that for men.

Perhaps of more interest in this context is Davies' suggestion that what is 'inside' is there because of what it excludes; the 'outside' is always there on the 'inside' with that which constitutes the 'inside'. The natural is what it is because it is argued to be outside culture; yet it is always there inside culture since its presence as an absent referent is needed for culture to be defined as such. The same applies to the feminine and to the private sphere.

Davies (1994) also demonstrates how closely linked to morality is the law. She notes that there is a maxim - *lex injusta non est lex* - an unjust law is not law - since the validity of the law rests on higher moral reason, on natural law divined from what are thought to be essential and immutable elements of nature. An alternative conception is that unjust laws really are laws, passed in the legislature or constituted by the judiciary. Nevertheless, adherents to this position argue that while there is no necessary relationship between law and morality, the latter should be brought to bear where the law is found to be unjust.

In both cases, nature and the natural are formulated as ideals far removed from the empirical, from the lived experience of individuals and populations. The South Australian public health laws made certain important contributions to the development and delivery of health reform in one colony of Australia. At the time, they were influential instruments that reified particular ideas about nature, people and the relationship between them. Even so, they remain highly partial documents that do not, indeed cannot, accommodate the diversity of human behaviours, lived experiences, living

environments and approaches to nature that arguably existed at the time. Based on discourses of reason and objectivity that have come to be associated with the masculine, they encapsulate idealistic and nominalistic principles in which all categories of meaning are rendered essential and stable.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted as the absent referents to the masculine, the public and culture in certain health-related documents generated in the public sphere. I have emphasised how particular categories of meaning have been viewed as unproblematically stable, and demonstrated how our language upholds the impression of the solidity of meaning. I have also suggested that the categories with which this research is concerned are co-extensive rather than mutually-exclusive; the boundaries between them are being constantly challenged and resisted as well as being upheld.

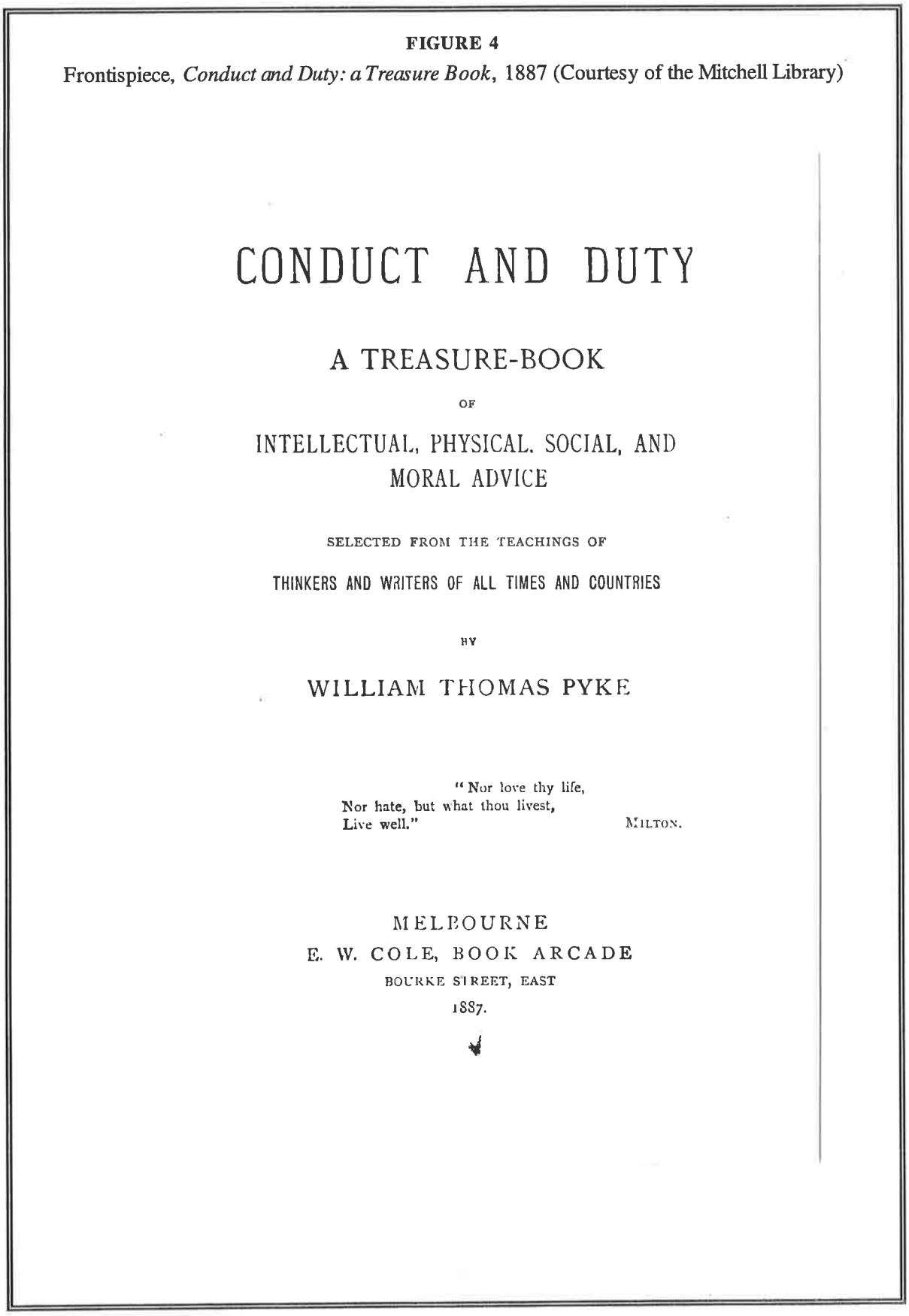
In seeking to establish these points, I have examined three different kinds of text by men. *A Bad Smell* uses the genre of the short story as a vehicle by which to make certain moral exhortations. The story illustrates a man's relationship to his family, outlining his truncated understanding of nature and the implications that such ignorance has for him and his loved ones. In exploring his situation, the story challenges the stereotype that sentiment is confined largely to the feminine realm. It also brings the masculine into the domestic. Nevertheless, the narrative does finally settle on a normalising message about the specific duties of a man in caring for his family and his home, reinstating particular and orthodox ideas about the masculine and other categories of meaning.

Articles from the *Building and Engineering Journal* demonstrate that some professional associations expressed a sympathy for health reform and for women's public and private involvement in that process. Clearly, discourses generated within the spheres of influence dominated by middle class women sought to bolster women's position and access to power while remaining concerned primarily with women's place in the home or in work that was a metaphoric extension from that realm. Similarly, the discourses by men in this professional journal illustrate views about health and women that conflate and naturalise the two within the confines of the domestic sphere (albeit one with loose symbolic boundaries).

The nineteenth century South Australian Public Health Acts and the debates on their passage through Parliament raise another set of issues about how the meaning of the feminine, the home and nature are constituted. These pieces of legislation and the discussions that surround their enactment illustrate how nature and society are labelled, compartmentalised and reified through legal language. Indeed, the importance of language in this instance is profound. Rich with metaphor, metonymy, the use of nominalism and idealism, and generating a series of naturalised myths that seem to constitute a most solid reality, the law nevertheless is marketed as objective, rational and, above all, as impartial. It is also a highly value-laden form of discipline, deploying a diverse range of surveillance strategies. The law is one of the normalising techniques of social practice that constitutes what is inside and what is outside, what is well or ill, natural or cultural and what it is to be masculine or feminine in particular sites and spheres.

FIGURE 4

Frontispiece, *Conduct and Duty: a Treasure Book*, 1887 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)



CONDUCT AND DUTY

A TREASURE-BOOK

OF

INTELLECTUAL, PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, AND MORAL ADVICE

SELECTED FROM THE TEACHINGS OF

THINKERS AND WRITERS OF ALL TIMES AND COUNTRIES

BY

WILLIAM THOMAS PYKE

"Nor love thy life,
Nor hate, but what thou livest,
Live well." MILTON.

MELBOURNE
E. W. COLE, BOOK ARCADE
BOURKE STREET, EAST
1887.

FIGURE 5

Front Cover, *Happy Homes: a Journal of Pure Literature for the Family*, 1(1) July 1891 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

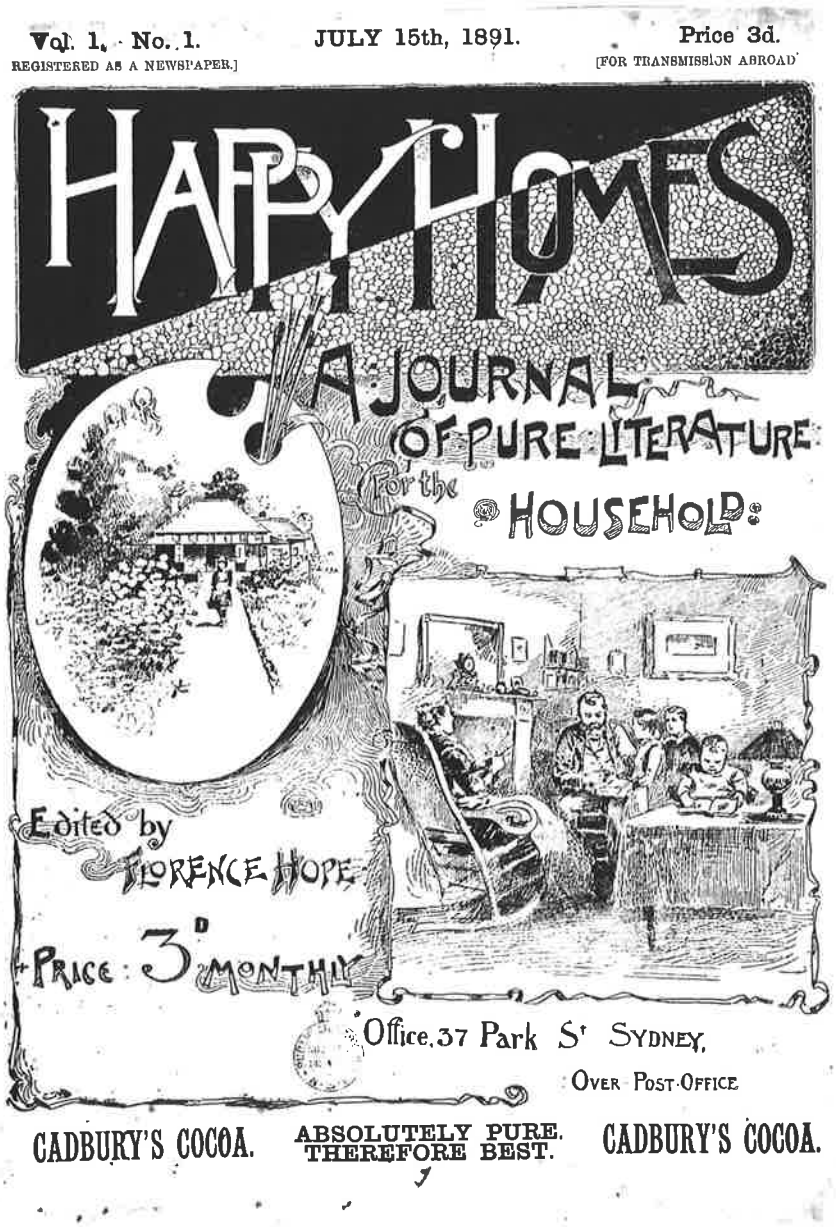


FIGURE 6

Cartoon, The Birth Rate Commission, *All About Australians*, 3(36) 2 April 1904, Inside Back Cover (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

April 2, 1904

A. A. A.

The maid looked confused. A few minutes later the landlady herself appeared in the room. "Em, mum," she gulped, "there ain't an egg in the house fit to boil. I don't buy them that fresh." And the boarder had been eating those eggs for six weeks.

THE BIRTH RATE COMMISSION.

The feature of last month was the discussion caused by the publication of the report of the Birth Rate Commission. As usual in such cases, a tremendous amount of drivel has been published. The decreased rate is attributed by every newspaper correspondent to the particular "sin" which he dislikes. One lady correspondent hates the labour party, hence the decrease was due to labor politics and socialism. The single taxer attributed it to "monopoly in land", the protectionist to freetrade in imports, the freetrader to the federal tariff, and so on.

As a matter of fact there is no particular birth rate problem in Australia. True, our birth rate is decreasing, but not nearly so fast as that of other countries. There is a set off, too, in the fact that our death rate is lower than any other country in the world, which is proved, not only by statistics, but by the experience of our life assurance societies. A low death rate, of course, makes the birth rate look low also.

The rate of increase of population in any country tends to decrease as the total mounts up. To take a homely illustration: A grocer starts in business, and takes £1 the first week. The second week he takes £2, which is an increase of 100 per cent. Supposing he takes £10 in the third week, that is only an increase of 400 per cent, and £15 in the fourth week would only be an increase of 50 per cent.

What appears to the ordinary man as the principal causes for the decrease are these:

(1) A low death rate, and a tendency to decrease as population gets more dense.

(2) Greater prudence among the people, for (a) marriage is postponed until the parties think a union is justified by prospects, financial circumstances, and (b) large families are avoided because people do not see how they can rear them in moderate comfort.

(3) Religious thought is changing. Formerly people did all sorts of things, and had large families "taking no thought of the morrow." Many folk now believe that it is criminal not to try to make provision for the future, and try and do so without lightly casting the whole responsibility upon the good fairy, "Providence."

(4) The invasion of women into many occupations formerly monopolised by men, has (a) reduced the opportunities for men to earn their livings, and, undoubtedly, to marry, and (b) has made women more independent, inasmuch as they don't have to "marry for a home," as they formerly did.

(5) The crowding of women into factories, workshops, and offices, and the strain of the lives they have to lead has brought about many gynæcological complaints, all of which tend to restrict marriages and fertility.

(6) Babies are unwelcome, in so far as they hamper parents in the pursuit of social pleasures. A striking object lesson is shown in the smallness of the average family among the well-to-do. A "pigeon pair" is now quite fashionable.

And just here it is well to remark that there is something grotesque in the exhortation of wealthy editors to the poor to rear large families. The life of the average woman in the humble classes is one continual drudgery from cradle to grave. As a girl she helps to rear her mother's children till she has to begin to nurse her own. Before she is well finished she commences to help her daughters with theirs. From first to last it is a continual fight against the wolf, which is never far from the front door, with never a rest from the squalling of an infant.

(7) "Without encumbrance," is the condition of employment in many avenues of life. The birth rate is lowest among married actors and actresses, and domestic servants. In these callings a baby is in the way.

(8) The accumulation of population in the great cities, where conditions are not so favourable to fertility as they are in the country.

Look at the above causes and see what has to be done to bring about an improvement! Nothing less than a radical change in our religious, social, and industrial life can touch these causes.

When one looks about the city, observes the hundreds of "weedy" boys and girls growing up, one cannot but believe that nature is herself working to the extinction of a race which seems to be losing its stamina and vigour.

DR. M— — "Well, what do you want here?"
BIRTH "I thought I could, perhaps, give you some fatherly advice."

Every Woman

is interested and should know about the wonderful

MARVEL WHIRLING SPRAY,

The new FEMALE SYRINGE, Injection and Suction. The best, safest and most convenient. It Cleanses Instantly.

If your druggist cannot supply the MARVEL, accept no other, but write us for Illustrated Book, SENT FREE—sealed. It gives price by mail, particulars and directions invaluable to ladies.

Endorsed by Physicians. TIMES BUILDING, N.Y.

PRICE, FIFTEEN SHILLINGS EACH.

Post Free in the Commonwealth or New Zealand.

SOLE AUSTRALASIAN AGENTS—

THE MARVEL COMPANY OF AUSTRALIA,

CAMDEN BUILDING, 418 George St., Sydney, N.S.W.

LADY SPECIALIST IN ATTENDANCE.

Postal Address, Box 623, G.P.O., Sydney. Write for Booklet. Sent free, sealed.

FIGURE 7

Advertisement for Marvel Whirling Spray, *The New Idea*, 6 July 1903, p.89 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

FIGURE 8

Advertisement for Capilla Hair Tonic, *The Home Queen*, 18 November 1903, page unknown
(Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

FIGURE 9

Fashion Fancies, *The Home Queen*, 18 November 1903, p.9 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

FASHION FANCIES.

By MRS. ARONSON.

JUST as it is natural for the birds to sing so is the want to be beautiful, and therefore to desire the dressing which adds to beauty and charm is only another bidding of Nature, and one that we may safely encourage with confidence. Beauty, in our present century, is almost as much an art as an inheritance, so where perchance our ancestors have overlooked their generosity, the thoughtfulness and originality of our fashion vendors step in, their wares, ideas, and suggestions bringing with them a breeziness that at once becomes acceptable. In all our three principal States, Fashion at present is seated at the door-step of midsummer, muslins, chiffons, and other filmy fabrics being therefore the chief objects of her interest. They all belong to hot days, to sunshine and to the winds that bring no coolness, only langour and exhaustion. In old-fashioned stories we always read of heroines wearing white muslin and blue ribbons; we are then at once impressed with pen pictures in which cool breezes blow the blue ribbons about the "golden curls" that as a rule accompany such garments. But in those days very little was known of hot winds or a moisture that makes the muslin limp, the ribbons flabby, or the hair flat and unbecoming. Gowns for these conditions are seldom considered the fashion oracle fails, I suppose, to even anticipate unfavorable conditions. All designs, ideas, and even fabrics are built for fine weather, and very little time is wasted upon anything else.

The season of 1903 may be said to be under the influence of the frail fabric we are greeted on all sides with almost a luxuriant growth of chiffon, and the woman who fails to save her pennies for such ornamentation is, alas, far behind in fashion's race. Certainly, she may come in a good second if she takes the next best thing on record, muslin; while even her chances of third place may be considered if canvas voile or crepe de chine are among her interests.

And when formed into costumes, to have the most remote chance of success they should either bear immeasurable gauging, lace widths, inlet lengthways, of fine handwork insertions. These additions are practically the groundwork upon which the best frocks of the season are constructed upon them were built the confections that adorned our fashion leaders at Randwick and our social queens at Flemington. Further features were the deep collars, giving the suggestion of sloping shoulders, which are so much sought after just now, and also bending themselves to that use of excessive material considered essential.

Blue Spotted Muslin edged with blue ribbons.

That friend indeed—the ready-made artist—has been more than usually successful this season, and really if a dress is desired in a hurry what better result can be achieved than by the immediate purchase of a ready-made, accordion-pleated skirt—and few skirts are more elegant—an ivory or ecru silken slip and a lace coatee hanging from a deep yoke, worn either high or low, as desired. Let me commend these ideas as excellent, as well as economical, for by dispensing with the coatee you have at once a costume claiming simplicity as its merits.

Shirts and blouses are like the poor ever with us—while their variety is perfectly amazing this year. Still, some particular style usually "sits on top," and from observation it is the shirt of the finest batiste, decked with handwork, either small beadings or tiny spots, that has achieved this honor. Plain lawn shirts, tucked by hand of course, are among other fancies, also those of ecru muslin inlet with encrustations and medallions of lace or fine embroidery. These blouses are really built for our climate—they do not soil as swiftly as whites, nor does that fiend, dust, find such an easy resting for its unpleasant germs. With muslin or linen skirts of the same hue they are either suitable for morning shopping, or with the additions of some little elaboration of lace or braidings they form just the afternoon garment that combines usefulness with trickiness. Add a smart hat adorned with bright flowers, or ribbon knots, and you will not fail to feel that you have achieved a success of distinct individuality.

The blouse illustrated in THE HOME QUEEN this issue is the latest idea of my Paris artist's brain. If made in muslin it would at once spell a word that ever clings to my pen, "charm" while if copied from the original model would turn a dowdy owner into something dainty and delightful. The centre part must be muslin, and the lace collar a series of Valenciennes insertions, while the original trimming claims the novelty of a narrow ribbon run through little rings worked thickly in button-hole stitch; the coloring employed to match the tones favored in the pattern of the muslin. You will understand that the Paris model, which is all hand-made, is something quite exceptional, when I tell you that the price is £7 7s., but the fortunate importers are prepared to copy it from £2 2s.

Fashions come and fashions go, but all the time we learn how invaluable is any information as to future orders. I personally, always like a wee peep behind the curtain, for then I can appear fully primed when questioned concerning coming forecasts. Once inside the all-important dress rooms of Messrs. David Jones and Co., I soon turned from an ignorant female into one "wise in any generation." I learnt that this is a great "cream" season; fabrics in this tone being largely in demand, even for underwear.

In silks the world of women dressers are also much impressed with the advantages of colored Tussors, or Shantung silks, as they are more correctly termed 34 inches wide, and 3s. 11d. a yard, in

FIGURE 10

Temora Superior Public School 1901, in Alan Davies (1989) *At Work and Play: Our Past in Pictures*, p.31 (Courtesy of the Bicentennial Copying Project, State Library of New South Wales)

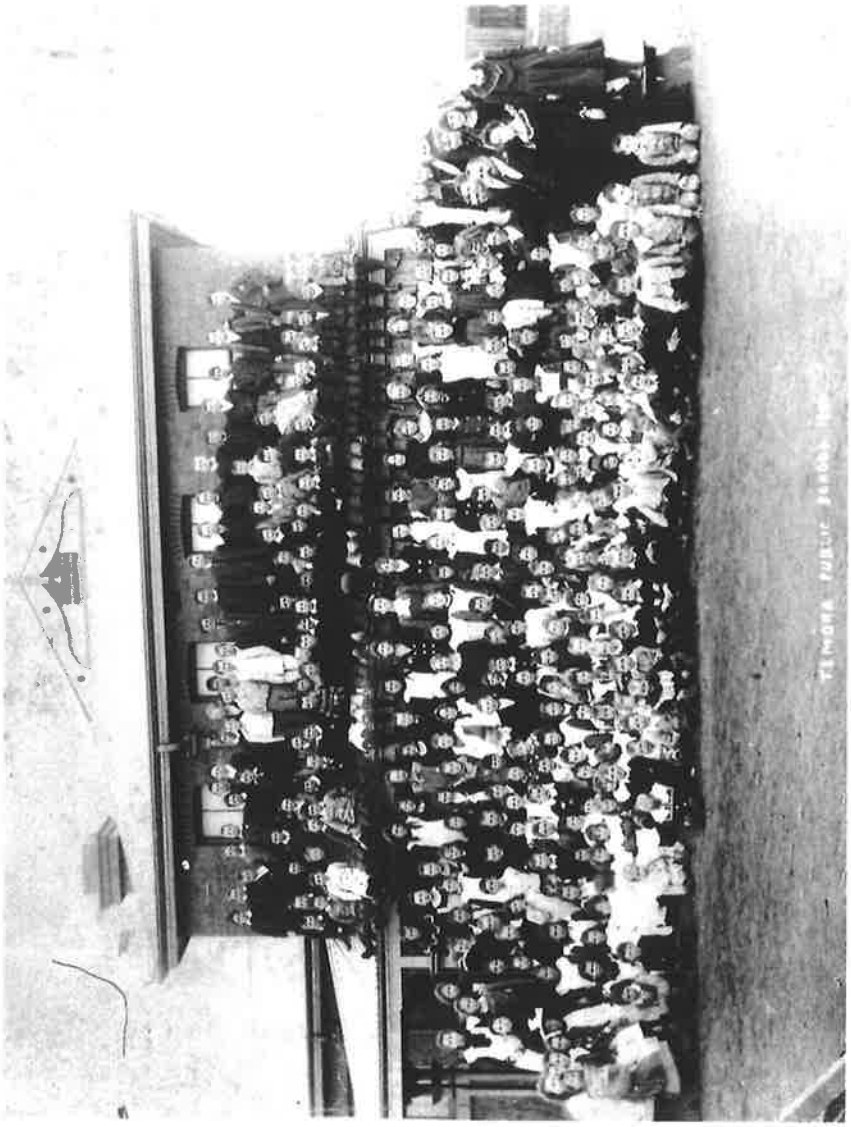


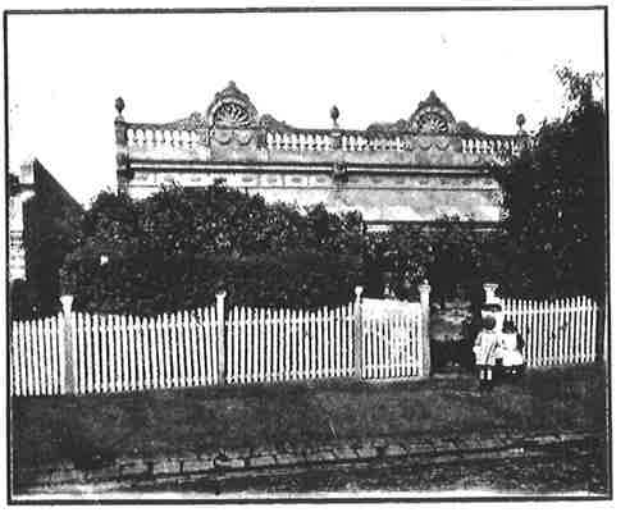
FIGURE 11

The Women Who Toil, *The New Idea*, 6 July 1903, p.41 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

He led the way to a work-room on the first floor, where I saw boys and men busily engaged on the manufacture of boots; and to another on the second floor, where girls and women were similarly engaged.

The majority were undersized, small, even, with a stunted appearance, as though Nature had laid her scheme for them on a bolder plan than was realised: and the faces were pale from bloodlessness. Vigorous maturity, which should be the abundant feature of the portion of the community supplying its muscular force, was wanting, in the main, together with the buoyant activity and eager looks of youth, though it was present.

"Now, this is under my eyes every day, and I cannot but see the cause and the drift of things. And just observe at what a rate they work. No amount of vitalising energy could replace the power they are throwing off at that rate."



Kodak.] HOME OF A BETTER-CLASS CLOTHING-FACTORY WORKER.

By now I was too accustomed to the purely mechanical deftness of the factory worker to be impressed by it. The significance of this remark, however, was certain; the nervous tension must be excessive.

"There's a woman not more than thirty, but she might be hardly a day less than forty-five. And that young girl coming down the room is as wizened in the face as an old woman. She is eighteen, and has been seven years shifting for herself."

"You might, perhaps, try to lower the speed," I suggested.

"I am afraid that is hopeless. Whatever form of benevolence you practise outside, you must still keep to the fixed principle in your business of making as much profit as you can. Competition enforces that."

"Not only on humanitarian but on national grounds this child-labour ought still further to be modified," he said, as we returned. "The child has been always a victim in its helplessness, and it is so still. When money is to be made, the parents do not, or cannot, hold it back from the sacrifice of its future well-being."

Picture, readers, for yourselves, the child of thirteen leaving school! The time for play is now over. Henceforth the vision is bounded by the dimensions of the factory work-room.

Kodak.] PARLOUR OF A COUPLE OF FACTORY GIRLS WHO DO NOT SPEND ALL THEIR EARNINGS ON THEIR BACKS.

THE WILLSMERE CERTIFIED MILK COMPANY, MELBOURNE.

FIGURE 12

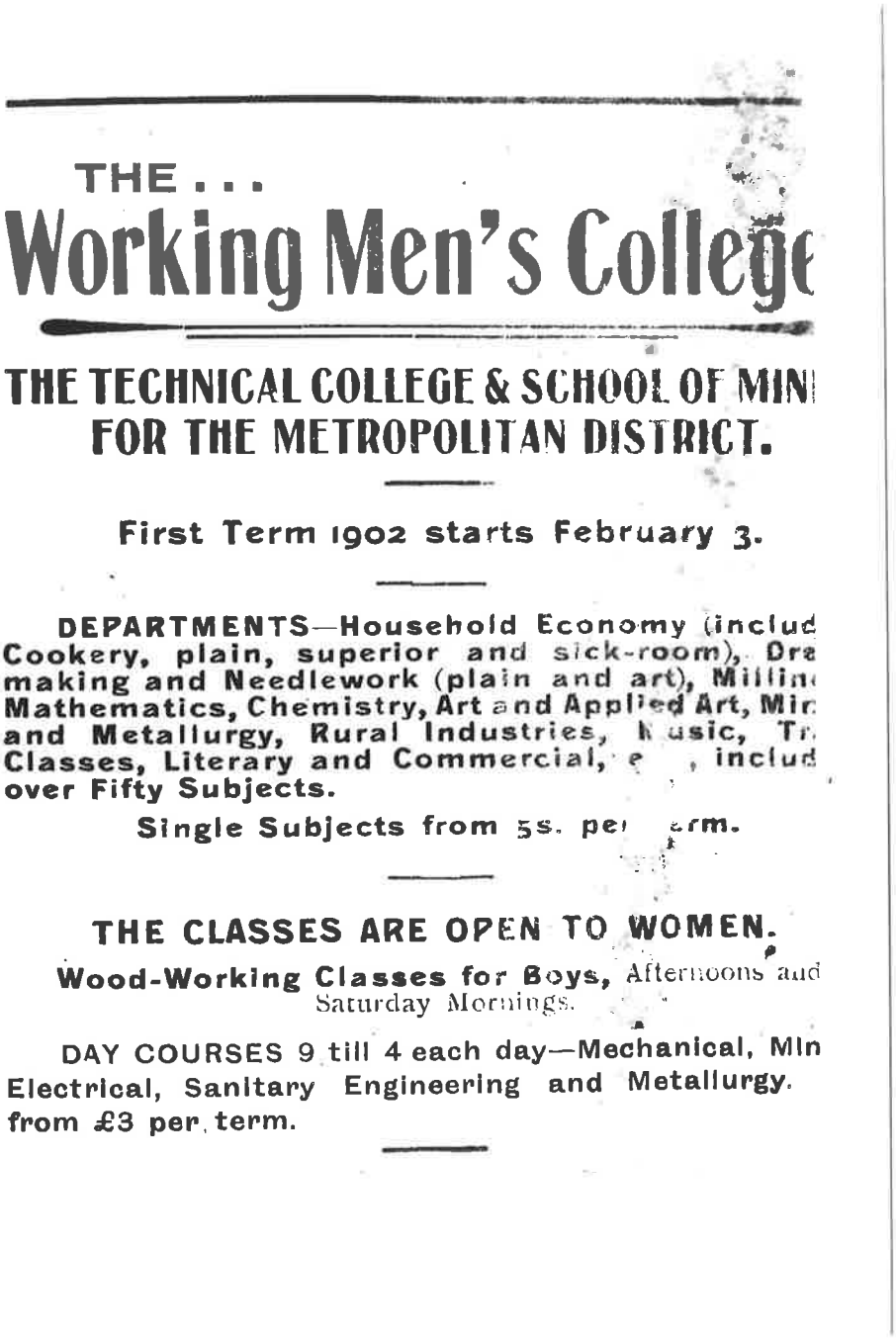
The Willsmere Certified Milk Company, *Australian Women's Sphere*, 1(2) October 1900, p.19
(Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

FIGURE 13

Kangaroo Shoot, Deniliquin c. 1903, in Alan Davies (1989) *At Work and Play: Our Past in Pictures*, p. 125 (Courtesy of the Bicentennial Copying Project, State Library of New South Wales)

FIGURE 14

Advertisement for the Working Men's College, *Australian Women's Sphere*, 1(16) December 1901, p. 132 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)



THE . . .

Working Men's College

THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE & SCHOOL OF MIN FOR THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

First Term 1902 starts February 3.

DEPARTMENTS—Household Economy (includ Cookery, plain, superior and sick-room), Dra making and Needlework (plain and art), Millin Mathematics, Chemistry, Art and Applied Art, Min and Metallurgy, Rural Industries, Music, Tr Classes, Literary and Commercial, e , includ over Fifty Subjects.

Single Subjects from 5s. per term.

THE CLASSES ARE OPEN TO WOMEN.

Wood-Working Classes for Boys, Afternoons and Saturday Mornings.

DAY COURSES 9 till 4 each day—Mechanical, Min Electrical, Sanitary Engineering and Metallurgy. from £3 per term.

FIGURE 15

Frontispiece, *A Bad Smell*, Australian Health Society, 1880 (Courtesy of the Bray Reference Library, State Library of South Australia)

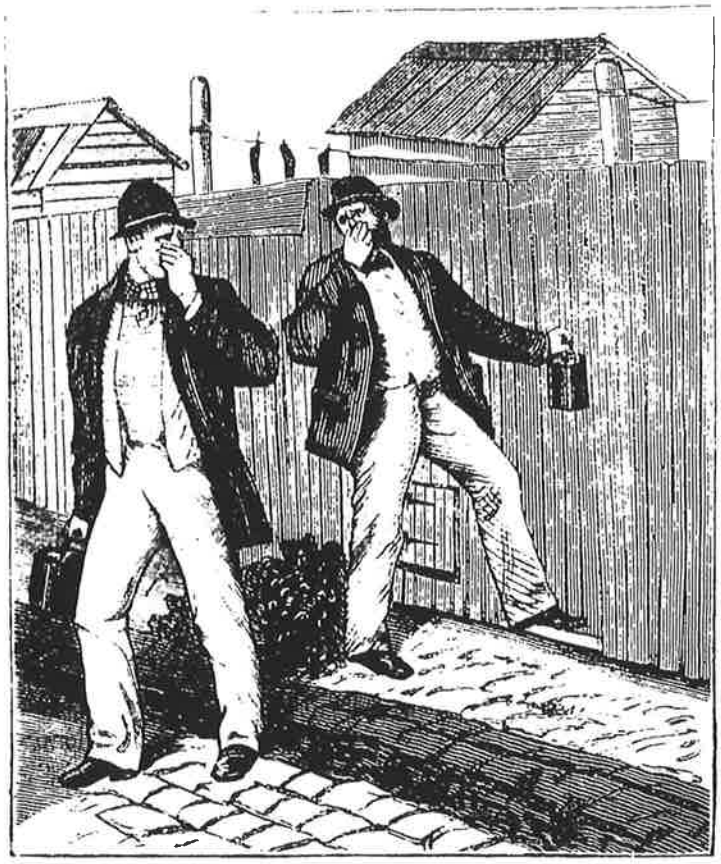
No. 10. Seventh Thousand.] [February, 1883.

Australian Health Society.

MELBOURNE.

OFFICE: 41 COLLINS STREET EAST.
SECRETARY:—J. G. BURROWS.

A BAD SMELL.



WHAT a bad smell!" said Carey to his fellow-workman, as they ne up the right-of-way on their road home after the day's work is done.

"Pooh!" said the other, holding his nose with his finger and

FIGURE 16

Advertisement for Siren Soap [among others], *The Sun The Society Courier*, December 1896, p. iii
(Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

DECEMBER 11, 1896. A JOURNAL FOR THE HOME AND SOCIETY. iii.

THREE NATURAL FOODS

TEETH, FOR GRANUMA PORRIDGE. Natural Food

MUSCLE, FOR PUDDINGS & FODAH INVALID'S FOOD. VITALITY, Supplies

HEALTH FOR BREAD HOVIS AND PASTRY. these.

WITH ALL THE ELEMENTS OF WHOLE WHEAT.

Buy SIREN A PERFECT SOAP FOR THE HOUSEHOLD.

The Sydney Soap and Candle Company, Limited,

NOW OFFER THE FOLLOWING REGISTERED BRANDS

Siren Soap	For the Household.
Silverine Soap	The Washerwoman's Friend.
New Style Soap	Handy for TOILET and General Use.
Magic Cleanser Soap	Will Wash Grease Stains, &c., from Clothing
Ferret Soap	For Scouring and Polishing. WON'T WASH CLOTHES.
Red Cross Soap	Will Wash White without Rubbing.
Sanitol Soap	Nature's Disinfectant.
Soft Soap	In quart Fruit Jars.
Ammonia	For the Bath and Laundry.
Phenol Sodique	Disinfectant and Antiseptic.
Glycerine	In Glass stoppered bottles.

ASK YOUR GROCER FOR PAMPHLET, "HOW SOAP IS MADE."

SAVE YOUR WRAPPERS FOR GOLD AND SILVER WATCHES, ETC.

COOLALTA WINES.

ESTABLISHED 1864.

OFFICES: 353 George Street, Opposite G.P.O.

MEDALS—BORDEAUX, AMSTERDAM, CALCUTTA, LONDON AND COLONIES.

We beg to announce that we have added to our Wholesale Wine and Spirit business a Private Trade Department, and are prepared to execute orders for private use at Wholesale Prices.

For this purpose, in addition to the ordinary brands of all times, we have imported special qualities of Wines and Spirits, Liqueurs, Cordials, Cigars, &c.

Every attention will be paid to the requirements of our constituents and the prompt delivery of their orders.

M. DE LISSA CO.,
5 & 7 BARRACK STREET, SYDNEY.

FIGURE 17

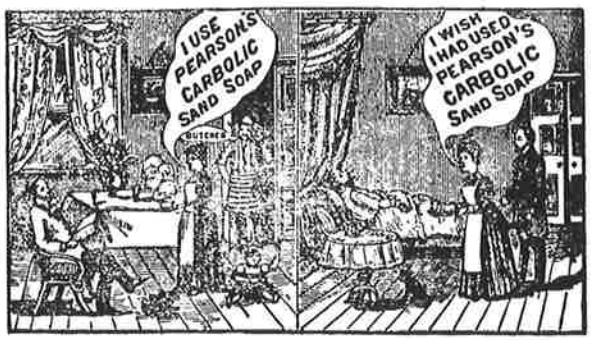
Advertisement for Pearson's Carbolic Sand Soap, in Frances Fawcett Story (1900) *Australian Economic Cookery Book*, p. 156 (Courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

PEARSON'S

CARBOLIC

SAND SOAP

(Protected by Letters Patent)



Unrivalled for cleansing the hands, however stained they may be. For scrubbing Floors, Tables, Stairs, or any kind of Woodwork, it cannot be equalled. Copper, Brass, Steel, Iron and Tinware of every description brightened with one application. It is invaluable for removing finger marks and other stains from paint or varnish work. It destroys all Insect Life—Ants, Fleas, etc., etc., will not infest houses where it is habitually used. As a Disinfectant it is highly recommended by the medical faculty.

MANUFACTURERS:

PEARSON BROS.,

HENRY STREET, LEICHHARDT.

Ask your Grocer for PEARSON'S, and take no other.

PART III

THE FEMININE, THE HOME AND NATURE IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY: GENEALOGIES

PREFACE

Thus far, I have focused on examining theoretical concerns about time and history, bodies and selves, power and knowledge, and the constitution of the feminine, the home, nature in health discourses. I have also provided evidence from diverse sources to suggest that from the late nineteenth century such discourses contribute to the multiple constitution of certain categories of meaning that are, themselves, moral and ethical. Such discourses may be read in various ways and have different power effects on different bodies in numerous contexts.

Two points need reiterating. First, although statements about health in the late twentieth century differ from this earlier period, discourses on health in these two eras appear to have a common understanding that knowledge is contextual. These statements on health in two different times also appear to reflect a common history founded on specific understandings about the world as atomistic, mechanistic, and essentially and unproblematically unitary. Whether such appearance can be substantiated remains to be seen.

Second, in Australia debates about the aims, objectives and outcomes of health practices have changed dramatically between the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries under the sway of medical and other technologies, fluctuations in reproductive and migration patterns, the infiltration of lifestyle marketing procedures into everyday life, and the radically anti-essentialist (re)connection of bodies and selves. In this section on the late twentieth century, I first ask how the meanings of the feminine, the home and nature are constituted through discourses on health and through embodied subjects. Second, I ask if and how these meanings remain continuous from the late nineteenth century to the late twentieth century, are discontinuous from one time to another time, or can be explained in other ways.

Therefore, the purpose of the three chapters that follow is to prepare for and then weave a narrative from the past to the present; to perform a genealogy. Before outlining the methodological concerns that inform these chapters, it is important to contextualise the study for the late twentieth century, since this era is one in which environmentalist and feminist concerns have been powerfully and diversely represented in our discourses and practices. The question of why these two social movements have been so visible and diverse is one that has occupied many analysts of contemporary western society[1].

In my estimation, environmentalism and feminism are vital social movements that nevertheless fall back on homogenising (though plausible and materially evident) descriptions of the symptoms of crisis. Among these symptoms are: alienation, depression and stress among the world's peoples; sexism, racism and other forms of oppression; poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy and other problems of social inequity; population and resource pressures; urban sprawl, blight, overcrowding and planning chaos; rural deprivations, particularly in agriculture; human-induced desertification, deforestation and other 'resource stripping' activities; air, water, soil, noise and other forms of pollution; the build-up of toxic and nuclear wastes; loss of natural and cultural (read indigenous and regional) diversity; militarism and other forms of institutionalised and informal violence; inappropriate methods and levels of production and consumption, and moribund economic and

---

[1] For instance see Banks (1981), Bierbaum (1991), Birch (1993), Eckersley (1992), Goldsmith and Hildyard (1988), Le Guin (1989), Merchant (1992), Mies (1986), Momsen and Kinnaird (1993), O'Riordan (1981), Pepper (1986), Plant (1989), Shiva (1989), Tolba (1988), Tong (1989), Trinh Minh-ha (1989), World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), and Young (1991).

political systems; damage to and loss of coastal and other fragile ecosystems; and ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect. Alongside these descriptions of crisis, are diagnoses that analyse such problems and suggest curative treatments such as education, policy formulation, management and intervention. Even so, in many such strategies nature is viewed as an instrumental *a priori* and, however partially, people are objectified.

Works by historians of environment and culture, such as Clarence Glacken (1967) and Donald Worster (1987), suggest that many of these symptoms of environmental crisis have challenged human domination over husbandry of the earth for much of recorded time. Perhaps then, the question should not be why environmentalism and feminism have come into prominence in the last decades of this century, for the answer to this question may be that such concerns have existed in different forms in different places and times. A more fruitful question may be to ask how the discourses and social practices of environmentalism and feminism have been constituted and circulated and with what effects during this era, and in diverse places and spaces.

In response to this latter question, I think it reasonable to suggest that nature and the feminine have gained much currency and exposure in three particular fields during the late twentieth century. First, they are constituted in specific social movements: Greenpeace, Earth First!, World Wildlife Fund, Die Grünen, the Women's Liberation Movement and various other groups. Second, they are colonised within the academy. Their points of emergence, philosophical and political platforms and power effects have been analysed from many intellectual perspectives such as social ecology, deep ecology, red and green theory, or pluralist positions, along with others such as liberal feminism, socialist and Marxist feminisms, radical and poststructural feminisms. Third, nature and the feminine are appropriated by popular and professional cultures. Their polyvalent meanings and material effects have gained expression and have accumulated new meanings and effects in many diverse arenas, among which figure the discourses and social practices of consumerism on which I focus in this section.

In these last decades of the twentieth century, consumerism has a pulse that beats with incessant and problematic charm. It is a force whose effects are evident in the commodification and marketing of health and nature in gendered and spatially specific ways. Demonstrably, many advertising ploys used to encourage the consumption of health and nature as products are feminised; many are also directed at domestic markets for use by people in their homes and on their bodies. Women have been and remain the primary consumers of goods and services for themselves and their families (Veblen 1899; Wells and Sim 1987); thus these are the domestic market. While these observations are not surprising, they still merit examination, particularly since relationships among the feminine, the home and nature are made more complex by the connections between health and consumerism.

These global changes in environment, feminism and consumerism have affected Australian society as much as any other. There are other social shifts that I think are worthy of note. Although many of them remain global, there are always endogenous and local flavours imparted to them. Among some of the other significant changes in Australian society in the last twenty years the following are especially important, though listed with no particular sense of priority: the advancement of republicanism; multiculturalism, the decrease of refugee and family reunion migrations in favour of business, and other economically driven migration patterns; the domination

of the Labor Party by the 'right of left'; economic rationalism associated with boom-bust economies, globalisation, deindustrialisation, the loss of tariffs and protectionism, GATT and postcolonial political-economies; the development of enterprise bargaining and diminution of the power of the unions; the increase in use of privatisation of public services, utilities and facilities; the entrenchment of the welfare safety net, including unemployment benefits, but in ways by which recipients are made to look more accountable; the particular multiplication of benefits to women and children through single parent payments, child-care subsidies and family allowance; the substantial increase in the number of women working part-time and full-time in jobs both traditionally feminised and newly feminised, and the entry of some women into male-dominated professions; the rise in delayed marriage, divorce, remarriage, childless couples or couples with two children; a movement away from orthodox Catholicism and Protestantism to evangelical and new age spiritualism, some of which embrace the advancement of women in the church, others of which eschew it; an awareness of alternative practices in medical and para-medical practices; the rise of challenges to the privilege of science, at the same time that science and technology have received more money for particular projects such as AIDS research, genetic engineering and resource development; the loss of severe constraints on the expression of non-heterosexual sexualities, the second rise of feminism and the rise of the Sensitive New Age Guy; the entrenchment of environment as an issue at the level of local, state and federal politics; the Mabo decision on land claims and the radical politicisation of Aboriginal culture; the new representation and circulation of knowledge by audio-visual technologies, internet and the information highway, along with the rise of information and technology cities; the establishment of a massively bureaucratised and entrenched tertiary/service sector in which tourism and leisure are paramount; anti-nuclear and peace movements, drug cultures and other counter-cultures, alongside the domination of popular culture by youth; the rise of grey power and the ageing of the population; the increase in rural decline and regional outmigration to primate cities; and the Dawkinsian revolution in tertiary education which has effected massive and mixed change to the culture of learning in the Australian community.

In effect, Australia has become much more of a cosmopolitan society - some might argue Americanised. It has continued to have among the highest standards of living in the world, marked by extremely low maternal and infant mortality rates, low inflation, high levels of education and welfare, and extremely high rates of consumption. Despite these indicators, there appears to be a growing common understanding that the gaps between haves and have-nots are increasing. According to Doyle and Kellow (1995), Australians are also among the worst offenders in terms of resource extraction, pollution and other environmentally irresponsible acts. In other words, Australian society is a complex, polyvalent and shifting collection, and any analysis of how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted in health discourses in this time will be partial. With these comments in mind, I turn to outline the purpose and scope of this section.

In chapter seven, one particular text is presented. The text uses memory-work and focuses on writing the self - recording particular recollections of the life of a subject who is gendered feminine, has grown up in Australia in the late twentieth century, lives in a home, and has diverse ideas about the meaning of health and nature. Memory-work is a leftist feminist method to analyse the socialisation of subjects, and its focus is on the body as a site of remembrance (Haug 1987). Its practitioners reject conceptions of the body as naturalistic and ahistorical, proposing that lived

experience of the self occurring through the body is biopolitical. Memory-work challenges modernist conceptions of time by making the past a component of the present. It was initiated by a group of socialist feminist academics and activists in (what was then) West Germany, who acknowledge the influence of Foucault's work on 'technologies of the self', some of which was published posthumously (Foucault 1988b, Rux 1988).

In describing the collective project of this *Frauenformen* (women's forms) led by Frigga Haug, her translator Erica Carter (1987) notes that memory-work involves several steps. First, members of the group write stories about their lives using the lived experiences of the body as an entry into remembering. Second, these stories are subjected to critical analysis by writers-as-readers and by other readers in order to develop a "new discursive framework, a *usable* theoretical language for their readers and themselves ..." (p.16). Third, the resulting composite of memory and analysis is used by writers and readers alike to continue the process of reflection on the constitution of the subject through various "structures" and events.

In outlining the emergence of the *Frauenformen*, Frigga Haug makes several points about the processes involved in developing this methodology. She notes that our relationship to embodiment generates particular forms of political behaviour which may produce resistance and liberation or may constrain these. As such, its effects on our living need to be explored. Although the focus of the *Frauenformen* is on the sexualisation of the female form, Haug indicates that this is one thematic or organisational device among many that potentially could constitute the body; health is another valid theme to explore in relation to bodies. The concern of the group is to analyse the *how* of socialisation; the necessary problematisation of 'subject' and 'object' in the group's research demands an empirical approach to textual analysis in which the subjects become objects of their own social-scientific method. In other words, Haug proposes that "it is we ourselves, our bodies, our relationship to our bodies and, again, ourselves as whole persons in relation to the world, that demand to be taken into account in relation to questions of human happiness ..." (1987, 34). Such a question is central to the work of the *Frauenformen.*

Haug also stresses the importance of the collective process, where members might question the assumptions expressed by writer/reader, ask the 'how and why' questions that the writer might not be able to articulate and, finally, provide a backdrop in which the socialised writer could continue to exist as an interactive and social being. In lieu of a formal collective, I have undertaken other steps. I have written the memories of my socialisation as a feminine subject in a home and in relation to ideas about nature and health, in some measure on the basis of the kinds of themes identified in Part II. I have also asked various people who know me to read the chapter - to be my collective. These people include colleagues, friends and family. I have asked them to challenge my assumptions, ask 'how and why' questions of my writing and recollection, and give that social backdrop for my work. Four women and three men have read the chapter in draft, and it has been presented as a seminar to the Gendered Geography Group of the University of Adelaide. I have used the comments of these groups to reflect on the constitution of the meaning of the subject, her home and her approach to nature before writing the final draft.

Critics condemn the broad process of self-writing as invalid, overly subjective and anti-intellectual, yet these criticisms have currency only within certain narrow conceptions of what constitutes knowledge; conceptions that have been challenged throughout this work. Foucault

(1988b) acknowledges, and Haug (1983, 43-44) is at pains to point out, that there are certain social pressures by which our individual experiences are collectivised and subjected to processes of universalisation. I am not suggesting that these processes are anything more than a device to organise, homogenise and understand our disparate lived experiences, but I agree that there is a powerful tendency to seek the common ground in social relations. Haug argues that such collectivity need not result in the (re)assertion of inappropriately stable categories of meaning. Singular lived experience can be generalised without being totalised.

Chapter seven is written using particular stylistic devices. First, I write in the third person. Second, almost without exception, I have chosen to use present tense in order to challenge the comfort of progressive time and logical narrative. Third, many of the sentences are not thoroughly grammatical, being abrupt and related forward or backward to sentences preceding and following. Finally, I impose only one form of organisation on the writing, namely the temporal context in which the first draft occurs, Monday 10:05 a.m. for example. These various strategies of expression are designed to discomfort, to rupture any possible flow or smoothing over of time and of juxtaposed meaning. Trinh Minh-ha writes:

> To use language well, says the voice of literacy, cherish its classic form. Do not choose the offbeat at the cost of clarity. Obscurity is an imposition on the reader. True, but beware when you cross railroad tracks for one train may hide another train. Clarity is a means of subjection, a quality both of official, taught language and of correct writing, two old mates of power: together they flow, together they flower, vertically, to impose an order. Let us not forget that writers who advocate the instrumentality of language are often those who cannot or choose not to see the suchness of things - a language as language - and therefore, continue to preach conformity to the norms of well-behaved writing: principles of composition, style, genre, correction, and improvement. To write "clearly", one must incessantly prune, eliminate, forbid, purge, purify; in other words, practice what may be called an "ablution of language" (Roland Barthes) ... and where does a committed woman writer go? Finding a voice, searching for words and sentences: say some thing, one thing, or no thing; tie/untie, read/unread, discard their forms; scrutinise the grammatical habits of your writing and decide for yourself whether they free or repress. Again, order(s). Shake syntax, smash the myths, and if you lose, slide on, *unearth* some new linguistic paths ... (1989, 16-17, 20).

Beyond these tactics, however, there are other reasons for writing in a manner which is removed from most, if not all, of the accepted parameters of the academic writing. I hope by now to have made clear to the reader my concern to challenge what it is in environmental studies and the academy that we consider to be legitimate forms of knowledge. Each and every personal, anecdotal or informal statement is constitutive of knowledge; there may also be very real political and scholastic dangers in being thought to tinker with the edges of acceptable practices of knowledge production without particular motive. Nevertheless, I contend that reflecting on the body and the self is vital for the continuing project of a poststructural environmental studies; namely, to create spaces in which subaltern knowledges come to be viewed as more than the necessary but silenced other.

This strategy of self-writing strikes me as crucial in environmental studies and other fields of knowledge with agendas that involve ethical considerations and ambitions about social transformation. Such techniques are especially important if advocates of environmentalism continue to adopt various ethical positions in which the body and the self of the subject are constituted as attached to the body and the self that are seen to be nature. This position is one with which I have qualified sympathy because of its positive tactical possibilities for changing how we deal with the nature in its various forms. In other words, self-reflection is a necessary element of any exploration

on nature, since the two are presently constituted as irrevocably relational, whether in broadly anthropocentric or in broadly ecocentric terms.

In chapter eight, I return to using the more orthodox language of academic writing. The techniques used in this chapter parallel those already used in Part II, and I analyse texts emanating from health discourses that circulate in consumer society of the late twentieth century. I use a variety of texts generated in the last two decades, ranging from material generated in the women's popular press to that presented in scholarly papers. In Foucault's terms, I am contextualising the technologies by which my subjectivity is evoked in discursive and social practices, melding chapter seven into chapter eight.

In chapter nine, I return to the issue of time and history in the production of knowledge. I address the question of how the form, substance and abstraction of meaning might change or stay the same over time, depending on how such time is conceived. Indeed, it is here that the issue of Foucault's conception of genealogy as a history of the present, my present, comes to the fore at last. In criticising the work of one scholar who assumes the history of morality as linear in development, Foucault writes:

> He assumed that words had kept their meaning, that desire still pointed in a single direction, and that ideas retained their logic; and he ignored the fact that the world of speech and desires has known invasions, struggles, plundering, disguises, ploys. From these elements, however, genealogy retrieves an indispensable restraint: it must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history - in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles. Finally, genealogy must define even those instances when they are absent, the moment when they remained unrealized ... (1984b, 76).

Foucault remains notoriously obtuse in his writings about time. On the other hand, Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth (1992) writes about the project of dismantling western representational time in ways that make Foucault and other scholars more accessible. Ermarth suggests that the postmodern critique of time must necessitate a critique of everything that is inside such time; she nominates anthropomorphism, metaphysical presence, transcendence, the idea of depth, along with the structure of the human sciences and the constitution of the subject as (Cartesian) individual. Ermarth is aware that this critique poses all manner of dangers for traditional morality, in which concerns for and about nature are located. She asks "After all, how *do* we deal with each other domestically or globally when we can't be certain who or where each other is? And who, for that matter, is *we*? (1992, 9). From this point, Ermarth concludes that postmodern critiques of traditional conceptions of time and of history are problematic. They nevertheless "make accessible new temporal capacities that subvert the privilege of historical time and blind temporality in language ..." (p.11).

Although highly sceptical of post- approaches, in the context of environmental ethics Val Plumwood (1991) notes that many contemporary criticisms of ethical systems rest on a profound dis-ease about rationalism, and postmodern/poststructural scholars share this discomfort. Plumwood suggests that rationalism absents the relational from accounts of the world, countering that, for women particularly, the exploration of relations with nature is vital in order to free the human side of the human/nature dualism "from the legacy of rationalism ..." (1991, 18).

Explorations of the relational are not rejected in post- approaches, although the conception of the subject differs from Plumwood's ecocentric and ecofeminist position. Thus also working to

unpack the influence of rationalism, Ermarth proposes that post- approaches to the critique of time result in the following:

> My thesis in brief is this: postmodern narrative language undermines historical time and substitutes for it a new construction of temporality that I call rhythmic time. This rhythmic time either radically modifies or abandons altogether the dialectics, the teleology, the transcendence, and the putative neutrality of historical time; and it replaces the Cartesian *cogito* with a different subjectivity whose manifesto might be Cortezar's "I swing therefore I am" [Julio Cortezar, Hopscotch, 1963, chapter 16] ... Time, in other words, is not neutral and absolute but a function of position, literally of reader position. In short, postmodern temporality makes temporality itself part of a system of value and emphasis. The sentence read *is* time and time is a sentence: a defined part of a defined sequence that comes to an end before another sequence, another *conjugation*, begins ... Readers must continuously recognize that when they read, as when they do other things, their consciousness is active, not passive ... To read any text, whether or not it is a printed book, is to participate; it is to continue to undergo the warps and deformations that never-neutral life entails. As we read and decipher, we coinvent; and this active attention to reader awareness belongs to a broad redefinition of what constitutes a "text" (Ermarth 1992, 14-15, 22-23; original emphasis).

The purpose of chapter nine, then, is first to weave temporal threads from two periods into a narrative whose purpose it is to augment our conceptions of time and, second, to reflect on the use archival and contemporary documents and of objective and subjective forms of knowledge, in the study of health and other matters that impinge on the study of environmentalism.

7

BLUEPRINTS AND TRACES
EXPLORATIONS OF THE BODY AND SELF

> The play of seeking, choosing, discarding words and stories that suggest, approximate, but never recapture the past is ... an interpretation of life that invests the past and the "self" with coherence and meaning that may not have been evident before the act of writing itself ... The very language she uses to name herself is simultaneously empowering and vitiating since words cannot capture the full sense of being and narratives explode in multiple directions on their own ... Precisely because self-representation is discursively complex and ambiguous, a "radical disappropriation" of the actual life by the artifice of literature takes place at the scene of writing. The "I", something apparently familiar, becomes something other, foreign; and the drift of the disappropriation, the shape, that is, that the autobiographer's narrative and dramatic strategies take, reveal more about the autobiographer's present experience of "self" than about her past, although, of course, it tells us something about that as well (Sidonie Smith 1987, 45-47).

TUESDAY, 9:15 a.m.

She is a Gardener. On weekends, she gets up while everyone else is still asleep, and sneaks outside in cut-offs and a tee-shirt, slips into her gardening shoes and futzes around the yard. With the demands of full-time study and part-time work, child-rearing and other commitments, they rarely go 'out there' into 'nature' anymore. Before Lew is born, they take off at weekends and head for Yorke Peninsula or Port Elliott, or just hang out in the Botanic Gardens reading novels and the weekend papers. Now, they mostly live according to the ferocious dictates of time - such a scarce resource; leisure an endangered species. She has learned to celebrate smaller parts of 'nature in here', in her urban environment, her home.

So she spends as much time as she can in the garden, pruning this, dividing that, propagating the other, collecting seeds from x and pulling up the spent offerings of something that used to be recognisable as y. This land is Kaurna land; old, precious. There is something infinitely tender about soil, even when it is baked hard by relentless Australian summers. It is such a delicate medium. Her love of soil derives from early tertiary training in geography. Two lecturers in particular used to become quite passionate about the properties and characteristics of various soil types and their potentials; she never looked at a clod of earth the same way after that. It is as though in connecting with the land we connect back into and onto ourselves. This kind of anthropocentrism she can deal with; it is human-centredness that is enriching without being harsh to nature. You can generally tell when a soil is healthy. It is friable and brown, has good humus and demonstrates the ability to hold and release water. A sick soil is too permeable or not permeable enough, has little humus, and is poorly coloured and textured. Unless, of course, we are talking about the special needs of kangaroo paw or protea, both of which prefer 'difficult' soils. So maybe a chocolaty and crumbly soil is only healthy if you are a peony or a petunia, normalised for those conditions.

Nature is a body, a living text to be read, a symbol to be (strategically) used for a range of philosophical and political purposes. Would it know that we think it is in danger? There is talk of an environmental crisis; such a misnomer. Nuclear holocausts aside, she suspects that nature will shuffle and maybe even stride along without us in one form or another. Perhaps we should talk of a

human crisis. And then the question becomes crisis for whom? It is difficult to imagine the end of the world as we know it living in affluent Adelaide in a middle class society that enjoys what is thought to be some of the best that life has to offer. It is doubly difficult to be motivated to leave the car at home and catch the bus, buy fewer products that cannot be fully recycled, compost the vegetables and hairbrush scrapings, invest in solar panels on the roof or turn off the lights.

She decides that greening the home is a disciplinary activity that requires us to gaze at ourselves and to monitor our thoughts, words and deeds. It necessitates asking ourselves about the division between body and self, inside and outside, surface and depth; confronting difficult questions about the future and our corporeal absence from it, about what we want to use and what we want to leave behind, and about how we can do these various things before we die. It is also about being healthy and greening the body.

Greening the home is a process that involves thinking about who is to do this greening, how they are to do it, using what kinds of strategies to create the self as environmental. This question is particularly important because in heterosexual liaisons such as her own, most women still tend to dominate the domestic arena in terms of hours worked, responsibilities taken on and commitments made. She also knows that greening the home is about greening the street, the neighbourhood, the local government area, the city and the hinterlands. It is about valuing the urban environment as nature. Maybe, it is about seeing the stunning mountain with the delicate vein of ore in it when you look at a steel building. About seeing both that precious tree and its myriad inhabitants gazing up at you when you sit down at your dining table. About being consciously aware of the subaltern characters and voices that might surround us, in the air, water and soil. Greening the home is about constituting and celebrating the subject status of nature. It is about recognising that these constitutive and playful strategies are not scripts for deep ecology, which assumes a Truth and Teleology to Nature. It is about understanding that the construction of nature as a subject instead of an object is a linguistic tool to perform biopolitical changes on ourselves, since it is we, not simply nature, who face crisis.

She is a person of the late twentieth century. She is sexed female and gendered feminine. She lives in a home, has certain ideas and undertakes certain social practices that relate to health and to nature. Is she a subject of her own study? She means to be.

MONDAY, 9:40 a.m.

It is April already. Yesterday, she notices the first snowdrops poking their shoots above the mulch in the garden when she is pottering about the garden in the sun. Soon they will be in flower. It is April *already*. March has disappeared in a haze of lecture preparations, CD Rom searches and thinking about the nature of nature, body and self. Lew has a tummy bug and a cold and Phil is immersed in rehearsals for the play he is directing; Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy*.

She has felt confused, unable to decide which form of distraction - wine or chocolate - might make her feel better. Finally, last night, she decides that she must just start to write again. Begin, although she never stopped; nevertheless, this pause between her chosen centuries has been punctuated. The doctoral process is such a mixed bag of creative joy and bureaucratic discipline. Her scholarship dries up on Friday 10 November 1995 and, as far as she is concerned, that is the day when she submits. Submit. To yield; to allow consideration by another. These bureaucratic

considerations push her forward, literally, to her desk each day. Other things to do, that she wants to do.

And still, she wants to take her time, despite the push of Time. She wants to reflect on this process, the 'nature' of nature and health, of bodies and selves. She wants to work through a critique of Time as Historical Time and to explore the implications of this critique for her (inter)discipline. So she works in a fashion that reflects the brush and clash of solid formal Time with Other informal time. Wherever it is that she does her thinking and feeling about this dissertation, she never stops doing it. She dreams this process and product. She gardens, cleans, plays, talks, eats and angsts through it. And she pins her body down to the chair in her office and pushes through it. Technologies of the self. Discipline.

MONDAY, 11:15 a.m.

Once upon a time ... it is Saturday. Normally they all do the shopping on Saturday mornings down at the Central Market in the city. There is always lots of noise, relaxed meanderings and multi-cultural offerings of food and drink. Cappuccino and a face-painter who can do a great train chugging across Lew's chubby cheeks. There is a sense of belonging and a way to touch the world.

This week, with the demands of a particularly busy week, she simply doesn't have it together to get to the Central Market. So, while up north visiting her folks, she goes to this suburban pastiche of postmodern porticos, piped muzak and pre-Easter kiddies' entertainment to do the grocery shopping. The Golden Grove Village. Village: a rustic place, small scale, personal, accessible, traditional, safe. She doesn't like it; for her it is impersonal, imperial, colonial, identical - a link in the chain of globalisation. So is the Central Market, but it doesn't feel like it so much. The market is rough around the edges, makes no attempt to be authentic and therefore it is, and still remains part of the proliferation of consumables that conquer all national and ecological boundaries. Surface(ing).

Lew's auntie Nic keeps him busy on various rides in the Village Mall while she charges purposefully down supermarket aisles, the organisation of which defies her. She is on strange turf and she cannot orient herself with the precision that she prides herself on normally; home economics and a disciplined upbringing had profound effects on her in these ways. She is an Efficient Woman. Shopping is a feminine task, they say. Shop-til-you-drop from the bargain-basement to the halls of *haute couture*. No-name products and designer foods. (Um, but which is better? Which is healthier?) Shopping is the promise of new things, of familiar things, the safety of the brand and the allure of the latest taste sensation. No chemicals please, we're healthy.

When she has time from official Time she actually quite likes grocery shopping. She has a keen interest in nutrition and naturopathy, in cooking and eating. Indeed, in celebration of the constituted links between the feminine and the natural, she has a kitchen witch with a cauldron above one set of cupboards. A gift from Phil. Shopping is integral to these pursuits. So is an interest in health. Today she does not have time.

She can't find a sink strainer, that little metal thing that fits over the plug to stop lumps of food going down the drain and into the stormwater. A very important do-dad in South Australia, because water is a precious commodity. The Patawalonga River system, into which stormwater from their home drains, is one of the most polluted waterways in the country. It is sick. Despite her base

training in geography, it is not until her friend Dianne points out the link between tiny bits of soapy soaked food and the eutrophication of the 'Pat' that she sees the need for this kitchen 'accessory'. This is some months ago. Then she *feels* that it is possible for them to do something small and significant at home to contribute to fixing the problem of diminishing water quality, to help make the waterways well again. They adopt other practices - washing dishes with minimal water and suds, using biodegradable concentrates in recyclable containers. They try plain cakes of soap but these leave a terrible taste and film on the dishes. They even make their own 'goop' for a while (soap flakes and washing soda crystals melted together, a recipe they get from the *Green Consumer Guide*). Then cloth nappies come along and Time changes into an exchange commodity that is at a premium. It is easier to buy prepared powders and, besides, they begin to worry about how 'hygienically clean' that enviro-soap will make the nappies, compared to some scientifically derived product. After all, think of all those pathogenic nodes and pathways that exist in nature that could descend upon their son or his clothes and give him a gastric or other illness. In effect they are making probably what is a false choice between two matters - their son's health and safety and the health and safety of nature. It is a continuing dilemma and one that seems without easy resolution.

Anyway, she cannot find one of these do-dad in the supermarket - her last one has been 'borrowed' for sand play by Lewis and she cannot find it. There are over ten brands of washing-up liquid, though. Comforting range of choice. It is annoying to be thwarted in her attempts to continue the Kitchen Water Quality Enhancement Program; a paucity of strainers and a plethora of suds. Nature is a sink.

The Village Shopping Centre is a happening place on the weekends. On this Saturday, for example, there is a small structure rigged up at one entrance to the Mall, in which are penned a good twenty or so small and mostly infant animals rescued by someone who is endeavouring to raise money to continue her work. She is not sure if it is significant that this other person is a woman; it seems convenient to think so and yet her knowledge of how the feminine is constructed to care for nature suggests that convenience is only part of her conclusion. Lew is fascinated. Nic prompts him to name some of the animals: bunnies, chickens, a 'yamb', a small terrier, kittens, a 'yizard' and a kookaburra. Mostly very Easter. Two boys beside her are taking great glee in poking one of the chickens with considerable force. She pokes one of the boys and asks him if he thinks the chicken appreciates being treated so; he backs off. She occupies the moral high ground; she is older and she feels mean. Once upon a time they called this *in loco parentis* and middle class philanthropists excelled at it; is this what she is doing? Then again, maybe she is premenstrual, although this could be an attempt to dip back into the cool comfort of an essential and hormonal body, and who cares anyway? Nic points out to her that the woman is trying to raise money and that she likely is not helping such attempts. And this coming from a person who, as a fourteen year old, clambers out into Dunedin Bay in New Zealand in her school uniform, to rescue a stranded octopus with a bucket. Could this type of behaviour run in their genes?

Either way, she is perplexed by people's ability to harm and protect the same kinds of animal in the same breath. Here they all are, just paces from a butcher's store and a specialty chicken shop; to all intents and purposes, these various cute and cuddly creatures may as well be slabs of chops or haunches of soon-to-be fricassee on some white plastic platter under fluorescent lights. To make

matters worse, she has just finished buying chicken sausages for them all and a small lump of rump steak for Phil.

Her parents have been vegetarian since the mid 1940s, and raised all four of their children in the same way. She is 'lapsed' from the faith, although the research she is doing on animal rights in this dissertation persuades her that she should return to a vegetarian lifestyle, but even now she still eats chicken and fish. She justifies these dead animal products in her diet because she can get 'free range' chickens and because she figures most fish are free range by definition, South Australian farmed tuna aside. She dislikes the idea of animals suffering, rationalising her participation in their demise by eating 'free-range' things that have had some freedom and that generally are killed quickly. The taste of chicken and fish is also nice, plain and simple. She gets her eggs from colleagues who keep poultry, and has personally met several of the chickens under their care; that feels good. But she continues to have milk and cheese without experiencing the visceral guilt she feels about eating red meat, despite knowing - when she takes time to think about it - that these dairy products are intimately tied up with the abuse and mistreatment of millions of animals every year.

So, her ethics are full of holes. She feels sad about the cruelty and contributes to its perpetuation by being able to excuse some acts as more cruel than others. Maybe it all comes down to the immediacy of certain acts. The separation of cow from calf to secure milk for her can be imagined as less vicious (although still terribly unpleasant) than an animal being slaughtered (and she knows that such is the fate of many calves whose bodies are worth more dead than alive when separated from their mothers). And through all of this cogitating, it is her feelings, her welfare, her karma if you will, that most concerns her. It is an anthropocentric position, and she is not sure if it can be otherwise. She adds to herself (parenthetically) that she still feels enormous distress and concern for the animals, but she hasn't yet worked out if there are uniform ethical foundations to this feeling or indeed whether there should be. Nor is she convinced that drinking soy milk will help, given the techniques currently used in its production and processing.

Only later does it occur to her to think about the dilemma that most of these rescued animals are, in very real ways, dangerous to the continued diversity of various bioregions in South Australia. Rabbits have caused incredible devastation to the Australian environment, along with hard-hoofed animals such as sheep and cattle. Cats are threatening the viability of several species of native bird and small marsupia (she has three cats, and comforts herself that they are desexed and curfewed at night). Chickens are part of a wider 'husbandry' of exotic animals that has resulted in the transfer of unsettled (but never unoccupied) land to western forms of settlement that have degraded the so-called natural qualities of the Australian landscape. These exotic cuties are threatening the biodiversity of the indigenous populations of flora and fauna. She gives up in disgust, and her leather boots (an ex-cow) march her off towards the car.

On Friday morning, before all these thoughts and events, she is presented with a wet, shaking and very shocked mouse by Jellylorum Cat. It is not at all well. In the preceding five days she has quietly buried one large rat and four other mice; she guesses there is a mess of them in the compost bin and piles of garden clippings out the back. The problem is that this particular mouse and she had met the previous evening when Jelly brought it round the first time; on that occasion she herded the cats indoors and hid the mouse back outside. But she has not appreciated the marvellous accuracy of the feline senses which have worked to thwart her best intentions. They live in a different world,

accessed by a different lexicon and grammar; a semantic framework constructed by the use of quite different sensory mechanisms. Like Kant's *noumena*, something that is there and to which we have no access. Indeed, without a common language, these other 'realities' don't even exist for her.

Well, at 6:45 on this Friday morning, she simply cannot contemplate mousenasia and she is not prepared to leave it to a predictable fate in the paws of Jellylorum. So, she picks Mouse up and pops it in an old ice cream container on a bed of tissue paper. She leaves a wee bit of bread and a piece of apple in the sick room, placing a sign on the lid for all onlookers about respecting Sentients and so forth. Later in the day, Lew asks to see the patient, and demonstrates a concern for it and a faith in his parents that she admires and that scares her. "Poor Mouse, Mummy. He not well. You and daddy fix him." To which she responds "Lew, I think that Mouse will die tonight, and it will not be sick anymore." And her prognosis is correct. Mouse departs corpo-reality sometime while Lew is sleeping in his bed. He doesn't ask about the mouse next day. "Die" doesn't mean anything to him - yet.

So here she is trying to save a declared pest that causes mass devastation throughout Australia, making the 'natural' environment sick. But she has held it and stroked it, and she feels that, as an individual creature with feeling, it deserves to die as peacefully as she will want to. And here she is again wondering if all these anthropomorphic and homocentric values are appropriate. She puts Mouse, in its little plastic Vanilla Ice Cream sarcophagus, straight in the big green Council bin. Bugger the recycling.

MONDAY 1:40 p.m.

It is 1987, and she is married to the person who is now her ex-husband. As a present, he has made her a sponsor of a grey-headed flying fox at the Royal Adelaide Zoological Gardens; the Zoo. Every year the Friends of the Zoo hold a picnic to which all sponsors are invited. This particular year, they take along a handful of friends and join in the fundraiser. One of the selling points for the picnic is an opportunity to linger in the Zoo at dusk and see the animals when some of them are reputedly most active, most natural in these most artificial of surrounds: a demonstration that captivity can be healthy. Toward dusk, she wanders off to look at the caged big cats, members of that exclusively marketed club, the 'charismatic megafauna', whose presence attracts so many paying public. Here she is, standing in front of the lion's cage, sunset in the western sky, champagne in her stomach and slight fuzz in her body, when this woman starts up a high-pitched whistling sound directly in front of the lion(ess). The animal begins to pace with rapidity. In retrospect, she acknowledge that perhaps the animal might have been dancing, but at the time she suggests politely that the woman might stop her whistling. That woman says something like "Well, it's not as if they're *real* lions, not like the ones I saw in Kenya". Huh?? How could anyone imagine that the creatures we capture and cage are not real? Our constitution of nature as something that exists elsewhere and our understanding of captured animals as anaesthetised cultural offerings, seems to her to undermine the very roots of what it is to have healthy and embodied experiences in nature. There are those in the zoo community who argue for the continuation of zoos because they believe that such institutions are working towards the conservation of species diversity; that is of the health of the individual animal, the collective group of animals and the global ecosystem. Nature's body; our patient.

It is November 1994. Lew's childcare centre organises a trip to the Zoo, and she goes along. She hasn't been to the Zoo since the evening of the picnic and she wants to see how she responds, especially since she is in the process of analysing the nineteenth century texts on cruelty to animals and thinking through her own ethics towards animals. She is also keen to witness Lew's reaction to the animals; apart from a brief visit to Taronga Zoo in January 1993, when he seems too young to understand, this is his first cognisant trip to such a place. So off they trot; four childcare workers, two parents and twelve children walking a block or so from the big old house that is the childcare centre to the Adelaide Zoo.

Lew is intrigued by the 'hippotatomis' and the 'grilla', and he keeps talking about them for several days after. And she does not despair after all. A lot of work has been done around the Zoo by removing the bigger animals to the open plains zoo at Monarto about 50 kilometres away, and by 'naturalising' the surrounds experienced by the animals. Even so, she remains uneasy about the whole concept of kept animals, even while she enjoy her son's very intense pleasure and keeps three charismatic meso-fauna herself.

TUESDAY 10:27 a.m.

On the walk from childcare to the University she passes along the perimeter of some of the University playing fields. In one area are some old Morton Bay fig trees with great root systems jutting up and curving round and down, making wonderful hidey-holes and intricate seats. She likes to walk under the big open canopy and look up; it keeps things in perspective. Some weeks ago, she notices that there is a dead possum lying in one little rooty pothole; the dew-fall has made its fur look all sparkled and soft. Not the kind of death that you turn away from because you are graphically reminded of the fragility of the body, the fine line between living health and another unknowable state. The possum's body is there for a few weeks.

She is moved to remember chapter one of Alain Corbin's (1994) story of the history of smell, in which one Madame Thiroux d'Arconville is reported to have made fascinating studies of changing smells of putrefying and fermenting substances. So she watches for signs of the progress of decay in the possum. She doesn't mean to be voyeuristic or morbid. It is just that the body is there and that she is walking past it and her eyes dwell on its presence and absence; she is drawn to look. Even still, these signs never appear, at least not on the part of the body that is not touching the ground. No bloat or sag, no growing baldness on the back or flanks, no missing parts. The possum body just lies there for a few weeks, wet by the dew and dried by the sun and wind. Then one day it is gone. Like us.

She lives in a female body. She is a female. She is (or she has been told that she is) what is called feminine in many of her behaviours, gestures and practices. She is (or she has been told that she is) quite capable of exhibiting what are called masculine traits and, depending on the context, this description has been both pleasing and annoying to hear. Her body is thirty one years old; thirty two in May. It has bottle blonde hair (she dyes it when she gets separated in the belief that blondes might have more fun; it is actually ash brown). It has brown eyes and fair skin. It is five feet seven inches tall. Her body weighs around 8 stone 7 pounds, which is 119 pounds or 56 kilograms. Statistics; a biopolitical regime, marking her as this and not that on her medical charts and other texts of identity. She knows these three measurements of body weight because she is one of those girls

who falls for western female obsessions about diet when she hits puberty. Or is it that her body hits puberty and she is forced to go along for the ride? Or is her body her self anyway? There isn't a lot of Possum left in the possum when she finds it. Will there be much of Her after her body has died? She doesn't know yet.

Anyway, this is her body. When she is pregnant she likes her body a lot and she does all sorts of things to be naturally healthy and vital, at least after the morning sickness subsides. She feels clever inside. It is winter 1992, and she is reading Foucault in the mornings, histories of the cult of domesticity in the afternoons. She begins to understand two things with acute resolution of focus; the relationship of body to self is complex and enculturated, and the appeal of celebrating the putative Essence of Female, Pregnant, Mother is profound in its unity and simplicity. As the pregnancy progresses, she feels as though things are happening to her that are somehow closer to nature than to culture. She cannot explain it to anyone without relying on metaphors that come to sound like advertising slogans; 'it feels right' or 'I feel connected'.

She is not sure if these feelings and the words she uses to describe them come from really experiencing a connection to body and nature, or whether they arise from deeply ingrained cultural conceptions of what it is to be Female, Pregnant, Mother. Either way, her involvement in the health of her body and, later, in the health of her child, is powerful, visceral and life-changing. She quits smoking the few cigarettes she indulges in during the day. She quits drinking, and takes up Breathing. She sits differently and disciplines her body because it has a job to do. She listens to every word her consulting midwife says; they check the growth of girth and the beat of heart; her body is a site of positive surveillance and change. Because all this is enjoyable and interesting, she is poorly prepared for how little control she is to have in the final hours of this lengthy process. In labour, she will come to feel that her body is an entity unto itself. In labour, she will come to have no doubt that there is a significant split (however ephemeral) between 'I' and the body. Unruly nature. She cannot domesticate it.

She exercises for this baby. Every Tuesday and Thursday evening of second and third trimesters she trots and then waddles to the hospital for pregnant 'ladies' exercise class. She likes that too. She feels responsible. Maternal before the event; caring for self and another. She also likes being in touch with her body as it changes; sit -ups become impossible except by lying on the side; a novel approach. And then there are the ante-natal classes. Men appear. Well, for some women anyway. There is an unvoiced curiosity about the women who come alone every time. Heterosexual nuclear familism remains strongly embedded in social expectations and the presence of men signifies a particular kind of legitimacy for the pregnant women here assembled. For after all it is a 'natural' and healthy configuration, isn't it - man, woman and child all sited in the home? The brochures and information sheets the midwives provide celebrate it. She has a colleague who is lesbian and who has two children with her partner. Their father is gay. He spends lots of time with these two boys in the company of his own partner and the women. They fall outside what has been constructed to be natural.

Some midwives patronise the men who are here and treat them like initiates who will get in the way unless properly trained here and now. She comes to resent this approach because it perpetuates a bag of myths about men and parenting that she finds counter-productive. These 'experts' perpetuate stereotypes about women with messages like "Don't forget to *help your wife* with the

dishes while she is tired from breast-feeding" or "You will have to *learn to do your own* ironing now". As if some men do not understand the idea of home as community. And yet she knows how many women carry double and triple burdens of hard work. Still, those men who are making a difference are marginalised by such overwhelming stereotypes, and the men who remain in traditionally constrained roles remain unexposed to alternatives.

Phil comes along to the ante-natal classes, and Nic too, for they are to be at the birth, along with Kate and Betty, the two crones, the wise women, those who have come before her to do what she will do soon. And so they learn about breathing and squatting, kneeling and grunting. It is awful because they are not supposed to laugh, but the three of them cannot help it. She feels ridiculous and yet she feels that this play is not responsible. She is a Mother now and she must be responsible. But what about when her body opens up and she loses it literally and figuratively? Nothing unnatural in that, midwives see it all the time. Pregnant women fear it or fight it or have hysterics over it all the time, along with the thought of the dreaded episiotomy.

She goes into labour just after ten p.m. on Tuesday 20 October 1992. She is three days late. Or is it the baby - sleeping, reluctant or comfortable just where I am thank you Mother. Well, these nerve pains down her leg are driving her nuts. She is heavy with child (now how she knows what this means) and she wants to have this baby. So she pesters Phil in the early hours of the morning, later insisting on a long country drive, before jumping up and down on the wood-pile for half an hour while clinging to the fence as Betty shrieks with laughter. Finally, she eats a hot-chilli pizza for dinner. Her own form of induction, and she goes into labour just after ten p.m. They get to hospital at midnight and, somewhere around one in the morning, she checks out of her body. Gone. Not there. Sheathed in a state of absolute lack of memory. About six on the morning of the twenty-first, she checks back in again. They tell her she can push. Then she is back in her body with a vengeance. Surrounded by culture without remorse. Midwives here and prodding there, monitoring baby's heart-beat, monitoring her. And through all the gushing of fluids she is actually thinking to herself how many disposable towels they're using. There is this stupid mountain of white-paper-and-blue-plastic-backed padding and towelling that is supposed to Mop up Mother. Medical waste - no recycling here. And her back hurts to the point where she cannot push and she cannot move. And its heart rate drops; after three and a half hours of pushing its heart rate drops. Fast now. Out of the dimmed birthing unit, into the bright delivery room. Eight people she has never seen before. Smiling efficiently. Machines.

Snip. Snip. PUSH.

And there you are. "Look Phil, he's a boy." She remembers saying that. Not a child or a person. A boy. We seem to gender ourselves and each other straight away. She feels clever. Tired. Apart from two small local anaesthetics and an incision, she has managed Natural Childbirth, once the general rule (with many risks), now the exception (also with many risks). Later, she puts it all down to drinking Raspberry Leaf Tea in third trimester.

On Day Four, the infamous Day Four when full milk comes into mammals and makes mothers seem crazy, her episiotomy gets problematic and Nature disappears out the sixth floor window of the hospital. She finds herself smack bang in the middle of Medical Intervention: massive doses of antibiotic and salt baths, stitches removed and dressing applied. The nurses then tell her she just has one of Those Perineums: uncooperative. Not healing naturally and healthily; deviant. Phil does his

best to comfort and amuse; makes jokes about zippers. Mother and child are twelve days in hospital. Glad for the Intervention; luckier than some. But she hates the Intervention; doesn't feel natural and healthy anymore.

Brand New Motherhood is a very sticky thing. Sticky not just in terms of drool, leaking milk and all those other bodily fluids exuded by self and the wee other that comes from self. Sticky because it makes you feel so many things; young, old, tired, elated, scared, confident, powerful, weak. Cleaved in two. And she doesn't think it has a lot to do with what we might think of as nature and the natural. She remembers a passage from an article by Carol Bigwood describing her own labour: *I was no longer giving birth but losing life. The epidural saved me, after which I fiercely pushed him wrong way out, his heart stopping every contraction. My heart goes out to all those unknown women who died giving birth* (1991, 71).

WEDNESDAY 8:40 a.m.

She notices certain things about this process of confession as it takes shape. Things about writing, how style and flow change as days and moods change, how liberating this process actually feels. Things about escaping the discipline of the academic tone, even if only to create other and different forms of discipline and voice. About disclosure and editing, omission and admission. There are many things that are only partially exposed, contained and proscribed. Inscribed. Just as if she is writing in an academic style, only so very different. And when she finishes writing for a spell, she paces around the flesh of the writing and gazes at it. The process is also making her (or she is making it, she is not sure) think somehow differently. She hasn't decided if there is a term to describe it yet; deeper isn't right, and nor is sharper. Yet there is a difference. She feels as though she might not be able to look at things in the same way again.

And so to move away from the body of the feminine, to the body of the home, and to an occupant of the home who has been central to its definition in middle class Australia. The child. A body formed of two seeds from a male and a female; born of a female body and feminised self. Lodged in another and bigger body that has also been feminised and deemed a natural locus for these activities; the home. She watches Lewis grow and marvels at the ways in which his body takes shape, finds itself, learns to crawl and walk, talk and eat, sleep and play and cry and manipulate the objects around him. His body exists. It is real and experienced and wonderful. How can we think it less than mind or spirit? How can we walk around in it and thoroughly enmeshed in its feelings of pain, dullness, ecstasy, joy, warmness ... and then construct is as some kind of second class citizen? Object. Of a nature that is object.

Maybe she will think differently when her body is old. Kate is seventy in November. Kate has orthopaedic troubles, and her legs and back give her a lot of discomfort. Kate tells her that she feels in her late forties; she giggles with Lewis like a child. She still loves her body. Kate does yoga breathing. Will, her father, is nearly seventy too. He has muscular troubles and diabetes. He tells her he doesn't feel any age at all. He smiles indulgently at Lewis. She doesn't know how he feels about his body. Nature has senescence too; we don't celebrate ageing though since it is construed as unavoidable and unhealthy in nature as well as in us, for of course the two are different and the same. Ageing is the beginning of the end.

Bodies are heavy. So are the roles that bodies take on. Being a parent is a privilege that carries such weight. Even after giving birth to Lewis, she is still heavy with child and now so is Phil. They are assured by others that the weight never goes, although its distribution changes. No holiday like a change. They share the care of their son. When he is four months old, she comes back to the doctorate full-time. Alone, Phil looks after Lewis and his considerable needs for three days a week; he is in childcare two days, and they are both on deck on weekends. That is then. Now that Lew is creeping towards his third birthday, he is in childcare four days a week while Phil finishes his degree and she finishes hers. Phil still does one full day a week alone with Lew; among other things, today they are going to the Botanic Gardens to feed the ducks so that Lewis can enjoy nature in the city. It seems perfectly natural that Phil should share the care of their child and yet, like exclusive mothering. His parenting is cultural although it raises more surprised looks and congratulations than would be the case if she were primary care-giver, because his close involvement is seen to rupture the natural roles of males and females. Even so, he stops going to the local play group at the Council because the women give him what he describes as suspicious looks.

She is reading a popular/populist book called *Man the Darker Continent* in which the (woman) writer says that boys raised equally by men and women will tend to have fewer of the problems that characterise masculinity. Problems such as isolation from self-awareness, from self-expression of emotions, from nurturing and ... well all those characteristics typically assigned to the feminine. She doesn't know whether this writer is correct, and she doesn't yet know how Lew will choose to constitute his genderedness. That is partly up to them, and they provide him with toys and experiences that cover the range of stereotypically masculine and feminine activities. They buy him a baby doll; he names it Tom and puts it in the back of his big dump-truck with a tea cup and a blanket. She reads that as perfectly logical, and she tries not to nominate gender to the activity. Mostly, though, his 'nature' is up to him; in the end she hopes they are friends through the exercise of the choices needed in this process. This ability to choose how and what one will be strikes her as being linked to cultural constructions about the 'nature' of being and doing. Not a metaphysics, but a conception of what it is to be constituted as something corporeal and still removable from that realm to one of rationality and disembodiment.

She is also reminded of all the things she learned in school and university about the nature/nurture debate. She is a mother by virtue of the fact that she occupies a female body. She could not give birth to her son if she had been anything else. Not yet. Phil is a father by virtue of the fact that he occupies a male body. These seem to be biological givens. But parenting; that is different. She is not sure how much nature there is in parenting. Yet time and time again, the messages that we receive and produce are founded on beliefs that women especially are deeply and profoundly connected to nature by virtue of the fact that we reproduce culture's corporeal vehicles. Indeed, we might well be powerfully connected to nature; radical ecofeminists and deep ecologists certainly think so, and when pregnant she does too.

On the other hand, she worries about the micro-political implications of making reductive connections with an essential nature. Some mothers who work in formal employment, for example, are still viewed and view themselves as somehow abandoning the scripts of nature. "I should be at home with Baby because *I am her mother*, but we need the money/I like to work/I need this for my own well-being". The same case cannot be or is not regularly made for fathers. Yet because he has

been crucially and centrally involved in Lew's upbringing, Phil feels deprived and anxious when he does not see enough of Lew. They do not think it is healthy for these stereotypes to be perpetuated.

She thinks there is a need to unpack various representations of natural motherhood, that glowing and ethereal throw-back to the cult of domesticity (itself such a recent manifestation). Not simply for the women, for the feminine, for female bodies, but for men and children too. We need to celebrate the body and the embodiedness of living. But along with this, we need to be extremely wary of invoking nature so readily as an essentialised component/object of this living.

THURSDAY 8:50 a.m.

Of course, her body is not simply a symbol of Mother. She is other voices, and while she doesn't conceive of herself as a work of art as Madonna might, she has come to think of this living as a work-in-progress nevertheless, as much as anything because that concept is fun. Being in a female body involves certain challenges, particularly if you buy into specific (albeit unstable) scripts about what it is to be feminine, natural and healthy. She does buy into some of these messages in her teens attempting, for example, to become a very proficient dieter. Unlike her girlfriend Penny, who is hospitalised with anorexia, she doesn't have the strength, courage or sorrow to starve herself. In fact, her dieting is a subterfuge because, like many other girls, she doesn't actually do it very well. On a visit to Canada in her late teens, she blows up like a balloon, peaking at 160 pounds. Kate almost doesn't recognise her when she picks her up at Adelaide airport, and is very adamant that she is not going to stay this way. Positively unhealthy. She doesn't care about the alleged health aspects of weight gain then. She just feels awful.

All through this, she is beginning to read about environmentalism, getting involved in local actions to protest the damming of the Franklin River in Tasmania. She discovers feminism. Indeed, when she is nineteen, and in University, she spends nine months on a major campaign to stop the administration cancelling its Women's Studies program. By the end of the process, with the busy schedule she has kept, the weight is off anyway and she doesn't care about it anymore. She stops shaving her legs and armpits. She doesn't wear make-up anymore. These are the badges of her membership to a sorority, and she is fully sympathetic with the politics behind the body-work. She opts to eschew the western cultural feminisation of the female body and go back to a female body on which all the badges of nature exist; hairy armpits and legs, face without foundation, nails without colour. She starts to practice some of the basics of green living.

It is not until she enters her late-twenties that she comes to look at her body as something that is neither pubescent enemy nor purely a feminist palette. Some of her earlier fervour where her body is concerned fades. While never on the radical vanguard of environmentalism, her fervour for this movement grows; her body may be finite but she cannot find a way to countenance the same of nature's body. She also decides that she is not getting any younger, and that there are creaks and aches beginning to appear. So she starts to exercise. Not the Jane Fonda workout, not the gym, just her, the music she has at home and stuff she learned in high school. It works. She begins to feel healthier, and she starts to peruse the health and exercise magazines, many of which use nature without mercy to sell their positions and products. These publications contain a plethora of information about the female body. About how natural it is, how beautiful it is. And how important it is to maintain its natural beauty through healthy living. The pursuit of this kind of living ironically

involves a lot of money also. Certain kinds of exercise gear (expensive kinds) are better for your skin, your performance, your healthy image, your circulation; same for footwear, same for vitamin supplements, mineral supplements, hair care, skin care, body care, cuticle and nail care ... and the penny drops again. She feels conned. Here again is the shopper in pursuit of feminised and domesticated cultural artefacts guaranteed to make the body reflect - indeed become - all manner of naturalised stereotype.

So this is her body and she is watching it grow older. Unlike the possum, who looks pristine in death and stays that way until it mysteriously disappears, her body is become a beaming sign, a representation - Thirty Something. And she is sure it won't look that crash hot when it's dead. She asks her women friends if they feel more comfortable with their bodies now than they did in their teens and twenties and the answer is a universal yes. Many of them have had a number of relationships. Serial monogamy. A few of them have children. More than one of them has had a miscarriage. A couple have had abortions. Just about all of them have had colds, flu, glandular fever, hangovers and heartaches. Their bodies are more lived in, more theirs than they used to be. They also agree that they feel stronger, less constrained to obey the dictates of this or that fad. Some of them aspire to eccentricity. Yet when push comes to shove, they all agree that the nascent signs of ageing - that most terrible curse of the Feminine - are worrisome. Night creams appear on some dressing tables, and grey hairs get plucked from eyebrows and hairlines. Their bodies and they celebrate them. But let us stay in this dominating youth culture a little longer. We want to grow old unnaturally and make it look like nature.

She wonders if men have the same urges and fears. Phil says that he doesn't like all the things that are happening to his body. He dances for a living in the '70s and '80s. Ballet: he is a great leaper in the Australian Ballet. He jokes that this is a decade and several pounds ago. Even so, there just don't seem to be the pressures on men to disguise age in the way that women are often driven to do. It sounds like a platitude, but growing old is valorised for men and vilified for women. At least until we more thoroughly challenge the constructions of nature and gender that influence these life stages and our relations with our bodies.

As for nature, that thing that we constitute as out there and that seems to be disappearing so fast, we all feel increasingly despairing about its health and well-being. We continue to do what we can - think global, act local - but it sometimes feels like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Like trying to stop the ageing process. Only, that process is natural, isn't it - the death of nature isn't.

THURSDAY 11:00 a.m.

Saskatoon, Canada. The first memory she has is sitting in the bath at Shannon Crescent. She thinks she is three. Classical music plays in the background. Lamp light shines down the hall. There is a smell of frying onion from the kitchen. She knows that the bath part is real - that it happened. The rest might be composite. Whenever these things converge, the music, the softening yellow light, and the delicious odour of sizzling dinner, and whenever she experience them now, she is back in her childhood.

Home. She loves her home. She is six and they live in this big house in Harvard Crescent. She has a bay window in her bedroom. Three walls are painted pale blue and one is a darker blue.

There is a built-in wardrobe that occupies half of one wall. She has to have it shut at night because the shadows and shapes scare her. She has a night-light, but on crisp winter nights she turns it off and opens the curtains because the reflection of the moon on the snow lights up the room with an luminous glow.

When she is nine, they leave Canada and that home she loves so much. The two older kids, her brother William and sister Caroline, are in their early twenties and stay behind. She is nine. Nic is fourteen and must also come. New Zealand - she doesn't want to go, and she cries a lot in the week before they leave. Dad gives them a magnificent trip through the Pacific; Mum stays behind to finish her Masters in Education; she doesn't see Kate for nine whole months. In Fiji they stay at this great hotel, and she makes friends with a Fijian maid named Mary. One day, Nic and she go for a walk and come across a woman and two children living in a cardboard and corrugated iron shack. The woman is washing clothes by hand. The kids are running about half dressed and dirty. Nic talks to them for a while and then they leave. "That is their home?" she asks her big sister, and 'even as a child' she feel staggered. Her pretty dresses and splendid room now seem somehow to jar, although she cannot express it like this until later. Retrospectively, she dates her first political feelings from this time, ascribing cause after effect. No matter where they travel in New Zealand, she does not warm to the homes they live in. They don't 'belong' to them. She doesn't belong here, either. She is a Yank, they say, and tease her about her accent; other. She loves the places though; the temperate rainforests and mountain ranges, the King Country and the deep clear lakes. Her memory of Canada's landscapes is dimmed, so New Zealand stands as a beacon, the symbol of her discovery of the immense and overwhelming beauty of the earth.

She begins to take responsibility at home. Nic is away in Dunedin boarding, and the rest of them are in Christchurch. She starts to do some simple cooking and she feels a sense of pride and of being Useful. She doesn't have the example of a 'working' father and a 'housewife' mother. They are both professionals and everyone pitches in to clean, launder and cook. Her father teaches her some of her domestic skills. She learns to garden; it is a hobby that sustains and succours her through her life right up to now. She decides to like New Zealand after all; she is not a Yank after all.

Australia; she is twelve. On a stinking hot day in November she arrives in a woollen skirt and top. She suspects that it is horrible and her feelings are confirmed when she runs a bath and the water comes out brown. Kate assures her that it will not kill her, and tells her that water is at a premium in this place. When she gets to Adelaide, Nic is suspicious too.

By the time she is thirteen she is offering to clean the house for money, since she has decided to go back to Canada after she finishes school. Kate and Will are busy with careers and the rising health problems of people in their fifties. Nic is living with her boyfriend. So she becomes the second Mistress of the House; she assumes it to be her natural role despite her parental influences. She enjoys this new responsibility and she eagerly applies her home economics lessons to the task. Her parents are patient guinea-pigs. She starts to sew cross-stitch and to embroider, and collect bits and pieces of china and linen for when she starts her own home. She learns first aid and joins the Y. She has a boyfriend.

It is 1982. She moves out of home into a share house with two university friends. It lasts three months before they all start to do different things, and then she moves into another and another

and another. She has other boyfriends. Then she has the women's studies campaign and forswear any more such boyfriends. In 1986 she moves in with someone and they are married in the July just as she is in the throes of her Honours degree. She takes marriage very seriously. Her great suburban dream ends in 1989. He moves out and she goes to town. Then in 1990, she quits her job at the university, her study and her home and goes overseas for a year.

She meets this guy named Phil about three months before she leaves. He is still here when she gets back. They have a son. They have a home. She is a feminised person in a female body living in a domesticated situation with someone for whom these things are cultural not natural. They are basically in accord. Life seems healthier.

MONDAY 2:15 p.m.

April is a stunning time for gardeners in Adelaide and she has been indulging her passion for the garden all weekend. The first autumn rains have come, and the hard earth is more giving to the trowel and the spade. She spends money they don't have on rosemary, lavender, abelia and abutilon. She spends more money on alyssum and poppies, primula and violas, pansies, sweet william and stock. She can't fit any more native shrubs into the place, so she justifies having exotics to give that splash of colour. Early in the morning she goes on Snail Patrol and notices that there are many of these beautiful creatures, with their curvaceous shells and shimmering trails. She wrestles with her conscience and starts killing them. They will eat all her new seedlings. She thinks she should get some snail bait, one that is 'all-natural' (and what a flexible meaning that has). At least it won't kill the cats and birds into the bargain.

Gardening is a multi-million dollar business. Its marketing has become increasingly sophisticated and effective, connecting the interior of the home with an outside space that is now part of one's Lifestyle. It is also presented in ways that blur gender distinctions that once marked Australian gardening - where the flower-beds belong to Mum and the 'vegi' plot is Dad's.

There are so many things to do in the garden and for its 'natural' health and beauty; perhaps we have constituted a new subject. And it is a subject that is open to all the fashion fads that human bodies are: native gardens for a few years, then cottage gardens, then back to native gardens. Borders are up, fence lines down. Just as we use all manner of product to disguise our bodies and to heal their illnesses and marks of decay, so too does the gardening industry have a massive reliance on hybrids, pesticides, herbicides and other eco-nasties that really do not enhance our long term chances. At home, they do their best to use pyrethrum spray, made from the juices of a daisy which repel insect 'pests' from plants. They also use chicken manure, mulch and plants that require little water in the summer. Few of the plants indigenous to this bioregion of Adelaide are in their garden, or in any of the neighbouring gardens; this floodplain is once home to the Kaurna, living in massive eucalypt woodlands, with a diverse understorey. At that time it is also home to a significant range of native fauna - kangaroo, emu and wallaby, small marsupials and a rich array of bird life. Not now; not since the 1830s.

When they arrive at this, their first home as a new family, there are layers of white occupation to investigate, many of them in the garden. An Archaeology. The people who live here before them are here for fifty years; some of the fruit trees must be nearly of that vintage, so old and rotten they have become in parts. There is a chook run and there are hundreds of bulbs, many of which have

not been lifted and divided for several years. The woman who was Mother here then is called Thelma Sparrow; she has four children and now lives just down the road from her daughter in another suburb. When she leaves and they come, they explore the traces of her existence and then stamp their own markings on the place. They constitute the house as home and they do so in gendered ways, although this process is not conscious until they reflect on it later. Phil looks after ceilings, roof tops, electricity and heavy jobs. She paints, sands, peels back wall-paper, settles on a limited range of colours for them to then choose from. Still, because they have agreed to share the labour required of this community they are building, they do not create his and hers spaces; the laundry is as much of him as the garden shed is of her. They do not necessarily seek to rupture stereotyped spaces that serve to discipline how bodies and selves interact, but this is the effect that is gained.

They try to instigate all manner of environmental actions; to consciously live them until they become habit. They have a compost bucket, a recycling bucket, a childcare bag for things that can't be recycled but which make great collage items. They have an ordinary garbage bin for things that do not fit into any of the aforementioned taxonomic groups. The order of things. In summer, they put the plug in the bath when they are having a shower and then bucket the water from the bath to the garden; laborious but effective. They attach a hose from the washing machine and use the grey water from their washing. It is illegal for a plumber to make the necessary permanent connections in order to use grey water without hard labour - something about risks to the public health. They use products to clean that are marketed as environmentally friendly, or use plain soap and bicarbonate of soda. They take their own big shopping bags and recycle other plastic bags when they shop, and they ask shop keepers not to bag things unless it is absolutely necessary. Then again, they drive a lead petrol car. They paint their house and wash the brushes so that all the acrylic paint goes down the drain. They resort to using poisons when nothing else will suffice. Yet they attempt to tread lightly on the earth. For themselves, for Lew and because it seems the right thing to do. Her work is also part of all this; the interdisciplinarity, the focus on environment, an intellectual site and physical space in which praxis is possible.

TUESDAY 10:30 a.m.

She is a person of the late twentieth century. She is sexed female and gendered feminine. She lives in a home, having certain ideas and undertaking certain social practices that relate to health and to nature. Is she a subject of her own study? She thinks so.

8

BUILDING SYSTEM(AT)IC DEGRADATION:
THE PURSUIT OF NATURAL HEALTH

> Nowhere can the aestheticization of value be more profoundly witnessed than in the evolution of body ideals since the beginning of the twentieth century. It is here, in the complex tissues of biology, ideology, and consciousness, that the modern commodity aesthetic, and the incarnations of personal identity, uncomfortably - at times pathologically - mesh (Stuart Ewen 1988, 176).

> Products create social as well as material contexts. Consumption purports to dispel the dread of being in a world of strangers. Ads tell us what we can expect, what is acceptable and unacceptable, how you do or do not belong. They are primary vehicles for transmitting cultural symbols ... and each time the commodity draws you as a consumer into a context, it leads to a different you ... Consumption undoes contexts to create contexts, ... advertising, as the language of consumption, holds our attention (Robert Sack 1988, 658).

INTRODUCTION

These last decades of the twentieth century present a set of new representational and material issues to analyse in relation to this research topic, for ours is a consumer society. In assorted texts from popular medical and psychological treatises to advertising, from bureaucratic documents to video clips, healthy bodies are construed as items that can be made through consumerism, and yet to consume means "to destroy or expend ..." in an effort to become (Ewen 1988, 236), and this paradox presents a moral dilemma.

Human bodies can be made as well as born. Home is that carefully staged place next to the landscaped garden where we lounge in designer leisure-wear. Nature is our playground, so let's go abseiling from those cliffs with video recorders and then we can watch ourselves later on the VCR. Underpinning this surface and revelry is an assumption about the bodies involved in such play. These bodies are youthful, naturally healthy bodies, usually white and bearing the marks of privilege. It is difficult (though not impossible) to play in disabled bodies, senescent bodies, psychiatrically disturbed bodies. It is undesirable (unless as an ephemeral pastime) to play in slum bodies, tenement bodies, or shanty bodies. It is repulsive to play on the degraded body of nature (unless you are just passing through). These bodies are not healthy.

But wait. We can change that for you. We can produce something for you to consume that will make it all better. You people - and you women in particular - can have extended youth with this cream. You can have healthy insides with this cereal. You can improve the body of your home and gain the love of your family with this natural acrylic-backed curtain fabric framing every window with that welcoming floral gaze. And you can even help the body of nature - you can have cleaner waterways and airways while giving back to Mother Nature a wardrobe of splendour. Just wait for us to implement this policy, that program, this treaty. Just put your trust in us; we won't let you down. And beyond that, we can also produce wonderful, potent and heady abstractions to help you keep the plot. Ambient lifestyle. A certain *je ne sais quois*. That feeling of well-being.

Clearly, bodies do feel the positive effects arising from nutritious food, clean air and water, soundly-constructed dwellings or built environments safe from the ooze of effluent. For example, low levels of maternal and infant mortality in western nations are due partly to these various public health and related measures, and many positive effects arise from these practices. The constitution of health as independent of the constant and mechanistic interventions of allopathic medicine is one instance of such effects. This partial liberation of health from the grip of expertise has been used by people to explore and revalue naturopathic and homoeopathic remedies and 'alternative' lifestyles, which nevertheless are also biopolitical regimes.

Consumerism upholds and augments disciplinary regimes of health by which we become subjects. It produces both material and discursive effects that contribute to how the feminine, the home and nature are viewed. It is an icon around which circulates a complex constellation of binary oppositions such as sameness/otherness and interiority/exteriority, along with those that I have already examined. It is a discourse that increasingly implicates what it means to be healthy, and thus is also a discourse about ethics and morality - about ways of living.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the use made of the feminine, the home and nature in the commodification of health. The images reproduced and analysed here are designed to sell health as a consumer item available to all who share in the affluence of Australian society in the late twentieth century. In keeping with the concerns of earlier chapters, and in line with poststructural and specifically Foucauldian insights into the power effects of biopolitical discourse and social practice, I also ask questions of these texts relating to power, legitimation and normalisation.

Two government policy documents written by academics and several advertisements from the women's popular press are analysed. *Goals and Targets for Australia's Health to 2000 and Beyond* (1993) is a paper prepared by Donald Nutbeam and his colleagues for the Australian Government (see also chapter three). The preface to this document outlines what is meant by a healthy environment, and proposes what policies and practices are then needed to achieve it. A second scholarly-come-bureaucratic document that I analyse derives from the Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) procedures instituted by the Australian Government in the early 1990s. Published under the auspices of the National Women's Consultative Committee, *Engendering Sustainable Development: Australian Women's Agenda for Environmental Action* (1992) was written by Valerie Brown and Dorothy Broom. They argue that gender is fundamental to issues of environment. In their paper, the links between women's roles as providers of health and as environmental activists is made explicit. I also analyse several advertisements drawn from 1994 editions of three magazines: *The Australian Women's Weekly*, *The New Weekly* and *Who Weekly*. In these advertisements, the feminine, the home and nature are constituted in shifting and complex ways in relation to what is meant by health.

Throughout this chapter, I interpolate certain extracts from the memory-work presented in chapter seven. This technique does three things. First, the interpolations retain the critical momentum I sought to establish in that chapter to challenge the idea that this work is only an instrumental piece of rational discourse. Second, and as a corollary of this first strategy, they serve as a reminder that this work, like much or all knowledge produced, is partial. Third, they are designed to link in a novel fashion the subject (my self) and the object (my research). As an adjunct to this point, such interpolation also demonstrates that the paradoxes which characterise binaries

need not impede the inclusion of personal, folkloric, or anecdotal stories in formal, rational and public documents. In other words, my own lived experiences and the memories of them are texts which can be incorporated in a more wide-ranging examination of the feminine, the home and nature in Australian health discourses in this era.

Finally, it is important to stress again my concern to examine the production of knowledge, the constitution of the embodied subject and the challenges and difficulties of time and history (this last point to be more closely elucidated in chapter nine). Arguably, the commodification of health is one element of a more significant commodification of subjectivity. The ways we produce knowledge about the feminine, the home and nature are challenged by this commodification with both positive and problematic results, because there is a distinct tension between constituting the self as an ethical (disciplined, normalised) subject and avoiding the systematic degradation of the integrity of others, non-animate nature (and our constructions of it) included.

A HEALTHY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY MARK II

Goals and Targets for Australia's Health in the Year 2000 and Beyond (1993) is a report prepared for the former Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services by five members of the Department of Public Health at the University of Sydney. The report is 269 pages long and is divided into two broad sections; namely 'Improving the Health of All Australians' and 'National Health Goals and Targets'. In separating discussions about healthy environments from other matters discussed in the book, such as cardio-vascular disease, AIDS, diet and nutrition, breast-feeding, drug use or the issue of self-help and self-care, the writers of this report have drawn the definitional boundaries of environment too tightly. For example, nutrition is derived from food, and food is derived from agriculture, horticulture and other forms of industry involving the earth's resources. Arguably, many of our bodily ills result from a complex array of other ills; the poisoning of agricultural soils and water with biocides (Carson 1962); the loss of diversity in seed stock (Penman 1994); the use of chemical and genetic treatments in animal husbandry; the general, sustained and dispersed pollution of the ecosystem; senescence. *Maybe I will think differently when my body is old. Kate is seventy in November. She has orthopedic troubles and her legs and back give her a lot of discomfort. She tells me that she feels in her late forties ... Will ... is nearly seventy too. He has muscular troubles and diabetes. He tells me he doesn't feel any age at all.*

There is a pronounced lack of wide-ranging choice about the products that we consume, and which then go to make up what it is our bodies become and how we feel. Naturopaths such as Dorothy Hall (1976) suggest that our cancers, coronary diseases and other ailments such as stress, drug abuse and violence stem from a widespread environmental malaise caused by our (in)actions and the system(at)ic degradation of nature. A tension thus exists between discourses on health produced within allopathic and naturopathic medicine. In some measure, this conflict stems from different disciplinary approaches to certain binary oppositions such as mind and matter, spirit and body, science and nature, or reductionism and holism.

Containing the discussion of healthy environments into one small and fairly specific chapter of a report clashes with the holistic thinking proposed within naturopathy and environmentalism. It also contradicts the assertions made in the report about the need for holistic approaches and

cooperative partnerships to solve environmental health problems. Thus, the document embraces with equal vigour conflicting definitions of health and environment reliant on broader political and ethical understandings of the relationship between people and nature as reductive or holistic.

My concern here is to examine the preface to 'Healthy Environments', a chapter of the report which comprises six sub-sections: the physical environment and how to plan for a healthy environment; transport injury, pollution and urban land use forms; safe, adequate, secure, affordable and appropriate housing and community infrastructure; work and the workplace, including occupational health and safety, access to paid employment, work organisation, health promotion at work, rehabilitation and chronic disability; schools' curricula, healthy environments, relations with community and with health and welfare services and other schools; and finally the physical, built, social and health promoting environments of health care settings.

A context is provided for these other discussions in the preamble to 'Healthy Environments'. It is an introductory piece of writing suggesting why the environment is central to the pursuit and maintenance of health. It begins with a statement about the crucial role of social justice in the creation of "supportive environments for health ..." (1993, 175). In this first sense, the term environment means something other than the physical environment; it is a politicised way of operating to suggest that "the adverse impact of the environment on health is generally greatest among disadvantaged groups ...". Here, in this second sense, the environment means the physical environment, constituted as a negative agent external to people and hazardous to vulnerable groups. Environment is, in this context, exterior and disadvantaged groups are other. Issues of affluence and consumer power remain implicit in this discussion, and yet there is a clear link between the ability to buy certain goods and services and to secure reasonable health outcomes which should be addressed especially given the established correlation between poverty and ill-health. *Shopping is viewed as a feminine task. Shop-til-you-drop from the bargain-basement to the halls of haute couture. No-name products and designer foods. ... The promise of new things, of familiar things. The safety of the brand and the allure of the latest taste sensation. No chemicals please, we are healthy.*

These statements raise a dilemma about notions of difference and otherness. In some poststructural and postcolonial writings, difference is valorised as something too long buried by liberal and pluralist discourses (Riley 1988; Trinh Minh-ha 1989). Difference should be celebrated by revelling in the excesses of consumerist behaviour (Ewen 1988). Conversely, otherness has become a mark of inferiority; disadvantaged groups are the other to the normal (read privileged) consumer. In the context of the preamble to 'Healthy Environments', the characters who fall within this category include women (and especially elderly women and single mothers), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and migrants. In terms of health reform, the delivery of goods and services, and the provision of healthy environments, these groups are the other rather than the different. Variance from one another is hidden, and possible similarity to groups among the advantaged classes is also erased.

Notwithstanding this criticism, the call for greater equity in health provision is welcome because the plight of particular groups in the community is severe. Yet equity here is poorly defined and, given the political context in which the document is produced, I surmise that the chapter (and indeed the report) is premised on a pluralist understanding about power and access to the state being

equitable among all players. Nature becomes the culprit for the ills of people who have (as yet) been unable to avail themselves of the fruits of this pluralist society. Indeed, this text seems indebted to specific ideas about nature being unruly and unreliable, and about the positive role of agency in producing different conceptions of nature. None of the possible or actual struggles that disadvantaged groups experience, indeed none of the resistances they muster in support of the environment or sometimes against the harsh and insensitive interventions of the health/welfare state, is acknowledged in this conception, particularly since it is premised on atomistic assumptions about people, power and the state. Nor is it acknowledged that power is exercised with various effects by different groups in society.

The environment is also defined at law in Commonwealth legislation "so as to include all aspects of the surroundings of human beings, whether affecting human beings as individuals or in social groupings ..." (Nutbeam et al. 1993, 175). As well as being a reminder of the distinctions between anatomo-politics of individuals and bio-politics of populations that Foucault (1976) made in his discussions on sexuality, this definition constitutes nature as something external, something beyond, thoroughly anthropocentric. *And through all of this cogitating, it is my feelings, my welfare, my karma if you will, that concerns me ... I haven't yet worked out if there are uniform ethical foundations to this feeling or indeed whether there should be.*

Early in the preamble, it is also noted that:

> The connection between health and the environment has been re-evaluated in light of the growing public understanding of the impact of current patterns of settlement and style of living on the ecology of the Earth, as well as the dependency of human health and well-being on continuing ecological sustainability (1993, 176).

Statements such as these suggest a sense of belonging, a sameness, an expanding inside: environmental health becomes part of a greater and global effort to address ecological sustainability. As Sharon Beder (1994) convincingly argues, the phrase 'ecologically sustainable development' has numerous meanings and is used by diverse groups, organisations and individuals in ways that are destructive of the environment and of relations among people. Beder proposes that sustainable development "is about incorporating environmental assets into the economic system to ensure the sustainability of economic systems ..." (1994, 8) and not about making environment a priority in the radical transformation of these systems. Her position is one with which I have much sympathy.

These statements also suggest achievement and progress. Certainly, there have been palpable and positive changes to health, welfare and environmental action in Australia. There has also been a more general greening of our language (Mühlhäusler 1995; Schultz 1994) and the captivation of environmental issues in popular culture. Nevertheless, novel conceptions of health and environment are constrained by other factors. For example, various actions from within the business sector or bureaucratic instrumentalities of government most obviously show how environmental and health reforms can be hijacked by these forces in society. Their actions and interventions in the environment often jeopardise the very reforms other members of their own sectors seek to establish, along with members of diverse social movements (Doyle 1995; Penman 1994).

By implying that awareness of environmental issues influences people's lifestyles, the preface also alludes to the widespread, partial acceptance of programs to 'green' consumer behaviour and other areas of social life. *Then again, we drive a lead petrol car. We paint our house and wash the*

brushes so that all the acrylic paint goes down the drain. We resort to using poisons when nothing else will suffice. I deal with the issue of green consumerism in more depth later in this chapter, and suggest for the moment that there are many serious problems with its formulation, implementation and maintenance.

Finally, the assertion that there is "growing public understanding ..." about how specific ways of living impinge on the environment implies that the public is one body with a single harmonious conception of environment, health and society. Patently, such is not the case. A similar homogeneity is evident in the way that 'community' is construed in the preamble. Consequently, there is little explicit recognition of the complex expanse of interest groups which line up about this or many other issues. Where such limited recognition is overt, it is made so in terms of large and typically undifferentiated groups such as *the* government, *the* community, *the* private sector. Such lack of differentiation does not acknowledge the complexity of the issues at hand. It also demonstrates an unquestioning acceptance of pluralist ideas about power and society, despite the disclosure that "Developing goals and targets that relate comprehensively to today's environment and which reflect more holistic environmental management has proved challenging" (Nutbeam et al. 1993, 176).

Overall, the focus of the preamble is on administration, establishing sector-based approaches and fostering inter-sectoral relationships. Boundaries are created; interior and exterior spaces, along with sameness and otherness, are constituted. The idea is to invent certain novel sectors of government, or to revamp the operations of existing sectors, and then to create nodes and pathways by which different sectors can temporarily mesh and integrate. Each sector is meant to maintain its interiority, and thus be monitored and made accountable. Each sector is to be 'amoebic', able to link and work with other sectors, pushing back the boundaries of what it means to be exterior, before contracting back to take up its own shape and character again.

These are metaphors of cooperation which are in direct conflict with others about bureaucratic secrecy, territoriality and the tacit subversion of others on the same government 'team'. Sometimes these inside-with-outside metaphors, along with the material effects arising from and reinforcing them, work well and sometimes they work poorly because structural impediments and the culture of the bureaucracy discourage such melding. Indeed, inter-sectoral partnerships are often more 'successful' because of informal networks, discourses and social practices, and the preamble acknowledges, without elaboration, that intent and process of interaction need to be well-defined and carefully undertaken to "avoid the dangers inherent in cross-sectoral ventures ..." (1993, 177).

Ultimately, *Goals and Targets* is a programmatic document, plotting a course for the health and well-being of all Australians to the new century and beyond. Many of the aspirations encapsulated in the report are admirable. None of us wants to be ill, to have our bodies apparently betray us and to suffer the diverse indignities of morbidity, the silence of 'premature' death. *No bloat or sag, no growing baldness on the back or flanks, no missing parts ... Then one day it is gone. Like us.* However, this analysis demonstrates that the metaphors underpinning this report are both liberal and pluralist by turns. These conceptions of environment and society reflect poorly the distinctions among the population, providing a limited analysis of the power effects that derive from our interactions with nature and each other. They also uncritically accept a series of binary

oppositions based around inside and outside, health and illness, environment and not-environment, and economic and not-economic that results in a too-narrow definition of the problem.

It may seem reasonable to locate nature and the physical environment 'out there' and yet is it possible to remove the outside from the inside? What if exteriority and interiority are not separate, and there is a surface that embraces and links both from between, so to speak? *So I watch for signs of decay in the possum. I don't mean to be voyeuristic or morbid. It is just that the body is there and that I am walking past it and my eyes dwell on its presence and absence; I am drawn to look. Even still, these signs never appear, at least not on the part of the body that is not touching the ground.* Perhaps more frequently we should examine surfaces instead of relegating problems to an interior or exterior of things, trying to plumb the depths of bodies, selves and communities for symptoms and solutions[1]. It is at the surface of things that the constitution of meaning and significance may be most productive (Barker 1994), for analysing how we most actively create and maintain binary oppositions in which disputable hierarchies prevail.

"ENGENDERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

Goals and Targets explicitly refers to the different health needs of men, women and children in its target summaries, yet there is little elaborating on the distinct experiences that people have of life and living. Any inference that these differences do exist requires some explanation, and such a task is addressed by Valerie Brown and Dorothy Broom in *Engendering Sustainable Development: Australian Women's Agenda for Environmental Action* (1992). Commissioned by the National Women's Consultative Council for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the report also feeds into the Australian Ecologically Sustainable Development Process[2] and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. Notably, Brown and Broom both work at the Australian National University, in The Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies and the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health respectively.

Engendering Sustainable Development results from widespread community consultations done in 1991 under the auspices of the National Women's Consultative Council. As the Preamble notes, over 3000 women and 200 women's organisations in all states and territories were approached during this consultation process. Indeed, I was among those who attended meetings in Adelaide at

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1 Arguably, we tend to think and act as though there were insides and outsides in our social order, in life. However, if these realms are representational rather than real, and if the surface that we play with is also representational (which does not detract from the potency of these spaces and planes) then is there any depth to be plumbed, whether hurriedly or at leisure? Margaret Cameron (1995) uses a Jungian analysis to examine how our subconscious is within the shadow of western rationalist environmentalism. Cameron suggests that there is, indeed, a depth and that we can discover it only with time and much perseverance. I feel considerable ambivalence about these issues. My current thoughts on the matter are that surface and depth, like inside and outside, are tools of language that we use for various reasons and that become naturalised unless we exercise rigour. Nevertheless, depth, like surface, has important strategic contributions to make to environmental studies.

2 The Ecologically Sustainable Development Process was established by former Prime Minister, Robert Hawke, as a consultation and implementation procedure to meet Australia's commitment to the World Commission on Environment and Development's (1986) call for global changes to how we work and live. Nine working groups were created in agriculture, energy generation, energy use, fisheries, forestry, manufacturing, mining, tourism and transport. These industries are dominated by male workers; this choice of groups distorted the whole ESD process as one unable to attend to the needs of all women and some men whose working profiles are concentrated in health, welfare and education, to other feminised industry categories, or to the unpaid work force.

which facilitators solicited and recorded as much information as possible about women's approaches to society and environment. This project is important in its challenge to the masculine domination of the wider ESD process and for this role it is to be most highly commended. Nevertheless, its effect has been limited.

The report is 26 pages long and contains several sections: an executive summary; a preamble; and eight chapters discussing why gender is fundamental to ecologically sustainable development, the place of Australia in the international arena, the central role of women's contributions to environmental matters, the currently poor use of women as a national resource, how women can become partners in sustainability, barriers that prevent such partnership, how to find a gender balance in environmental matters, and fifty recommendations on various matters related to the report. The Executive Summary suggests five possible prerequisites to enhance women's involvement in environmental matters. It is these five points that I focus on here, since they summarise in short-form much of what is elaborated in other sections. Executive summaries also function as the 'shop-front' or 'window-dressing' for documents, and it is interesting to note the kinds of constructions that are made or stressed in these parts of reports.

The prerequisites recognised in the report are:

> • routine gender analysis of all environmental issues and programs, in order to ensure the inclusion of all dimensions of sustainable development;
>
> • recognition of the global nature of the pressure of poverty on the environment and the need to redress the poverty of women in this country and internationally;
>
> • equal contribution by both genders to the economic, scientific, legal and administrative spheres of action through which the environment is managed
>
> • education of women and men as to the informal and invisible barriers to gender balance in environmental programs; and
>
> • acceptance that gender-balanced environmental management is a necessary precondition for ecologically sustainable development (1992, 3).

I have several difficulties with these points. First, these prerequisites present gender as a simple concept involving a binary opposition between the masculine and the feminine. As I have argued in chapter one, this kind of supposition is typical; indeed I use it myself, in part because of the limitations of language on writing about various categories of meaning[3]. Teresa De Lauretis (1987) suggests that binary gender divisions make it difficult to articulate differences between or within women (and, I would add, between or within other categories). These divisions keep feminism within the master's house, focusing on sexual and socialised differences of women and men, rather than on language, representation and the constitution of multiple subjectivity within bodies. Additionally, they make no space for thinking about gender as "the set of effects produced in bodies, behaviors, and social relations by a certain deployment deriving from a complex political technology ..." (Foucault 1976, 127).

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3 Terry Threadgold (1988) argues that there is no inside and no outside to language; with no outside from which to speak, we exist in a particular order and must speak from that order, even where we are able to deconstruct the meanings in that order and gesture towards its deficiencies. Threadgold does allow for the development of new naming practices, and the creation of new language relations in the constitution of different spaces of meaning within the phallogocentric order.

In this sense, Brown and Broom appear to constitute women as always and already gendered feminine, and men as the given masculine. This gendering process also seems to view women as more nurturing, caring and consultative than men in relation to environment and society alike; as inside nature. *While never on the radical vanguard of environmentalism, my fervour for this movement grows; my body may be finite but I cannot find a way to countenance the same of nature's body.* The proposal that routine gender analyses of programs and policies on environment will guarantee sustainable development is designed to encourage all levels of government, business and community to ask certain questions. Among these might be 'have we consulted women in this procedure? what do women think about this measure? what do they want to go into or come from this program?' Such questions are warranted. Yet there is little to distinguish among various (and often quite conflicting) groups of women. The needs, aspirations and perceptions of women from indigenous, migrant and Anglo-Australian backgrounds, from different age groups, religious affiliations, and educational and economic groups may be at odds. Gender is only one among many complex categories by which we construct our subjectivity. Documents calling for simplistically conceived gender equity may do women a disservice by perpetuating a liberal feminist language in which differences among women are elided and left unproblematised. Yet, without such documents and sentiments, much that has been gained through feminism and women's involvement with the environment movement might not exist.

Second, in calling for a global approach to the dilemma of poverty and environmental degradation, an implicit distinction is made among classes of women, and this recognition of difference is commendable. However, the term environment is used in an undifferentiated way. The problems of women in rural and urban communities, in developed and less developed regions, in different ecosystems and in various political, economic and religious systems are often dramatically different.

Third, invoking some idea of equal contribution by women and men to environmental action seems to imply some absolute, ideal and measurable level of input to which different groups can perform. I concede that this prerequisite is likely meant to persuade government, business and community groups to increase the number of women on committees, boards of management and other bodies; to redress the distinct imbalances that do exist in these arenas. These imbalances do hinder the development of a fuller agenda for environmental action. Nevertheless, such claims do not account for significant differences in the life cycles of Australian women and men, and the time that some women tend to take away from the formal workforce during the years when they are raising children. Nor does this desire for 'equality' of contribution necessarily account for the work undertaken by women (and men) who live outside the mainstream, or by women (and men) in voluntary work. *We share the care of our son. When he is four months old, I come back to the doctorate full-time. Alone, Phil looks after Lewis and his considerable needs for three days a week; he is in childcare two days, and we are both on deck on weekends.* Indeed, by default this prerequisite supports the maintenance of current (masculinist) decision-making processes. It might prove more effective if it were accompanied by an additional statement advocating both the better recognition of women's significant involvement in the informal sectors of society and the extension of legislation affecting parenting, along with other unpaid or informal activities, to encompass more thoroughly the participation of men.

The last prerequisites deal first with the need to educate people about explicit and tacit barriers that hinder the creation and implementation of gender-balanced environmental programs, and second with the assertion that such balance is vital to the success of any process of ESD. There is little in the way of critique that can be mounted against these aims, except to reiterate that education and the implementation of gender and environment programs must take into account the very different needs of various groups of women and men. These programs should be based on a firm understanding of the sub-cultures to which they are directed. Better still, sub-cultures should be involved in the design and implementation of such programs from their conception.

Engendering Sustainable Development makes few explicit points about the connection between environment and health; these few deal with the connection between the feminisation of poverty and the inability of women to help themselves in polluted environments and to help mitigate such pollution. Examples include:

> In every country, including Australia, the environmental consequence [of the feminisation of poverty] has been that women heads of families have few spare resources for protecting the environment, even when they badly wish to do so (1992, 4),
>
> Worldwatch records that the poor in every country are more likely to live in environmentally polluted areas (Worldwatch 1992). Social health atlases are documenting this same phenomenon in Australia (South Australian Health Commission 1989). As the majority of the poor, women and their dependants are thus more likely to experience the ill-effects of environmental degradation than men. The accumulated effect over their children's life-time is a matter for national concern (pp.4-5),
>
> Australian women make up 67% of workers in the health sector, and over 80% of heads of single parent households ... Women undertake at least 70% of household work and their tasks tend to be human resource and support tasks, with men undertaking the maintenance tasks (Bittman 1990). Women working, paid and unpaid, in these fields have both the experience and occupational skills which are sought if we are to move from ownership to a stewardship model of environmental management. It is the public health field that is providing the new Environmental Protection Agencies with expertise in social impact assessment ... (p.9).

Here, the report deals with the complex convergence of women's health, home and environmental roles. It is suggested that women's contributions to the formal public sector could bring to that sector the kinds of negotiating, nurturing and other putatively 'feminine' qualities that women are said to use in their domestic lives, a sentiment I find simultaneously appealing and essentialising. The lines drawn by dichotomising gender do risk the acceptance that there is no common ground between women and men, and that all women and all men are alike (Brown and Broom 1992, 15). These very important philosophical points might have been made, albeit in fairly 'economical' terms, in the Executive Summary; they are crucial to the rest of the paper and to the idea that the critique of normative gender roles and relations liberates men as well as women, not to mention being crucial to the ethical and transformative agenda of environmentalism.

Brown and Broom suggest that all measures to increase women's voice and exercise of power in environmental management are vital. I concur with their overall position. In part, this accord is because they constitute women as active subjects with diverse environmental roles and relations, and because they acknowledge that such active involvement has some significant potential dangers. Women have long been constituted as the most effective moral guardians in the home, that naturalised and feminised space in which the socialisation of the species goes on. By constituting ourselves as the ecological guardians of a gendered Mother Earth, do we now run the risk of overloading ourselves even further? Brown and Broom certainly argue that many of the

environmental programs involving women are poorly resourced and often delivered piecemeal, requiring more input from women than initially anticipated:

> In addition to the paid and unpaid work women already do, women's time is the main resource for "green" household practices such as avoiding convenience packaging, transporting recyclable materials to collection points, use of environmentally friendly cleaning and other products, eschewing the private motor car, and monitoring and policing the environmental impact of activities of other members of the household ... Environmental solutions that add to their workloads are neither practical nor equitable. Yet many of the major government environmental protection initiatives rely on voluntary support from women (1992, 16).

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature has been partially effected in recent times by the commodification of health and health products, many of which are also marketed as environmentally friendly or as natural. I want now to examine some of the advertising that is used to constitute these various categories.

"IF IT'S BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, GREAT. BUT ..."

One of the enduring objectives of my research has been to ask how the diverse meanings of nature (and by extension of natural, environment, environmentally-friendly and such like) are constituted in popular culture. This heterogeneous culture includes specific consumer items available to the general public in a wide range of retail and wholesale outlets, along with more abstract ideas such as 'lifestyle' or 'image'. *The Golden Grove Village. Village. A rustic place, small scale, personal, accessible, traditional. Safe.* Popular culture is also used by the most radical and the most conservative elements of society, and embraces distinct and often polarised political and philosophical positions.

Primarily, environmental messages fall into two distinct categories, although elements of both may be used with any given advertisement or product. The first category includes all those messages that tell customers 'this product is environmentally friendly'. Friendliness includes various claims: that products are not tested on animals before release on the market[4]; that all-natural materials are used in the manufacture of the product; that environmentally benign methods, such as the avoidance of biocides, are used in the item's production process. Various signs indicate that product packaging is recyclable and/or refillable, that the product is energy efficient, either in production or in later use by customers, and that the product is environmentally benign because its use does not contribute to certain environmental problems such as ozone depletion, pollution or biodiversity loss. *I cannot find a sink strainer, that little metal do-dad that fits over the plug to stop lumps of food going down the drain and into the stormwater ... it is annoying to be thwarted in my attempts to continue the Kitchen Water Quality Enhancement Program; a paucity of strainers and a plethora of suds. Nature is our sink.*

The second category of environmental message includes all those claims that tell customers 'this product will make you feel more natural or closer to nature'. This category uses many more symbols and representational devices than the first category because it is relatively easy to convey

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[4] On this matter, it is important to note that products claiming to eschew animal testing may nevertheless use animal by-products in the manufacture of their products. Few fully vegan consumer items exist (Animal Liberation, Cruelty Free pamphlet, no date).

the idea that a product is 'friendly', say through being recyclable, by using recognised codes. In Australia, the numbers one to seven (1-7) surrounded by a triangle (Δ) are the most popular indicators of recyclable products. On the other hand, it is more difficult and very important to companies to convince consumers that purchasing a particular product will, for example, *naturally* enhance *natural* beauty, or *naturally* contribute to the *natural* good health that all members of the population should enjoy. Indeed, it is in the consumer niches of cosmetics and health products, foods and household items, that these messages seem most popular.

There are diverse kinds of representational devices to convey messages asserting a relationship between customers and nature. Some of the most popular of these devices include photographs, sketches or other visual renderings of coastlines and other seascapes, marine animals (and especially cetaceans such as whales and dolphins), flowers, plants and vegetables, 'domesticated' or 'safe' animals such as cats, dogs, rabbits, birds, certain native fauna, animals with comical reputations such as hippopotami, or mythical creatures such as dragons. Metaphor and metonymy prevail - Pumas are fast and sleek, hence their use in selling running shoes; kittens are soft and the use of their images in Kitten Car Products assures the buyer that the product will be soft on the car to be washed or polished. Products designed for women make widespread use of images of women in natural settings that are feminised. *Our bodies and we celebrate them. But don't let us look old yet. Let us stay in this dominating youth culture a little longer. We want to grow old unnaturally and make it look like nature.* These images of nature make use of small and intimate settings such as gardens rather than, say, rugged mountain ranges, an image almost always reserved for products and advertisements directed toward men.

Many products carry few messages that fall within these two categories of friendliness and naturalness. There may be various reasons for this lack. Manufacturers, designers, distributors and managers of wholesale or retail outlets may not place a high priority on the mitigation of environmental problems currently faced by Australia and by the diverse global community. They may be (or may wish to be seen to be) very concerned about the environment, yet may be unsure about how best to convey their company 'philosophy', their practices and other concerns to the general public, their buying public. They may also be perturbed about the possibility of losing profits for share-holders by introducing environmental policies and practices that alienate certain clients or that require major changes to their own infrastructure, manufacturing processes or other elements of their business operation.

Nevertheless, it is clear that environmental issues are important to consumers. Although they continue to earn less money than men, women also remain that class of people most likely to make the bulk of consumer purchases for themselves, for their families and for others (Hugo 1991). Hence, many of the messages on consumer items that are about nature are already directed to women. Nevertheless, a twin argument can be made for the extension of such messages. First, it can be asserted that more products should carry messages about how they are produced, what effects they have from cradle to grave, and what they will provide to the consumer in the way of 'enviro-friends' or 'enviro-nasties'. The roles of the state, its formal and informal networks with internal and external groups, along with the roles of business, remain unacknowledged. Second, it can be argued that products should direct messages to men and children. Generally, however, many

messages about green consumerism in particular, about environment in general and about health remain both implicitly and explicitly directed towards women as individuals.

Substantial numbers of products and advertisements nevertheless use images of the feminine, nature and, to lesser extent, the home. The examples that I analyse below have been selected from *The Australian Women's Weekly, The New Weekly* and *Who Weekly*. They have been selected for three reasons. First, all these texts are particularly evocative of the connections regularly made between an essence of femininity and one of nature. Second, some texts also rely on feminising or naturalising homes or health. Finally, all of the texts appear to me to invoke particular forms of desire, often using bodies to sell products, and celebrating the notion of consumption as good rather than as systematically degrading of the environment and health, all the while using discursive devices that suggest consumption is natural and healthy.

In 'Every Bath Should Feel This Good', the product being advertised is Dencorub Mineral Bath (*The New Weekly*, 6 June 1994, 42). A woman is pictured relaxing in a full bath and, as the accompanying text suggests, she is sloughing off the trials of the day (FIG 27). In a form of mimesis, her face is also on the product, two varieties of which are shown in an inset photo at bottom right. The text is rhythmic and convincing. *Bathe* in mineral salts and natural oils. *Breathe* in the aroma of natural herbal extracts ... The reason provided to the reader for the existence of this product is that it will make each and every bath feel *this* good. The experience will be superlative. The other point to note is that the product claims to come from nature, using mineral salts and herbs derived from the earth's bounty. Clearly such ingredients are what makes a Dencorub bath so - well, so natural and so healthy.

In 'Soy Life Picked Straight from the Fridge', use is made of the idea that all healthy food comes from healthy nature (*The Australian Women's Weekly*, December 1994, 228). The advertisement suggests that keeping to a balanced and healthy diet is easy, and that such a diet is ready and waiting in our fridge if we have Soy Life behind the door (FIG 28). Instead of relying on methods of manufacture using irradiation or other long-life treatments, this product is kept fresh in the fridge, so you can feel 'safe' and 'same' all at once; your slightly off-beat but healthy product looks just like milk and is packaged just like milk. Simulacrum.

Three other important phrases are used both in the text and on the product itself. These phrases are Calcium Enriched (meaning that all the calcium removed in the refining process has been put back to aid people with, say, osteoporosis), No Cholesterol (meaning that this product will not contribute to the development of your coronary disease) and No Lactose (meaning that people with lactose intolerance will not suffer adverse effects from consuming this product). In other words, these phrases show the product to be a curative against illness, against symptoms of bone density loss, heart disease and allergy. Paradoxically, although the product is marketed as a healthy alternative, the consumer is defined by lack of health, and the product is designed to deal with that lack. Perhaps most effective of all is the image that Soy Life comes, as a finished product, directly from the goodness of the soil. Vegetarians would also recognise that this image implies the use of no direct animal cruelty in the manufacture of the product. Others might ask what ecosystems with what fauna, flora and other inhabitants had existed in the place where the soy crops now grow. Yet, with few exceptions, consumers seek products of reasonable price and quality, serving particular functions, and possibly embracing specific ethical or practical positions viz-a-viz environmental

matters (Cope and Winward 1991) or health. Unless more complex questions about the links between consumerism as destructive desire and nature as its stage-set are raised in relation to products and their promotion, there may be little chance that consumerism will be seriously challenged as systematically degrading. *Maybe it all comes down to the immediacy of certain acts. The separation of cow from calf to secure milk for me can be imagined as less vicious (although still terribly unpleasant) than an animal being slaughtered (and I know that such is the fate of many calves whose bodies are worth more dead than alive when separated from their mothers).*

Although the image used on the Dencorub advertisement is of a woman, and although women still do the bulk of shopping for themselves and others (Brown and Broom 1992), it is possible and even probable, that men and children also use these products. Alternatively, 'Which Tampon Will You Choose?' is directed absolutely to women (FIG 29). The advertisement uses minimal graphics, relying on small images of two tampons whose external appearances are indistinguishable, were it not for the claims "Made by man" and "Made by mother nature". Here is an explicit and gendered reference to a nature that is feminine and maternal. She is bounteous, clever and concerned for the health and well-being of her daughters, unlike man who uses chlorine bleaches, dyes and synthetics in the production of his tampons for women. Yet the advertisement stops short of suggesting that such a gendered (and feminist?) nature actually produces these all natural tampons. Rather, what is implied is that someone (and that someone is left ungendered) has thought about what mother nature intended all along. However, when it costs over five dollars to buy twenty tampons claimed to be fully organic, and only four dollars to buy synthetic ones, many women choose the latter because of the persuasiveness of the market or because they simply cannot afford to purchase the 'green' product.

In this tampon advertisement, several matters remain unanswered. Is the 100% all natural cotton used in the product nevertheless sprayed with biocides during its growing cycle? Is the soil on which the cotton is grown treated in any way with chemicals or other compounds? Do the machines that harvest the cotton have emission controls, leaky oil pans or other mechanical problems that could sully the purity of the crop? What procedures using what compounds are employed in the refinement of the cotton? These and numerous other possible questions may or may not occur to women when we purchase 'sanitary' products. More often than not we are supposed to be glad to disguise a natural function of our body as well as possible, and if we can avoid increasing the risk of toxic shock syndrome all the better. The extension of ethical consideration by individual women to nature may prove difficult in these circumstances. Nonetheless, as Audrey Petersen (1993, 10) suggests:

> If we are acting morally, we are not free to ignore the effects of our choices on other's lives [and arguably on non-human nature]. This is especially true in consumer decision-making because the goods and services we use come from limited natural resources and create external production, use, and disposal costs.

Most importantly, however, it seems simultaneously important and implausible that manufacturers be more answerable to consumers about the effects of products on health and nature, and that consumers be more rigorously educated to ask difficult questions about consumerism and its degrading effects. In a liberal and pluralist society, these aims are often viewed as interfering in the

market and the rights of the individual; nevertheless, they are crucial to the development of discourses that more seriously challenge the foundational principles of late capitalism.

Aids for pre-menstrual syndrome are another group of products in which the conflation of images about the feminine, the natural and health prevail. Also known as pre-menstrual tension, this syndrome is marked as a form of natural, unavoidable and temporary pathology which women suffer in varying degrees, and which is controllable using a range of management techniques, pharmaceutical reliefs and natural remedies. Women's bodies are problematic, ruled by hormonal fluctuations and the passage of the moon, and we are told that we can and should control these things. We are also told that we must fight hard to keep the ground we have won; any sign of this unruly nature may erode our modern roles in a pluralist and liberal democracy.

'What Could Relieve PMT Better Than a Bunch of Flowers?' headlines an advertisement for Nature's Way Starflower Oil Capsules (*Who Weekly*, 11 July 1994, 49). Derived from the Starflower plant and using the "active ingredient" known as gamma Linolenic acid, this product is marketed as a natural aid to "alleviate the misery of PMT" by a company specialising in health products. *Two boys beside me are taking great glee in poking one of the chickens with considerable force. I poke one of the boys and ask him if he thinks the chicken appreciates being treated so ... I think I am premenstrual ...*

One of the catch-cries of green consumerism is that consumers should become better informed about all aspects of the creation of products that they might purchase (Winward 1991). Women are particularly targeted in these calls because consumption has supposedly provided women with "new areas of authority and expertise, new sources of income, a new sense of consumer rights ..." (Nava 1993, 166). When combined with images of political and ethical correctness, consumption becomes more than ephemeral pleasure: the woman who identifies herself as a green consumer has constituted herself and has been constituted by consumer discourses in such a way that she is both ethically and materially enriched. The combination is both heady and seductive.

Moreover, this process of education can be complicated. In gamma Linolenic acid, for example, gamma refers to the "unit of weight equal to one microgram ..." (*The Macquarie Dictionary* 1982, 724). Linolenic acid is defined as "a polyunsaturated fatty acid, $C_{17}H_{31}COOH$, occurring as a glyceride in fats and drying oils such as linseed oil; an essential part of mammalian diets ..." (1982, 1008). A glyceride is "one of a group of esters obtained from glycerol in combination with acids ..." (1982, 749). An ester is "a compound formed by the reaction between an acid and an alcohol with the elimination of a molecule of water ..." (1982, 604). Glycerol is "a colourless, odourless liquid alcohol $HOCH_2CHOHCH_2OH$, of syrupy consistency and sweet taste, obtained by the saponification of natural fats and oils, and used as a solvent, plasticiser or sweetener ..." (1982, 749). To saponify is to "convert (a fat) into soap by treating with an alkali ...", to "decompose (any ester) forming the corresponding alcohol and acid or salt ..." (1982, 1505). Gamma Linolenic acid begins to sound like a sweet and fatty acid obtained by some process that involves soap and that is to be swallowed in order to scrub away the PMS blues.

Therefore, obtaining information and knowing how to interpret and use it are two very distinct issues. Indeed, many of the claims that are made about healthy and natural products would not stand up well to hard scrutiny (Miller 1991; Sutherland 1993). More often than not, the final judgment becomes 'is this economical and does it make me feel good?'. Sometimes these criteria are

sufficient; sometimes, however, a great deal of myth-making about the need for this or that naturally healthy product is perpetuated, and not all of it is helpful. It is also one of the great myths woven by modern corporatism that production and consumption are increasingly environmentally benign (see *Business Council Bulletin* 1994). Many such corporatist myths about consumption, undertaken in various fields and using many discursive tools, are part of what Howlett and Raglon (1992) call the consciousness industry. *I justify these dead animal products in my diet because I can get free range chickens and because I figure most fish are free range by definition* ... This consciousness industry is designed to challenge ideas about business being environmentally irresponsible, and to convince the buying public that business is able to provide spectacle, revelry and the fulfilment of material desire while caring for nature, the poor and other marginal groups.

Some companies may well be very sincere in these endeavours. Esprit is an international clothing company whose image and product is targeted at youth and the young adult market. It produces an EcoManual available for customer scrutiny in most of its outlets. The Manual results from an environmental audit undertaken by the Elmwood Institute for Esprit San Francisco in 1990. It is noted that:

> In Australia, this programme [for in-house environmental housekeeping] is centred upon the EcoAudit - an ongoing process involving employees throughout the company. An EcoAudit is an analysis of a company's activities to ensure that these are as environmentally sound as possible. The EcoAudit team continually scrutinizes everything that Esprit consumes and produces - from the products Esprit buys and the food we eat, to our consumption of paper and electricity.
>
> The idea of an EcoManual began as a means of ensuring that the results of the EcoAudit are implemented in all areas of the company, in all stores, and that they continue to be followed (EcoManual no date, 1).

The EcoManual then records various aims, objectives and methods by which Esprit wants to achieve certain environmental ends. It summarises the audit process, notes how customers and employees are constantly being informed and consulted, and provides contact details for Esprit offices in each state of Australia. It lists activities of the "Esprit Corps" volunteer programme, including tree-planting on World Environment Day and the provision of teams for Clean Up Australia Day. It notes the existence of an initiative whereby employees can take ten hours per month to volunteer for a community organisation of their choice, and other programmes where staff can involve themselves in day projects for environmental causes.

Esprit has a formal working relationship with the Australian Conservation Foundation and allows the Foundation to sell its own products in Esprit outlets[5]. The clothing collections designed, manufactured and sold by Esprit are also audited. Organically grown materials, natural colouring substances and the employment of disadvantaged artisans throughout the world are encouraged work practices. Esprit runs a "What Would You Do?" campaign to encourage customers to think about and contribute to solving the disparate environmental challenges facing humanity. It also has a youth committee, along with a trust fund helping Big Sisters of Melbourne, the Hanover Centre for homeless students, and the Taggerty Pioneer Education Centre for homeless youth, providing other miscellaneous services for this last group. It sponsors recycling programs, employs youths in

5 The Australian Conservation Foundation's commercial activities have run into serious financial difficulty and from 1995 all retail activities have ceased or been minimised. It is intended that wholesale will be allowed to run until products are sold, and to then postpone all sale activities until further notice (Australian Conservation Foundation Melbourne Office, pers. comm. October 1994).

crisis, provides work experience and supports young artists. In conjunction with The Body Shop, Esprit runs grooming courses for young people between 15 and 20 years of age to help them present themselves in society. It gives financial assistance to university and senior secondary students, participates in fund-raising activities generated by The Wilderness Society, and supports activities organised by surfing enthusiasts to protest against and mitigate marine and coastal pollution. Esprit also has a clearly enunciated policy on what it calls daily environmental actions for electricity use; the purchase, use and recycling of stationery; the replacement of biros with fountain pens and pacer pencils; waste separation, cleaning methods and products; and the use of architectural materials in constructing new outlets and other infrastructure.

Clearly, there are areas where Esprit likely cannot or does not comply with other environmentally desirable actions. For example, no mention is made about how it transports its goods from point to point, or about the kinds of investments made on behalf of Esprit shareholders and owners. Nonetheless, if it is to be credited, this manual does indicate a number of things. First, it is possible to make corporations shades of green lighter and to empower employees and customers to act ethically and with due regard for a nature that is not constructed as devoid of people. Second, it is feasible to make surveillance, government and technologies of the self positive acts. Thus, it is not impossible to move from the idea of environment as a wilderness or space 'out there' to supporting the idea that a social environment is still very much an environment. *Greening the home is also about greening the street, the neighbourhood, the local government area, the city the hinterlands. It is about valuing the urban environment as nature. It is about 'thinking local and acting local' as well as 'thinking global and stretching the bounds of what it means to act local'.* Homelessness and other social justice issues that fall within the ambit of health and welfare should be as much a part of environmental studies as other issues, though often they are not. In my opinion, the juxtaposition of environmental concerns and the consideration of homelessness by Esprit is significant. These and other similar incremental changes nevertheless fail to address the much more complex and difficult question that relates to the constitution of our culture as materialist, growthist and bent on system(at)ic destruction. Can producers and consumers dismantle the master's house while still furnishing it?

On another matter, nature is also used to sell products to men. Founded by Maurice Blackmore in the 1930s, Blackmores is a company with an international reputation for creating health and beauty products for women. Since 1993, it has developed a new line of products directed to male consumers. Four products are available, three of them related to shaving or facial cleansing and one for deodorising armpits. All use oak bark (the oak is a masculine tree compared to the birch or the willow, extracts of which are used in some of the women's lines). All claim to enhance the natural and healthy good looks of the user. David Jones produces a similar range.

Other products for men use nature but make no claims about health or well-being, using sexual desire as a selling point. 'You Couldn't Resist It If You Tried' is a headline for an advertisement for Gravity Cologne for Men (*Who Weekly*, 5 September 1994, 17). Economical in terms of words, the advertisement notes that Gravity is "more than a fragrance ... it's a force of nature". The scantily clad (heterosexual) couple in the grip of passion, serenaded by the sounds and feel of a gushing waterfall, provides an unwritten and sexualised conclusion to the assertion about forces of nature (FIG 31). 'Gravity' also refers to natural forces, things that we cannot fight against, even should we

wish to and here, too, there is a complex and atypical conflation of the masculine with the natural. The cologne is for man, and his scent is irresistible, just like gravity, a natural force. Although it is the feminine that is most frequently associated with images of nature, in this instance the masculine is equated with forces in nature. What is so interesting about this example is that gravity itself is strongly associated with masculine images and icons; scientists such as Isaac Newton or astronauts such as Neil Armstrong. *Phil says he doesn't like all the things that are happening to his body. He dances for a living in the '70s and '80s. Ballet. He is a great leaper in the chorus of the Australian Ballet. He jokes that this is a decade and several pounds ago.* Other natural forces are feminised and rarely used in conjunction with masculine products. Such forces might include the power required for a flower to bloom or for leaves to turn, images which are much more often associated with young and ageing women respectively. Thus, while not all images of nature are feminised, essential and gendered mythologies about nature nevertheless remain largely intact.

These various examples relate to the disparate connections made among gendered bodies, gendered nature and health. Advertisers do not stop looking for selling points at the boundaries of the human body, because they also desire to sell products designed for that other high-maintenance body, the home. In a two-page spread with significant amounts of copy and a full-page photograph, the Down to Earth company focuses on how using its products will mitigate against the continued erosion of water quality in Australia. 'If It's Better for the Environment, Great. But If It Doesn't Clean My Dishes I Won't Use It' is a heading seeking to emphasise that green products are also economical and efficient (FIG 32) and thus will compete with the leading non-green products in the same range (*Who Weekly*, 3 October 1994, 3-4).

There are several points of note. First, the woman in the photograph is looking straight at the reader (camera) with a tough and sceptical look on her mature but still youthful face. She does not want to contribute to the pollution of the environment in which she and her loved ones live and will continue to live for the foreseeable future and longer. So her suspicion is welcomed as warranted by the company. The copy serves to answer her spoken and unspoken questions. *It is easier to buy prepared powders and, besides, we begin to worry about how 'hygienically clean' our enviro-soap will make the nappies compared to some scientifically derived product ... we are making what probably is a false choice between two matters - our son's health and safety and the health and safety of nature.* The product is concentrated, implying that it is economical and powerful and, since less is needed each time *she* does the dishes, less damage will be done to the waterways. The product works in a particular way, insinuating that it is predictable and thus reliable. "First it breaks down the grease ..." and cleans her dishes with ease and, in an act of marvellous 'self' effacement, "then it breaks itself down ..." so that it disappears out of the environment and causes no problems to waterways and their ecosystems. And her home remains a green and clean haven of efficiency.

Derived from coconut oil and sugar, the dish-washing liquid has no petro-chemicals. These alternative ingredients may indeed be better for the environment than the kinds of ingredients this consumer has used before and yet there remain all sorts of unanswered questions about them. Where did these crops come from? What protection is there for the environment and for the plantation workers employed in the production of them? Who owns the company that manufactures the product and what are its links to multi-national corporations also involved in the petrochemical or other degrading industries? What chemicals are used in their growth, refinement, packaging and

transport? Very often, and this refers back to the observation about busy women made by Brown and Broom (1992), women are struggling hard enough in their multiple roles without having to get involved in major research projects about corporate behaviour. Nonetheless, almost without exception, it is on the consumer that the responsibility for analysis of products is tacitly placed.

Nature is also used in selling products designed for the healthy body of the home. 'Hardie's Ageless Weatherboards. Friendly to nature and to owners' headlines an advertisement for building material (*The Australian Women's Weekly*, February 1994, 247). The accompanying image is of well-presented homes in bushland settings complete with a possum and a butterfly. The advertisement notes that:

> No native forests are felled for Hardie's Weatherboards or Hardiplanks. No toxic chemicals or preservatives are necessary to protect them from the elements and they won't rot, burn or attract termites.

though the consumer is not told what forms of treatment are needed to make the product. Various styles are available, and customers are able to send away for a colour brochure of the full range of "environmentally-friendly building products ..." produced by James Hardie industries. This example only touches on the issue of health and safety standards in Australian homes and concerns about emissions from paints, underlay, carpets, curtains, wallpapers, gas and electrical fixtures and other parts of the home. Such anxiety seems especially potent because the home is marketed as a place in which we can safely retreat from the cares of modern living and enjoy those aspects of such living designed to make us comfortable. *Home. I love my home. I am six and we live in this big house in Harvard Crescent and I have a bay window in my room ... When I am nine, we leave Canada and that home I love so much ... One day Nic and I go for a walk and come across this woman and two children living in a cardboard and corrugated iron shack ... I date my first political feelings from this time.*

A feature entitled 'Beware. Your Home Could Make You Sick' in *The Australian Women's Weekly* (June 1994, 64-65) provides an interesting illustration of the concerns about sick homes. While not an advertisement in the strict sense of the word, the two-page spread makes multiple references to consumer products; an infomercial. Here, the home is laid down across the centre of the spread and its insides are open; a body dissected. Different parts of the home are indicated by arrows and these arrows link such parts to written summaries of symptoms, diagnoses and remedies for the ills experienced by people as a result of the home being a sick place.

Several issues arise from this representation. First, while there is no specific reference to women, the feature appears in a women's magazine (and not in the *Financial Review* or *Business Weekly*) and its anticipated audience is women, who continue to perform the vast bulk of domestic work in many Australian homes (Bittman 1991). *The woman who is here before me is called Thelma Sparrow; she has four children and now lives just down the road from her daughter in another suburb. When she leaves and we come, we explore the traces of her existence and then stamp our own markings on the place.* Second, the individual parts of the home that are shown are feminised spaces; there are no dens, garages, sheds and other sites typically gendered masculine (Johnson 1993). Third, nature is constituted as problematic. Its moisture leaks into the home, causing mould and mildew. Its winds bring dust, germs and particulate pollution into the air flow of

the home. Its energy fixtures, while useful tools for cooking, lighting and heating, bring other emissions into the home. Pets, those lovable icons of home life, are dangerous carriers of disease that is hidden underneath all that fluff and fur. Alongside all these emanations from nature there are all those leaks and oozes that stem from other products ultimately derived from nature but modified by human technologies - paint, carpets, telephones and the like. So according to this representation, nature and its by-products have significant potential to make us sick.

There are also certain advertisements and products designed to focus on the body of nature itself, marketing items as alternatives to products that will make nature sick. Some of these items are generated by organisations established to further the cause of environmentalism. In the 1990s, the Wilderness Society, Greenpeace and the Australian Conservation Foundation have all launched retail programs and, without exception, these have been only partly successful. Some of the reason for this poor retail showing may be that these organisations are funded at levels far below major consumer outlets. These organisations may also have over-extended themselves in terms of the range of products made available to members of the societies and of the general public. Be that as it may, the catalogues that these organisations produce to market their products all celebrate the beauty, diversity and fragility of the Australian and other environments, and assert the need to protect nature even while gaining access to its more wild parts. In all cases, nature is construed as 'out there'. Cities and other sites that bear the brunt of high levels of human impact are not commodified as natural places, and it appears that these sites are viewed as causing the degradation of the real nature, that wilderness 'out there'. They are unhealthy.

Other organisations focus on the body of nature to suggest that their activities will not harm that body. Nicole Mazur (1995) analyses the involvement of McDonalds in the construction of the Sydney Taronga Zoo Orang-utan Rainforest enclosure. Mazur states that:

> There are signs positioned at the two entrances that display the McDonalds name and famous golden arches. Additionally, there are banners placed throughout several other areas of the zoo that display the name of the exhibit and the McDonalds logo. Not only does it appear as if McDonalds is utilising the exhibit as a public relations and advertising platform, but the hidden message is that McDonalds is caring for, and looking after, the rainforest (1995, 35).

Mazur points to the spurious implication that providing a small and artificial habitat will make things better, will make elements of the earth and its non-human inhabitants well again. These actions serve the company far better than they do nature. *Nature is a body, a text to be read, a symbol to be strategically deployed for a range of philosophical and political purposes.*

Finally, there are other extractive industries whose public relations officials have been capitalising on the image of a nature restored to former glory following the removal of forests, minerals and other resources. The Australian Mining Industry runs one advertisement showing an Australian five cent coin engraved with an echidna, and below it a photograph of a real echidna curled in the same pose. Between these images are the words "The Australian Mining Industry wants both of them to multiply" (in McEachern 1995, 20). Here, the company makes a connection between the possibility of realising large profits from mining and protecting ecosystems in which mining activities are undertaken. As McEachern (1995) notes, these rhetorical strategies are powerful factors in how companies come to influence public sentiment and government policies on mining. While critics of other extractive industries may choose to dismiss such rhetoric, McEachern

argues that they should "use the obvious material interests of the mining companies to expose the shallowness of the rhetoric of nature as it is deployed ..." (1995, 21).

THE CONSUMING PASSION FOR NATURAL HEALTH

Bryan Turner (1984) suggests that embodiment involves having a body and being a body; that is, being both subject and object for the self. Moreover, he observes that embodiment is a necessary but insufficient condition for social membership. I would add that a hallmark of social membership is adherence to the ethical and moral codes established within and by that society. Of course, one of the paradoxes of this adherence is that, sometimes, dissent and transgression are moral acts that appear to disrupt the overriding ethical systems in place in a given society.

In general terms, though, all kinds of discursive and social practices are inscribed on the body, which then becomes a text to be read for various meanings. Health and illness are among a range of signs that can be deciphered on the body. Homes are bodies also. Some house families whose relations appear to correspond to what is deemed healthy and natural. Some house cleaner air, purer water, safer soil and more aesthetic and healthy surrounds. Nature is a body as well. Perhaps it is some kind of *anima mundi* (Bishop 1994); perhaps it is Gaia, alive and conscious. Either way, there are powerful stories suggesting it is sick, makes us sick, can be made well, can make us well.

These various ideas about bodies, health and nature are underpinned by the production and consumption of specific things in particular ways allegedly to secure our health, the well-being of our homes and the delivery of nature from disaster. Have we come to rely on the idea that consumption will help in the mitigation of the evasively-labelled environmental crisis? Certainly, this alleged reliance is gambled on by the environment movement and large corporations alike in the marketing of their products and ideologies. Information technology and the information city are also held up to us as ways by which to stretch the bounds of (virtual?) reality. Yet when nature becomes the 'big room' for children whose exposure to the world is filtered by such things as virtual reality games, the question must be asked - how is it that we are not sufficiently critical of the system(at)ic degradation of late capitalism and remain unable to link its effects to the denial of social justice and society.

The commodification of nature in the pursuit of health is therefore a powerful force in the privileged west during the late twentieth century. It is also part of a continuing regulation, a disciplining of bodies, a biopolitics in which individual and collective subjects are constituted and surveyed. This commodification is about people celebrating difference and competition while becoming increasingly embedded in the homogenising and normalising political and economic effects of a globalised political economy. We congratulate ourselves for the creation of near-perfect and healthy human bodies, for designer homes, for environmental actions on the body of nature. We revel in the mesh of desire, need and crisis. We chastise ourselves for immoral acts and unethical systems of living. It is a complex and polyvalent discourse.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

In this chapter, I have provided evidence about how health and nature have been commodified in diverse ways in a range of discourses emanating from scholarly and policy driven arenas and from the popular press. I have suggested that, as a set of practices by which to secure natural health, consumerism operates according to gender and other categories of meaning, and functions as a moral discourse in relation to the bodies of the home and nature as well as in relation to human bodies.

Furthermore, I have argued that many of the recommendations presented in documents advocating better health, the pursuit of healthy environments and the widespread involvement of women in environmental management are admirable. All statements are partial, and while these documents go considerable way to addressing many of the health and welfare problems of Australian society at the present time, in my opinion they remain deficient in how they conceptualise the feminine, the home and nature. In part, this deficiency arises because these discourses emanate from sources whose philosophical assumptions rest on pluralist understandings of the individual, the state and power, and the functions of modern democracy.

I have also argued that two distinct forms of environmental message have been colonised by business and advertising in selling products that are complexly connected to ideas about health and nature. Some products carry messages about being environmentally friendly, others suggest that the use of the product will make us feel closer to nature, some carry both. These messages are also often strongly gendered, with most either being directed to women or using feminine representations to appeal to women. There are also messages about how the home is an interface between the feminine and the natural, a space that is pathological or well depending on the influence of these other categories.

Finally, I have suggested that this commodification of nature is part of a biopolitics, a government of bodies and selves. It is a set of practices that is generative of certain kinds of knowledge and power effects, of difference, sameness, interiority, exteriority and other divisions. What remains to be addressed is whether, what and how there might be any links between the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in health discourses in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. This subject and related matters is the focus of chapter nine.

9

THE SCAFFOLDS OF TIME:
THEORISING MULTI-DIRECTIONAL HISTORY

> How will the new pluralised imagination work in the telling of something as complex as a history? Who is writing the new postmodern histories - the ones which constantly exhort us/enable us to imagine the story from other points of view? Which go beyond cataloguing diversity to imagining difference? Which are radically self-conscious about the issue of whose story it is that is being told, about the multiple relations between stories of the past and lives in the present? Which understands the multiplicities of identities which each of us habitually bears and creates as we make our ways about the world? Which depict both the continuities and placedness of the indigenous populations, and the shifting aesthetics of the 'migrant dreamings' of Australia, without making one seem to negate or diminish the other? Which admit the existence of the two sexes and their differences? Which have a politicised but also cultural sense of the relations of the colonial Australians to the empire which abandoned them here? There is a great desire for such histories in Australia now. Maybe they can't be written by one prophetic person - by a postmodern Manning Clarke figure. But it is time to start forming the collectives that will produce them (David Goodman 1994, 53).

INTRODUCTION

By interrogating the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature, I have examined health discourses in two periods, suggesting why the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries are particularly apposite for this research. Throughout this process, I have been working through the question of how I might bring these two periods together in conversation; it is a technique that Foucault himself did not attempt and he has left no traces for others to follow. Currently, Gail Reekie (1994a) is working on examining various parts of history using textual fragments and she, too, has noted how challenging a 'comparative' approach might be in poststructural work, particularly if one accepts the idea that history is partial or discontinuous.

Therefore, one of the most intriguing aspects of this research has been to ask how we make the narratives that come to be construed as history, knowledge and power. This chapter presents some of the fruits of such theorising. It is important to note that in preparing to write this chapter, I have revisited Foucault's work with fresh eyes, as well as examining again two pieces in particular, 'What is Enlightenment?' (Foucault 1984a) and 'Nietzsche, Genealogy and History' (Foucault 1984b). In order better to appreciate the thoughts on history that are demonstrated by some of his intellectual antecedents, I have also gone back to read from the original, translations of Immanuel Kant's theories on space and time in *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1991) and his original essay on 'What is Enlightenment?' (1784/1959), as well as analysing Friedrich Nietzsche's treatise 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' (1874), published in *Untimely Meditations* (1983). Beyond these, I have also read Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth's (1992) challenging critique of representational time and the uses of postmodern narrative in that critique. My interpretations of material from these texts, along with my understandings of Foucault's positions on archaeology, genealogy and ethics, informs the work undertaken in this chapter.

Now, I want to experiment with time and history, because of their profoundly complex links to embodied subjectivity, power and knowledge, and thus to the formulation of ethical and moral positions. First, I elaborate on how I conceive of the connections between the late nineteenth and

late twentieth centuries, drawing on the work of the aforementioned writers. Following this explanation, I develop a conversation among three friends, Form, Substance and Abstraction, as they muse about their respective roles in changing both meaning and significance. In this story, I engage with the various themes that have been discussed in the dissertation to this point. Finally, I make some additional comments about what I am calling the multi-directionality of history, using primary documents from two women's recollections of a period spanning from the latter years of the nineteenth century to the present.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

In several of his works, Foucault writes of the modern episteme as an epoch in which several pervasive changes have influenced how we constitute ourselves as subjects and others as objects. Among these changes, he nominates as significant to this subject/object split the rise of modern science, the creation of the western individual of rationalism, the development of biopolitical forms of governmentality, and a concomitant emergence of practices of normalisation and transgression. Although Foucault's methods are supposed to require a devotion to detailed and specific historical analysis, he accepts as unproblematic the currency or exchange value of terms such as 'the Victorian era', 'the Enlightenment' or 'the Classical period', and he is not alone in this practice. Clearly, though, he accepts that there are different epochs in historical time and that this modern period with its modern episteme is only one among these. As Jan Goldstein (1994, 14) suggests, this conception is the archaeology of Foucault's work: that which examines the verticality of "successive cultural forms, stacked one upon the other so as to emphasize their self-containment and radical difference from one another ...". Alternatively, genealogy is the horizontality of cultural forms, and the resulting historical "narrative is resolutely non-teleological: events are eruptions; outcomes are local and radically contingent, never adhering to a global necessity ..." (Goldstein 1994, 14).

One question that arises here is whether Foucault views historical discontinuity as something between or within epochs, or both. If history is discontinuous, then can we still conceive of time in terms of epochal elements, or is there an internal contradiction in Foucault's work? On the one hand, there is an implication that history occurs in distinct lumps, whose internal heterogeneity is not initially made explicit by him. On the other hand, there is the notion that history is composed of localised, contingent and polymorphous events. There is an apparent dilemma in these positions. However, *if* one accepts a basic proposition that the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries are two periods within the modern era, influenced by the discourses and social practices of the modern episteme, *then* it is still possible to suggest that there are discontinuities between the two periods even as they exist within the same epoch. From this base, an additional question must be posed: is any putative sameness and difference between these two periods a matter of sameness and difference of abstraction, substance or form? In other words, is the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in health discourses basically consistent across the periods in terms of abstract ideas and meanings, changing only in terms of the specific ways in which such ideas are conceived and given form? If so, is form an important issue to consider, despite our traditional intellectual concerns with substance and abstraction? Or is there a radical break in the conception of these categories between the two periods as well as in how they are represented?

Foucault and Kant

In 'What is Enlightenment?' (1784/1959, 85), Kant asserts the necessity of *daring to know* as the first step to enlightenment, arguing that people's domestication by the guardians has made them cowardly and lazy: "If I have a book which understands for me, a pastor who has a conscience for me, a physician who decides my diet, and so forth, I need not trouble myself. I need not think ...". Kant proposes that enlightenment of the masses and their guardians alike follows in the steps of freedom, and that the exercise of reason is instrumental in these procedures. Here, Kant makes a distinction between public and private uses of reason. He suggests that public reason is that which critiques, for instance, the system by which taxes are levied; it is scholarly in nature. Private reason is expedient and remains obedient to the rules of society; for example, it is that which motivates us to pay our taxes. In other words, freedom brings restrictions.

> Here is shown a strange and unexpected trend in human affairs in which almost everything, looked at in the large, is paradoxical. A greater degree of civil freedom appears advantageous to the freedom of mind of the people, and yet it places inescapable limitations upon it; a lower degree of civil freedom, on the contrary, provides the mind with room for each man to extend himself to his full capacity (p.92).

For Kant, free thinking results in people learning how to manage freedom and become dignified and enlightened.

Foucault's essay on this Enlightenment question (1984a) suggests that, in making a distinction between public and private reason, Kant points (respectively) to the ethical and political deployments of reason in society. Enlightenment is to be a contract between rational despotism and free reason. Foucault notes that Kant's text is a reflection on Kant's own present, and argues that Kant sees Enlightenment as a 'way out' which avoids reference to some essence of past or future. Enlightenment is maturity, implying that we must eschew the influences of external authorities and have the courage to use our own reason. It is both a process undertaken collectively and an obligation undertaken personally. According to Foucault, it occurs "when the universal, the free, and the public uses of reason are superimposed on one another ..." (1984a, 37). For Foucault, the dilemma is that we cannot be guaranteed that the public (ethical) uses of reason will be assured in a system of rational despotism in which the private (political) uses of reason require obedience to the system.

In my assessment, the novelty of this intertextual 'exchange' between the two thinkers occurs after Foucault moves away from a direct discussion of Kant's essay. Suggesting that the essay by Kant is a hallmark of modernity, and having acknowledged that 'modern' and 'postmodern' are troublesome labels, Foucault proposes that these terms stand for attitudes (ethos) rather than for epochs (history). Furthermore, he argues that Kant is conscious of the discontinuity of time, and of its ephemeral, contingent and fleeting characteristics, to my mind suggesting that modernity represents a particular ethos premised on the centrality of rationality and progress, and attempting to cope with discontinuity by constituting stabilities and uniformities where equally one might find ruptures and differences. Modernity is an attempt to recapture that which is allegedly eternal within (not beyond/future, or behind/past) the instant of the present. Foucault considers that this acknowledgment of time is also an acceptance of the will to heroize, the desire to indulge in ironic play and in spectatorship. Here, I think he is much more indebted to Nietzsche than to Kant, whose essay makes no explicit reference to such revelries.

Foucault's critique of Kant is based on his own conviction that there are both negative and positive elements to the formulation of Enlightenment, but that a 'for or against' approach to it remains within a counterproductive dialectical between 'good' reason and 'bad' unreason. Again, Foucault's emphasis is not on the 'why' of these matters, for the answers to that question remain embedded in ideas about truth and progress. Foucault instead asks 'how' do we become "beings who are historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment ..." (1984a, 43). Foucault also argues that the Enlightenment is an event imposing necessary limits on teleological conceptions of time. In asking about the present, about its improvement and its obligations, Kant moves from the universal to the specific, from transcendent substance to particular form, albeit a form that is based on idealism. Where there is limitation, Foucault argues, there is transgression. If Enlightenment is critique, and if critique is positively limiting and recognises the historical specificity of events, then criticism is no longer absolutely tied to the apron strings of universalist projects: it becomes a program of the present creating the present.

Foucault and Nietzsche

Nietzsche's essay 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life' was written in 1874 and is published with three other essays in a collection entitled *Untimely Meditations* (1983). It is a passionate and erratic paper, sometimes asserting ideas that are tremendously insightful, sometimes invoking all manner of sexist and classist opinions. Foucault's debt to Nietzsche is transparent. Nietzsche's debt to Kant may seem less clear and yet, like Kant, he focuses on themes such as heroism, maturity, the need to be daring in learning and in knowing oneself. Again, like Kant, Nietzsche also concentrates his critique of society, directing his comments on power and knowledge at the level of institutions, extending his vision to examine how embodied subjects are constituted through institutional means and come to resist these same techniques.

Nietzsche begins his commentary with an observation about the differences between non-human nature and 'man':

> ... the animal lives *unhistorically*: for it is contained in the present like a number without any awkward fractions left over; it does not know how to dissimulate, it conceals nothing and at every instance appears wholly as what it is; it can therefore never be anything but honest. Man, on the other hand, braces himself against the great and ever greater pressure of what is past: it pushes him down or bends him sideways; it encumbers his steps as a dark invisible burden which he would like to disown ... (p.61).

In this essay, Nietzsche's primary assertion is that history has come to dominate the present and, while necessary to society, it should be in balance with the unhistorical; the *health* of the people suffers if their lives are oppressed by the weight of the past (pp.67, 80). Developing this argument, he proposes that 'man' is influenced by history in three ways, "as a being who acts and strives, ... who preserves and reveres, ... who suffers and seeks deliverance" (p.67). These three states of being correspond to three "species" of history, the monumental, the antiquarian and the critical.

For Nietzsche, monumental history is a belief in the ability of the past to be used strategically to expand the idea of 'man' into something of everlasting greatness. He suggests that it is this push for infinite glory that ignites our most dreadful conflagrations, since "he lives best who has no respect for existence ..." (p.69). Nietzsche criticises monumental history for a tendency to rely on approximations and generalisations, and because it is a collection of effects in themselves that

produce effects in future ages. In this way, history becomes invention, mythical fiction. When monumental history dominates antiquarian and critical forms of history, the past itself suffers: "whole segments of it are forgotten, despised, and flow away in an uninterrupted colourless flood, and only individual embellished facts rise out of it like islands ..." (p.70). Finally, Nietzsche suggests that monumental history is used in the present to keep innovation and challenge in abeyance; the dead bury the living (p.72).

Antiquarian history is that which reveres the past and ignores the present. It is valuable "when it spreads a simple feeling of pleasure and contentment over the modest, rude, even wretched conditions in which a man or a nation lives ..." (p.73). However, reverence for the past strangles the present and the future; Nietzsche argues that antiquarian historians only know how to preserve life, not to engender it. The culmination of all this history, all this aggrandisement, reverence and disciplined searching for knowledge is humanity devoid of life, dead from the inside through loss of culture and reverence only of the knowledge of old cultures: "we have nothing whatever of our own ..." (p.79). We have become cleaved into inner and outer, substance and form; we have fallen apart into these binaries. Here, it might be anticipated that Nietzsche would lament the putative loss of substance in life. However, he argues that form is not equivalent to disguise, mask or convention, although it may be manifest in these things. Rather, he proposes that, in its originary state, form is art, style, aesthetics; a desire to be natural, although nature is inaccessible (p.80). Content without form is impossible to perceive; abstraction without praxis is poverty stricken. In other words, Nietzsche is suggesting that we must find positive ways in the present to constitute ourselves as culturally vigorous, alive subjects and resolve the binary oppositions that have been historically invented to split form from substance, outside from inside.

Critical history -genealogy - is that which judges and condemns these other tendencies that threaten life and vigour in the present. Nietzsche observes that the men who practice this form of history are both dangerous and endangered. He proposes that we must create in ourselves, and with stern discipline, new forms of living - a new second nature - from the fruits of critical history:

> It is an attempt to give oneself, as it were, *a posteriori*, a past in which one would like to originate in opposition to that in which one did originate: - always a dangerous attempt because it is so hard to know the limit to denial of the past and because second natures are usually weaker than first. What happens all too often is that we know the good but do not do it, because we also know the better but cannot do it. But here and there a victory is nonetheless achieved, and for the combatants, for those who employ critical history for the sake of life, there is even a noteworthy consolation: that of knowing that this first nature was once a second and that every victorious second nature will become a first (pp.76-77).

Thus, Nietzsche's final assertions are organised around the idea of effective history or genealogy: "... to become mature and to flee from that paralyzing upbringing of the present age which sees its advantage in preventing your growth so as to rule and to exploit you to the full while you are still immature ..." (p.95). This point marks a radical departure from the kinds of assertions made about maturity by Kant. Where Kant sees private reason (politics) and public reason (ethics) as an productive combination of the effects of rational despotism and enlightenment, Nietzsche eschews obedience to historical conventions, knowledge for the sake of knowledge and the cultivation of culture as fashion not art.

Foucault's essay on 'Nietzsche, Genealogy and History' (1984b) demonstrates his debt to the German philosopher. Foucault builds on Nietzsche's ideas about effective history, elaborating on how such history emphasises discontinuity. Where traditional history upholds the idea that time is a stable element in life and nature, effective history is designed to disrupt the myth of continuity. Such history marks the entry of what Nietzsche calls the masked other (1984b, 88). In other words, Foucault is suggesting that our desire to believe that the present is constructed on the firm foundations of a stable past is counter-productive to "the true historical sense [which] confirms our existence among countless lost events, without a landmark or a point of reference ..." (p.89).

The other substantial debt that Foucault owes to Nietzsche's work is in his discussion of the possible effects of genealogy on life. Nietzsche stresses the crucial role of art and style, of form, on how we constitute ourselves as subjects. Foucault suggests that these elements of expression are often best fostered by acts of play:

> ... the veneration of monuments becomes parody; the respect for ancient continuities becomes systematic dissociation; the critique of the injustices of the past by a truth held by men in the present becomes the destruction of the man who maintains knowledge by the injustice proper to the will to knowledge (1984b, 97).

These disruptions to continuous history - that is to history founded on principles or beliefs of teleology, stability and 'selective memory loss' about the other - are designed to accommodate new visions of history as effect rather than as cause. History that is constituted in a present time (as all history is) remains partial. We cannot imply total continuities between those documents that now belong to our past and those documents that belong to our present.

A Method of Entry into Theorising Multi-Directional History

For Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth (1992), the postmodern subversion of representational time and orthodox history involves a critique of everything that is located 'in' such time. Necessarily, this critique depends on language, on a redefinition of time as "a function of position, as a dimension of particular events ..." (1992, p.11). She argues that orthodox history and representational time constitute a language or languages serving discursive and social functions. Alternatively, postmodern uses of parody, irony and concern with form and style seek through language to challenge the myth of western rationalism and metaphysical truth. Effective history (genealogy) evokes other myths that disrupt continuity, stability and other elements of the 'grammar, syntax and semantics' of orthodox history. Nonetheless, Ermarth is frank enough to admit that these postmodern strategies are constrained, and her comments are apposite in relation to my own project:

> ... this text "about" postmodernism is written in the language of representation; it produces meaning, assumes a consensus community, engages in historical generalizations and footnotes. In short, in my own writing I do not entirely live up to the postmodern call, a methodological problem I recognize and settle in my own conscience with several assumptions. First, I assume that one need not give up history to challenge its hegemony, although I admit the perilousness of the undertaking and the ironies of the situation in which history must recognize its own historicity. Second, I assume that the play, the alliterating thematic echoes of a text, as of a life, may be heterogeneous to "meaning" and yet remain always in sight of it. Third, the essay form ... permits among specialists a kind of "literature" or bridge of language that is endlessly allusive and intertextual *because* there exists a community of discourse ... Fourth, I assume a discourse community but I write at risk ... (1992, 14).

Following these various qualifications, Ermarth goes on, among other things, to examine the themes raised also by Kant, Nietzsche and Foucault by exploring postmodern narrative language and the ways in which it undermines orthodox time and history. She introduces the concept of rhythmic time designed to change the neutrally dialectical, teleological and transcendent in history, abandoning the *cogito* for a subjectivity based on the idea of "I swing, therefore I am" (after Cortázar's novel *Hopscotch* which she analyses). In postmodern conceptions of time, history is neither cultural imperative nor natural essence; it is configuration, conjunction, arrangement.

Three of the most popular mythic story lines in environmentalism involve particular and modernist conceptions of history. The romantic-nostalgic line proposes that the arcadian times are behind us rather than before us, arguing that we can recreate this bountiful and harmonious world again if we can just find those missing pieces of historical evidence to show us how. The liberal-progressive line suggests that humanity has progressed along some evolutionary trajectory, that we are more advanced, more rational and better in our approach to nature and to each other than we used to be. The revolutionary-futurist line asserts that we are not progressing under present systems and that the past holds few if any lessons for how we can best improve our relations with each other and with nature. Nothing short of revolutionary change will see us clear of the environmental mess in which we have placed ourselves.

These three myths construct history and time (past, present and future) as repositories for knowledge and power; as things of substance rather than as complex and embedded social constructions of form, of body. Notwithstanding the general desire to commune with nature - that is to change the manner in which we conceive of our place 'in' nature - in my opinion these narratives also constitute nature as something tangible that can then be related to in instrumental terms. Even among ecocentric environmental positions, where the alleged intrinsic value of nature is vehemently argued, concerns about the relationship we have to nature remain (necessarily) tied to the anthropocentric.

I cannot quite abandon the idea that there is, indeed, an environment out there beyond my conceptions of it, no matter how much the informal dictates of 'post' theories might require that of me. I have already noted, at least for the purposes of argument, that I make a distinction between the possibility of environment as a 'noumenal' entity and the possibility of nature as a linguistic construct and phenomenal entity, focusing on the latter. My analysis has not been of instrumental and intrinsic values of nature, except as these positions are expressed in the discourses and social practices of health reform in Australia, and inscribe particular meanings onto the bodies of the feminine, the home and nature. In my analysis of these categories of meaning I have been centrally concerned with the metaphor of embodiment and its articulation as subjectivity, with the issue of power and the production of knowledge, and with the use of time and history as disciplinary tactics.

It is at this point that my earlier questions come into play. *Is any putative sameness and difference between these two periods a matter of sameness and difference of abstraction, substance or form? In other words, is the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in health discourses basically consistent across the periods in terms of abstract ideas, changing only in terms of the specific ways in which such ideas are conceived and then given form, or is there a radical break in the conception of these categories between the two periods and not simply in how they are represented? Is discontinuity therefore a matter of 'substance' or 'form' and what effects might this*

distinction have for how we proceed? I now think that the concept of discontinuity needs to be augmented in particular ways. As Foucault acknowledges, in the modern episteme certain continuities do exist at the abstract or conceptual level and these abstractions may be traced from the late nineteenth century and earlier to the late twentieth century in terms of how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted in health discourses. What is less clear is whether the substance of discourses and social practices about health is discontinuous between the periods. More importantly, what is most intriguing is to ask whether and how the form, the style, the art of the debate changes. In different ways, Kant, Nietzsche and Foucault all stress the art of living, of governing the self in ways that produce 'enlightened' subjectivity. Part of this art is a focus on what Foucault calls technologies of the self, aesthetic and ethical methods by which to constitute our embodied selves and by which to live correctly. These matters impinge on form as much as they do on substance.

Thus, I think the way to theorise the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature in Australian health discourses in two periods is to view these categories as continuous abstractions influenced by the foundational myths of the modern episteme, and yet as discontinuous in substance and most particularly in form, being products of two different presents. Furthermore, I am suggesting that history involves these two presents in an exchange, a multi-directional exchange. The past is its own present, and constructs these 'nows' in relation to multiple pasts and futures. The present, too is its own series of 'nows' as well as being the futures that belonged to the past. Some of its pasts were the past's own present, and its futures may embrace some of the past's extended visions of futures. In other words, linearity and discontinuity are not sufficient metaphors by which to explore time. Multi-directionality opens up a layeredness to time and history, a connectedness and a space for differences.

FORM, SUBSTANCE AND ABSTRACTION (AN HEURISTIC TALE)

Form, Substance and Abstraction were sitting around the dining room table one night, eating a meal together as three old friends are wont to do. They got to talking about a particular research project in which they were implicated. It was a topic in which the researcher was attempting to theorise across two eras within one episteme, using poststructural insights, the metaphor of the body, and the injection of the subjective into academic writing. The real bones of contention among the three was first an issue of content: whether or not they changed or remained the same in the specific context of the researcher's work, that is across these two eras; and second an issue of procedure: whether they would use Platonic or poststructural story-lines to speak about this topic.

Abstraction suggested that continuity, indeed, had been retained, and insisted on Platonic means to speak, being so long used to that method and quite resistant to major changes.

"Look," she said, "we've all been friends for a very long time now, although there are days when I swear I cannot recognise you Form. And you both know that some things just never change. Take those really nitty-gritty questions, the ones that get you right where you think you live; existentialism, ontology, destiny. It doesn't matter how you cut that cerebral cake, these questions just keep popping out and saying 'hey, we're still here, you guys!'"

"Oh, you mean ..." started Substance.

"Yes, precisely." replied Abstraction. "The Big Questions. Who are we? What are we? Why are we and why are we here and not there? where? Could someone please tell us what good and bad really are? And while you're at it, how about giving us a hint about right and wrong? Look, what exactly is our nature? Nature? Is culture nature? Can that be natural? I mean ... well, you know. And, what about those other things, social categories of meaning like gender and class, or race and place. Where do they fit in?"

"It sure does keep them entertained," smiled Form.

"Busy as hell for millennia," agreed Abstraction. "Then they get worried about whether there is a difference between the vehicle and the passenger, and ask all these questions about embodiment, about mind and matter, spirit and body, health and illness, and the real doozey, life and death. They want to know - they've always wanted to know - how to get one more day out it all. How do we change things? they say. What happens next and later and when we die? Do we die?"

"Yes, and then they begin to look outside of themselves again and want to know about all the other vehicles and passengers," said Substance.

"Right," said Form.

"Indeed," said Abstraction, "those sticky little issues such as what other things should have rights? what sorts of rights for what sorts of contexts? all contexts? And the one that really cracks me up is the question about how do we become? How do we constitute the meaning of our selves and our lives? You know, these questions just never seem to change."

"Well, now, I'm not sure I can completely agree with you on that score," began Substance. "You know that western people have had this tendency to organise things, so that time for instance becomes a series of linear lumps where each lump has certain internal consistencies and where they argue that the time they are in is usually better than all times before. And you know that there is this big debate now about whether they are still in the modern era with that modern episteme that all those fellows were tinkering around with from the 1600s, or whether they have now entered a postmodern era. Well, anyway, just suppose that they are still in this modern era (cause let's face it, most of them simply cannot tolerate the idea that they don't exist except as a series of faults, fractures and linguistic constructs), then surely this era is different from, say, an earlier era with a different name. You know, the substance of these things changes between eras; it just isn't continuous. And yet, things change, things remain the same, at least within one era. I don't think the substance changes much in one discrete period of history. And these two eras are part of the same modern episteme."

"Certainly the substance of the debate changes between eras," agreed Abstraction. "Not only does it change from one epistemic lump - or era if you will - to another, but I think you could safely say that, unlike abstraction, it changes within a particular era depending on the time, the context, and the discourses and social practices that are being generated and circulated in various forums."

"Don't you mean forms?" quipped Form

"I'm not so sure about that," said Substance, ignoring Form. "Take this research topic that the woman is working on. There are, indeed, certain continuities from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century. Those ontological and existential questions about life and living, and the ethical and political dilemmas that arise from the very act of living, are questions that in abstract terms seem

to be concerns of every era. But I still maintain that the substance changes little within one epistemic tradition."

"State your case then," said Abstraction, safe in her own status as a survivor. Form kept quiet, listening intently and looking from one to the other of her companions.

Warming to her topic, Substance said "Well, I think that one of the main continuities sits somewhere between Abstraction and me. When a vanguard movement or movements become involved in trying to create a climate for social, political or cultural change, what do they do? Well, they produce a multitude of discourses and begin to modify their social practices (usually documenting how such modifications can be maintained by individuals and populations). Often they are concerned to make such changes in society because they have a firm belief that their vision of correct living is better than the vision of either the majority or the powerful (which frequently are not the same).

"Of course, such transgression is not always widespread or public, as evidenced by the existence of secret societies, and because transgression is not always undertaken by those with access to the means by which knowledge can be readily transmitted. Even so, transgression is almost always bound to be met with resistance from those whose position in society is threatened. Such resistance may come from the powerful by use of coercion, cooption and other disciplinary means. Or it may come from the mass of people who simply choose to ignore the messages that the vanguard or vanguards are trying to convey. Indifference is a superlative killer.

"Now, I don't mean to imply that these various groups of transgression and normalisation are always mutually exclusive," said Substance. "Someone in a vanguard of the environmental movement might be really orthodox in approach to women's issues, for example. Radicalism in one arena of life is no guarantee of the absence of conservatism in another arena."

"Indeed not," agreed Abstraction, "Despite the fineness of the abstract questions that they ask, and the rigour with which they develop these allegedly watertight ideologies meant to address such questions, people aren't very consistent, are they?"

"Well, no they aren't" said Substance, "But that is part of their charm and their danger, don't you think. And you know, resistance and normalisation are slippery customers. The messages of the vanguards often are subtly colonised into the mainstream. As this colonisation occurs, the heat and passion of the vanguard is tamed, and yet in this very act of dilution an infiltration of transgression into the orthodox does occur."

"Especially now with the use of the media and consumerist drives of desire," said Form. "And this is just up my alley, you know."

"Ah, yes, but just a minute now Form," said Substance. "We still haven't come to the bottom of whether or not these matters of substance are continuous or not. I certainly think there is something in this argument, no matter what your Monsieur Foucault suggests."

"How so?" asked Form.

"Well, look at the obvious points of comparison. There was a public health movement in the late nineteenth century, and we now have vigorous environmental and community health movements in the late twentieth century. Surely these are indebted to the former era, indeed built upon it? And think of all those movements last century that were designed to extend ethical consideration to animals - the anti-cruelty and anti-vivisection campaigns, the push for vegetarianism. Just how

different in substance are they from campaigns in the present? Or the labour movement and the women's movement? Assuredly the environmental movement embraces much more than did the conservation movement of the last century, but even Henri David Thoreau stands as a challenge to the current idea of thinking that nature has intrinsic rights is a twentieth century invention. Even the new age movement has antecedents in spiritualism, the occult and theosophy, herbalism and homoeopathy. So where, I ask you, is the discontinuity?"

"Why, yes," said Abstraction, "I begin to see that matters of abstraction may be continuous over great spans of time but that matters of substance can also be continuous within epistemic eras."

"You know," began Form, winding her finger over the edges of plates and the stems of wine glasses, "Foucault's argument was not that simple. Hang on while I get my copy of *The Foucault Reader*, will you?"

While she was out of the room, Abstraction and Substance cleared the table and put on the coffee, snuffling around the fridge for that block of chocolate they had bought earlier.

"Yes, here it is," Form reappeared, chuckling. "Although how unlike me to be worried over matters of substance and abstraction! Still, these issues actually impinge on my very be-ing. Right, listen to this, you two.

> Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form on all its vicissitudes. Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations - or conversely, the complete reversals - the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to all those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth and being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents. This is undoubtedly why every origin of morality from the moment it stops being pious ... has value as a critique ... The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration. Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body [that's on pages 81 and 83 of the 1984 edition by Rabinow]

There was a pause. Abstraction and Substance looked at one another and across to Form and together said "So?"

"So, we are talking at cross-purposes. You are discussing issues of abstraction and substance, and arguing that abstract ideas are continuous across many periods, and that the substance by which these ideas are dealt with in one episteme is also continuous. I am talking about discontinuity and about form in its broadest sense: appearance, configuration, embodiedness, particularity, arrangement, style, assemblage, combination, pattern, set, conduct, method, inflection, detail, frame, shape, fashion.

"All these points that Substance has made about the putative continuities between the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries seems reasonable enough on the surface. Look at any history text and the comparisons will be drawn just so. Early feminism established particular trends in society that caused the rise of second wave feminism. Early public health reform established other trends that caused the rise of community and environmental health. The nature of the home as a central element in the constitution of the individual, the family and society has not changed since

Adam and Eve. Our relationship to nature can be traced back to the Greeks or to Genesis or both depending on your alliances. These are the putative continuities.

"What exactly are you Substance? Are you the underpinning idea? No, that is Abstraction, isn't it?"

Abstraction nodded defensively, "That's me, all right."

"Well then, Substance here is content, isn't she? The particular but broad scope and domain of an issue, a field of knowledge. Doesn't seem to change if the shape of an issue changes. The substance of the debate around what it is to be one of these dualisms, the feminine, the home or nature is just that, the substance. The guts of the matter. And you are suggesting that these innards don't change. Well, I don't know, maybe they don't. Maybe there is some essence to the debates irrespective of whether they are raging in the late nineteenth or late twentieth century, but I don't think so; not fully anyway. If you take that position, you are simply looking at the connection between Substance here and you Abstraction. You ignore the relationship between Form and Substance.

"Look, I don't want to sound arrogant, but you guys forget me at your peril. I am Form. That means I am the embodiment of things, their corporeality, the thing you sense, that you can read or touch or smell, taste or hear or see. I am the thing that will not go away, although I am ephemeral; that will not stay the same, although I am always here; that is the surface between inside and outside, between the exterior and its depth. I am the language, the lexicon and grammar, the semantics and pragmatics of a thing. I am the colour and the context, the size, shape and weight, the texture and tone, hue and design. I am that which inscribes the very binaries that you spend all your days constituting and wresting with. I am night and day, male and female, old and young, sick and well, nature and culture, the public sphere and the private realm. Now you see me, now you don't. You think of these things as secondary, art not life. I tell you they are not, for each of us is a wealth of change, heterogeneity and revelry."

She paused. "We've been together a long time, haven't we?"

The others nodded.

"Anyway, what is discontinuous in the two eras the woman is looking at, since so much of it seems as though it could be interpreted as continuous?" Form paused again. "What about the constitution of the feminine, indeed of the human in general? It seems to me that one major discontinuity lies in the complex constellation of discourses around what it is to be a desiring embodied and feeling person. That changes the value of the self, you know, the value of subjectivity. Women are subjects in our community, despite all manner of challenges yet to be overcome. We aren't simply adjuncts anymore. Even the old essentialist ideals about women's natural place in the natural order has splintered, along with certain ideas about women's specific relationship with the phenomenal world, the home, the workplace, the environment. And don't forget the changes to how we have constituted nature as intrinsically of value, outside of any consideration about ourselves.

"Now, this might be a matter of changes in substance and abstraction, and these changes might be indebted to some continuities, but I tell you the form has changed. It is in how we speak, think, feel and write our meanings that the discontinuities are found. The woman's work demonstrates this. The texts she has chosen from two eras demonstrate this. The language is

different; the meanings have changed. And language speaks us. It constitutes us. And if the language changes, then that which we think of as reality also changes; it is discontinuous from that which comes before and that which will come after. All these similarities that you assert are noted from the perspective of the present. You are drawing a line of origin from one era to another but you are nominating cause only from a position of effect. But what of all the transgressions that the woman notes in her work; the contradictions to the norm in one era or another? The fact that some women and men were trying to constitute the meaning of the feminine, the home and nature in ways that appeared radically different at the time, at both times. That some women and men were resisting these new linguistic constructions, these new forms of living and being by upholding those naturalised myths of traditional linguistic constructs? When someone stands up in a community and says, against the prevailing tide of opinion "I will not submit to silly fashion rules, isolation in the home, archaic methods of child-rearing, food adulteration, cruelty to animals, jerry-built houses and a toxic waste dump in my city" they are chafing against a form of living. Of necessity they will need to find new forms of living, art, government, self-discipline and regimenting others. They are attempting to introduce discontinuities into their lives, to challenge that seeming legacy of sameness that makes historical time a pall, and to find new ways of expressing a change of substance by inscribing these changes on their bodies, their homes and their worlds in terms of the forms that these bodies will take henceforth. They do so by using time in a multi-directional way - gazing back to Arcady, gazing forward to Arcady, creating Arcady in manifold temporal and spatial distortions of their own. Transgression and normalisation, consumption and production, health and illness, power and knowledge; all are implicated in these wrestles among what we need and want, and how it is that we come to express these needs and wants. In life as in art, in life as art, these streams and strings of apparent connection, these fragments, and fault-lines and networks seem so complex. The forms are complex, and so are the substances and abstractions. But I think I agree with Abstraction, you know. I think it comes down to those tricky little questions that we design for ourselves. What are we? where are we going? and what is the correct way to live in the meantime?"

She paused. "I'm tired. Let's do the dishes and put on the fire."

"You know," said Substance, getting up and stretching, "the matter simply cannot rest here. There is so much more to say, to think. The woman herself is not sure where to draw the line, that little mark of closure."

"It'll rest here for now," said Abstraction. "Trust me, there will be another story about it tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow."

"Maybe so," said Form, "but its style and inscriptions will have changed, and its meaning cannot stay the same once these have shifted."

TEMPORAL BRIDGES: A GESTURE TO ELSEWHERE

How and why to imagine the past, make it self rather than other, make it part of an ethical framework that one can understand? Depending on how far 'back' it is, I cannot talk to the past. I can only reach some history through texts; formal archival documents, magazines and pictures, diaries and letters. However, I can talk to living people about their memories of a past that is part of the present they once lived. In trying to feel the period from the 1870s to the era after 1905, I asked

my mother to tell me about her own grandmother, with whom she spend three months in every year from the time she was 8 until she was 18 years old. Laura Shepley was born in 1874 and died in 1943. The conversation that Kate and I recorded about my great-grandmother Laura is fully transcribed in Appendix One. It provides my mother's perceptions of something that is part of her early past, but was of her present, and of her grandmother's present. It also represents how my own mother is able to put together a composite and shifting picture of her grandmother and, to some extent her grandmother's era, on the basis of personal knowledge and more general information absorbed over the course of intervening decades. Moreover, in hearing these descriptions about my ancestors' pasts, I came to associate with them - "this is of me, this is not of me". In very important ways, Kate provides a temporal bridge over which past and present (and even future, as I keep my son in mind) wander, back and forth, constituting different meanings about the feminine, the home and nature.

> Well, Laura must have been born in 1874. She was both typical and atypical of her era in ways that I will try to explain later. When she was eleven she was taken out of school because of the death of her mother and she remained at home to house-keep for her brothers (I'm not sure now whether there were three or four) and her father. She would have been 16 in 1890 and in 1892 she would have been married for six months when she had her first baby. I don't know whether the fact that she was pregnant prior to marriage affected her, but it affected her eldest daughter Evelyn, my mother, throughout the entire period of her life ... because the concept of virginity up to the marriage ceremony was very strong in those days and in fact for another 50 or 60 years at very least. During that decade she had three other babies. They were all girls and the youngest one must have been born in I think 1899. The eldest one as I said was Evelyn Alberta, the next one was Hilda Gladys and I think she probably was born in 1894. Louise Ethel was probably born 1896 or 7 and Gertrude Ann would be 1899. Then she had no more children, although at that time she could only have been about 25 or 6, and it was a matter of intrigue as to the cause of her lack of further conceptions. There was a vague rumour whose source I cannot remember that she had found a way to prevent conception. What that way was nobody seemed to know ... She was very much really in charge of the home and of the domestic details, and these sorts of things would certainly have been her purview ... As a person she was a very quiet, silent woman. Not withdrawn so much as indrawn. She had a strong sense of responsibility. The home was impeccably kept. I can recall that the blinds and the curtains had to be open by a certain time or you were considered to be lazy, 8 o'clock in the morning; if they were closed beyond that time except on holidays, that was a sign of ... well, a household that wasn't all that well run ... I know I wondered about her childhood, and I wondered about how at 11 years old you could cope with a house and a family of men but, although I think I probably might have ventured to ask her questions, she was not forthcoming. She didn't squash me or tell me that she was angry or upset or anything, she just avoided the issues and um ... I'm not sure what the reasons might have been for this reticence. And also her daughters didn't talk about that early period or a great deal about the early period of their lives ... I think that she was a strong role model. She was for me; whether she was for her daughters or not - to the degree that she was for her grand-daughter - is difficult for me to um ... ah ... be sure. I can basically only speculate and ... she always gave the greatest encouragement [pause, tears, broken voice] ... for academic successes, for doing well in school and, very quietly, you could tell from her non-verbal behaviour that she would be very pleased when you had done very well in school. Probably this was a surrogate situation for her too ... Very courageous little woman ... [long pause, broken voice] I was always so very conscious that she was so, as I said, she wasn't withdrawn, she was indrawn ... for reasons that never ever became clear. My grandfather always called her Ma. She was Ma for her daughters - not Mother, Ma.

In this quest to feel pasts of my own and others' creation, and yet pasts that have common elements with other interpretations, I have also examined diaries and letters written by women in the 1890s and held in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana. Often, these documents are yellowed and musty. A surreptitious sniff of the onion skin or bond paper covered with copperplate script might reveal a hint of lavender or toilet water, as did the writings of Elsie Birks, who in 1895 was a twenty year old school teacher in Murtho, a communitarian village settlement near Renmark in South Australia. The words record what might be thought of as simple fare: news of loved ones - spouses

and sweethearts, children, relatives in other branches of the family; details about the books read, such as Barry's *Margaret Ogilvy* or Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*; rough sketches of garden plans or dress designs; information on a particularly effective recipe or curative; discussions about the finer points of walking through meadows and taming nature for the people.

No monumental or antiquarian history here, although Birks does become involved in critical history later. We do not simply touch the past of others, living or dead. We also tap into our own pasts, as Elsie Birks did in 1945, fifty years after writing about her journey from Adelaide to Murtho. In a letter to one Elizabeth George[1], Birks critically reflects on a time that had once been her present; this time being fifty years into her past:

> [letter from The Wilgas, Gilgandra, on 24 April 1945]
> Whether or not you are to gain anything from this correspondence, I certainly am getting quite a lot of fun, from hunting up old records and letters, living again in the past, trying to think of any other ways to help you. My house gets sadly neglected in the process and I must hope that visitors will ring up before coming. The trip up the Murray was a joyous adventure to all us young folk. To Father, it spelt emancipation from the chemist shop which he had always hated, but took the first job offering at 12 years old when his Father died. (He was John Birks, one of the six Birks Bros of Adelaide and the last of them to die, at the age of 83.) But to my step-mother I imagine it must have been a nightmare to leave a comfortable 12 roomed house at Woodville, with a large garden and orchard, where a maid was always kept and a "wash lady" came weekly; to move into three large stone rooms and a wide verandah which was later partitioned into four more rooms. To do without a bathroom (although we could bathe daily in the River), and to take four very young children so far from our family Dr (although he truly said we would not need him there) and to have to bake bread and make butter for our family of eight or nine; do the washing herself and the house-work and cooking, I know she often used to faint after getting into bed at night.

"But to my step-mother I *imagine* it must have been a nightmare ...". Was Birks' step-mother another reticent or "indrawn" woman, like Laura Shepley, faced with the seemingly unchallengeable reality that *this* was the lot of women, to wrestle with bodies and homes, health and illness, culture and nature? Either way, Birks has also created an historical figure in her step-mother by interpreting her own past in the light of her present.

What Kate Stratford and Elsie Birks have done in bringing their pasts back into their presents is to reconstitute both as a dynamic that I will carry forward into a future that is very different in form, and increasingly different in substance if not abstraction (for I think the significant ethical questions to which Abstraction referred above remain surprisingly stable). Constrained and yet empowered by our culture's metaphor of linear time, Kate, Elsie and I - along with a multitude of others - are able to reflect on our lives, recognising the radical transformations to meaning brought about by changes to the form and substance of those lives. The form of change that has been wrought over the century between the late 1800s and the late 1900s is representative of massive, rupturing discontinuities to the modern episteme. Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth (1992) reminds us that these discontinuities (these multi-directional exchanges and challenges) need not be feared as apocalyptic visions: loss of order, reason and progress, and morality. It is to the question of morality and ethics that the discussion now turns.

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[1] Elizabeth George collected the Birks papers, and donated them to the Mortlock Library.

FIGURE 18

There is something infinitely tender about soil (photograph by Philip Hutch)

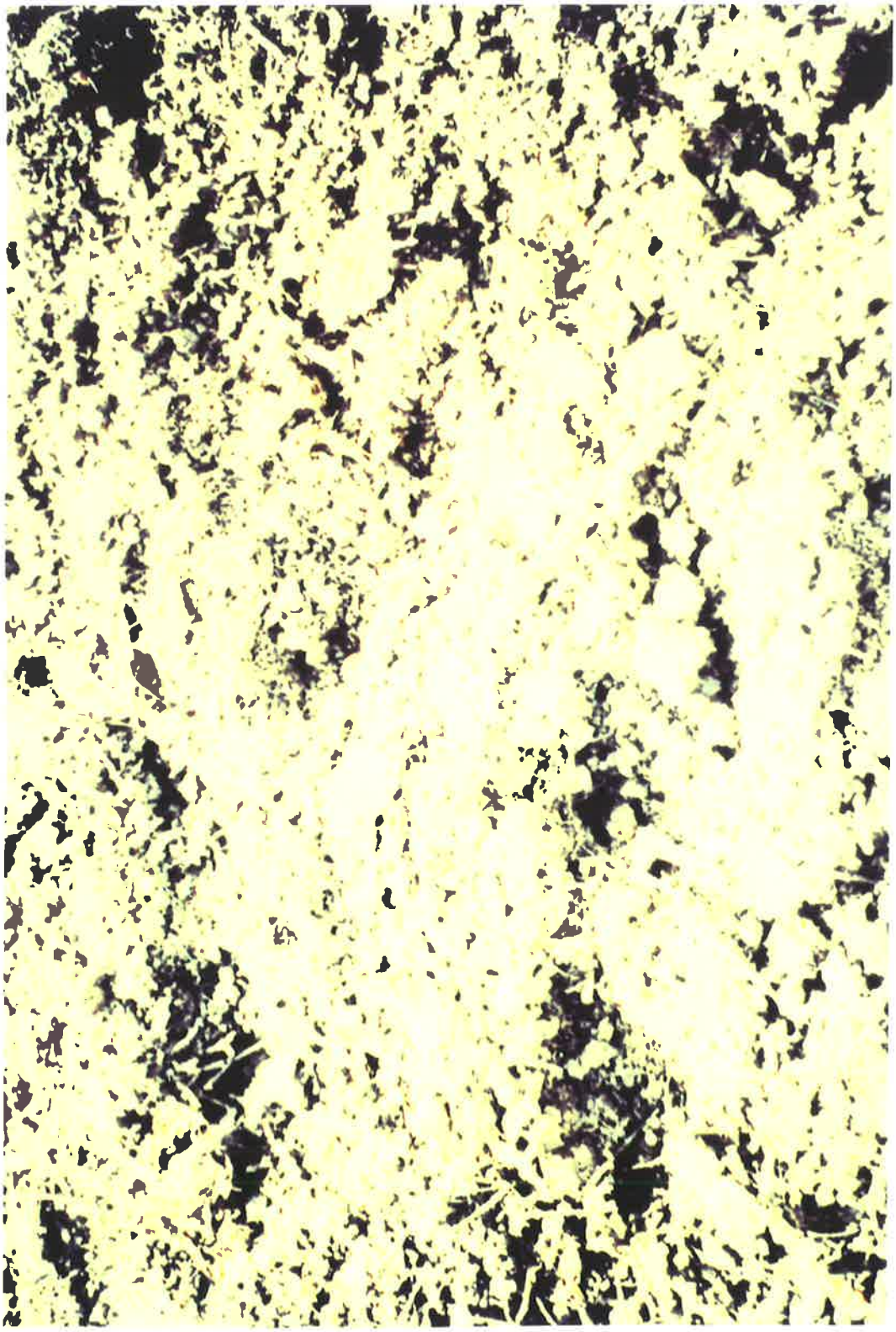

FIGURE 19

Yesterday she notices the first snowdrops poking their shoots above the mulch
(photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 20

Sink Strainer (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 21

Still Life - and Death (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 22

Caged Lion (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 23

Squatting Figure (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 24

The Aged Hand (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 25

Still Life with Night Cream (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 26

Snail in the Garden (photograph by Philip Hutch)

FIGURE 27

Every Bath Should Feel This Good (*The New Weekly*, 6 June 1994, p.42)

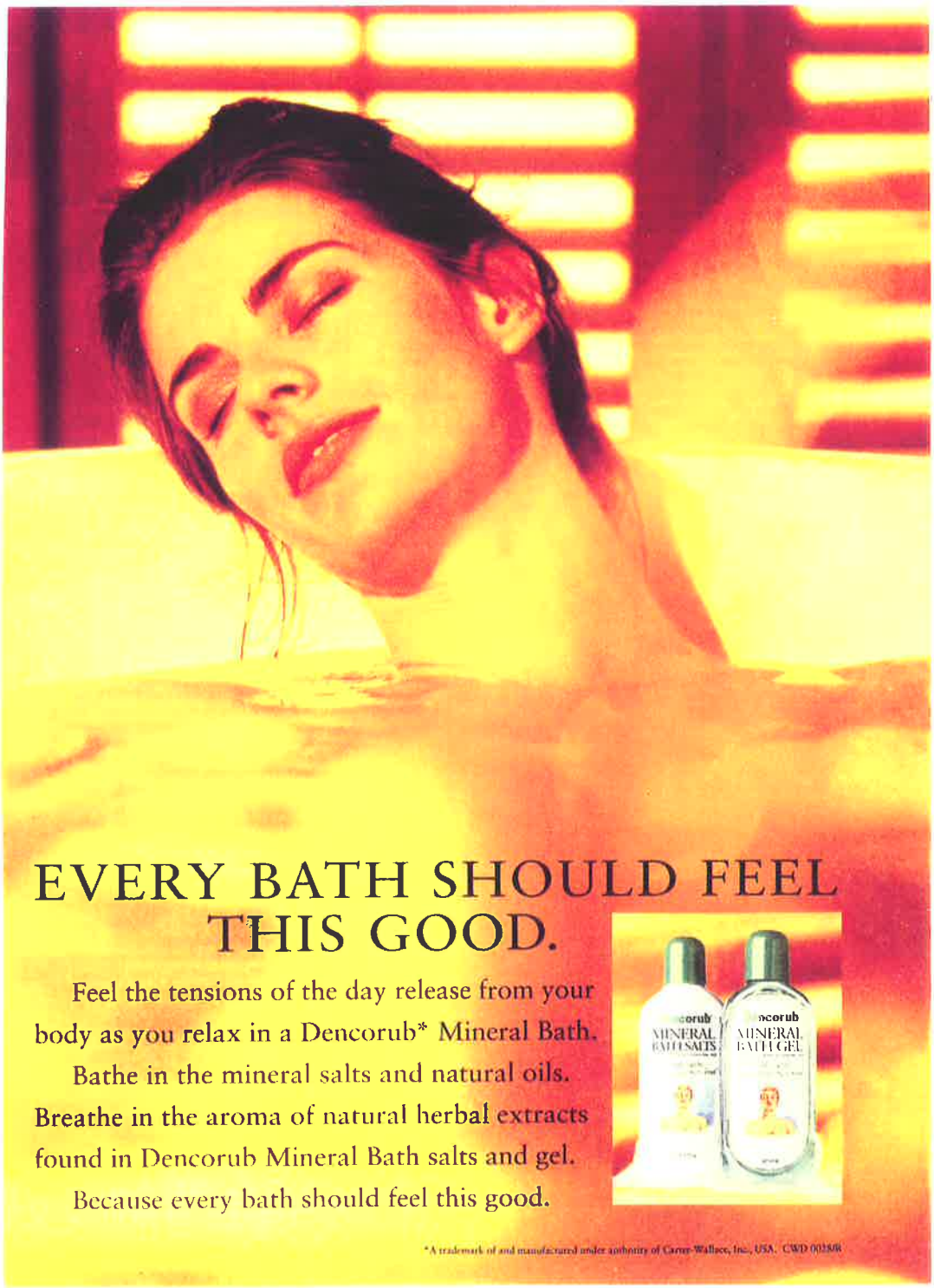

FIGURE 28

Soy Life Picked Straight from the Fridge (*The Australian Women's Weekly*, December 1994, p.228)

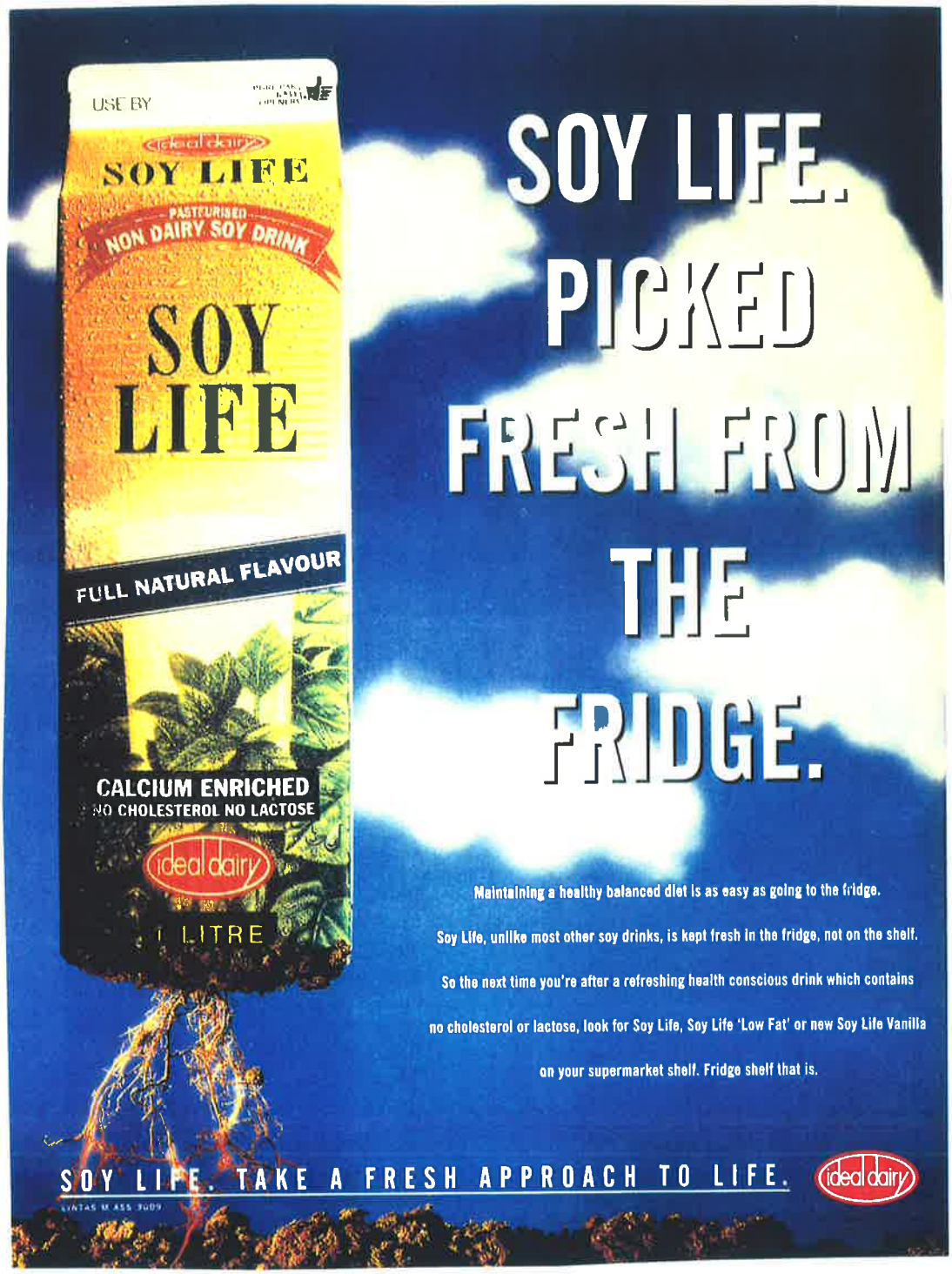

FIGURE 29

Which Tampon Will You Choose? (*The New Weekly*, 5 September 1994, p.95)

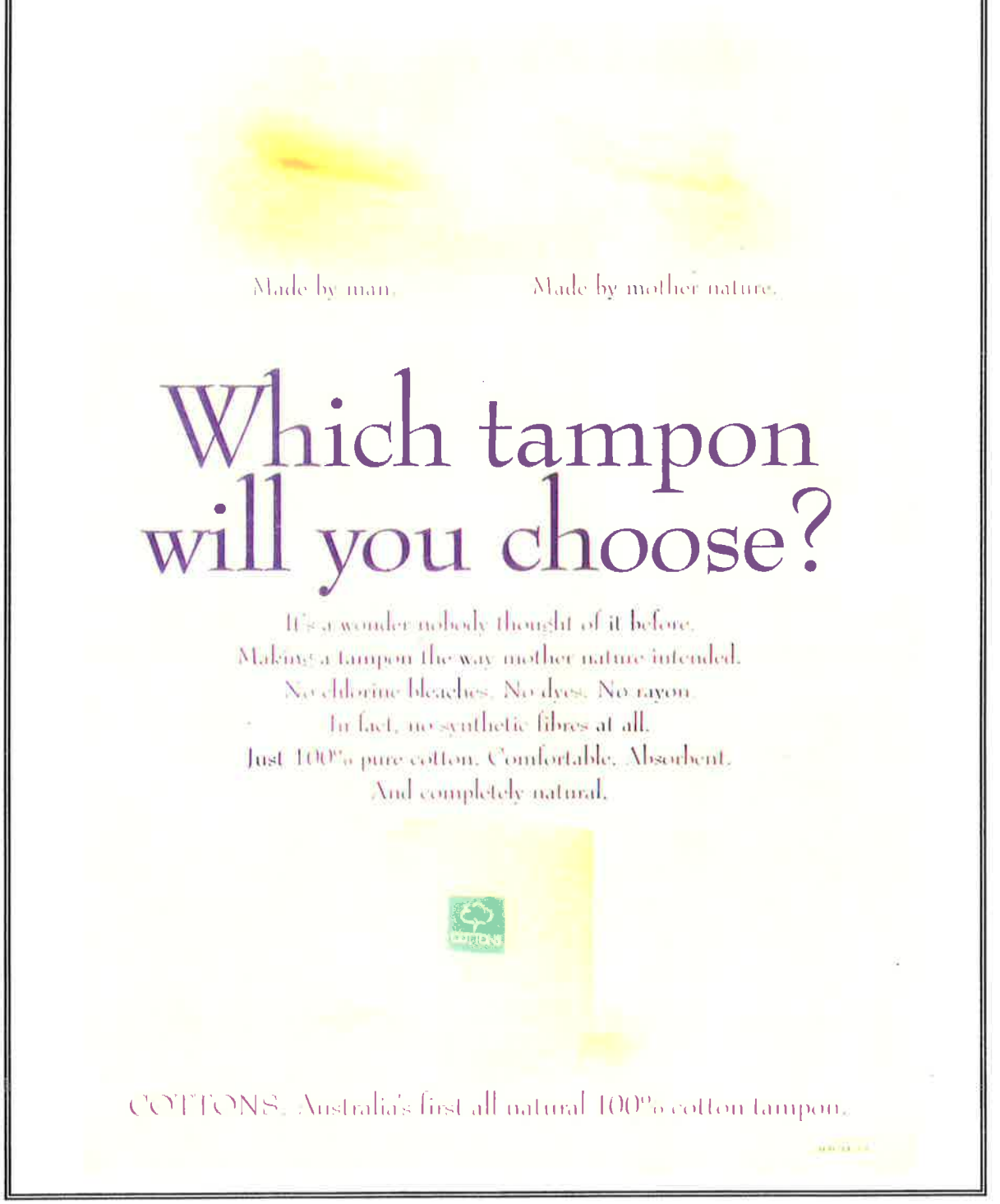

FIGURE 30

What Could Relieve PMT Better than a Bunch of Flowers? (*Who Weekly*, 11 July 1994, p.49)

FIGURE 31

You Couldn't Resist It If You Tried (*Who Weekly*, 5 September 1994, p.17)

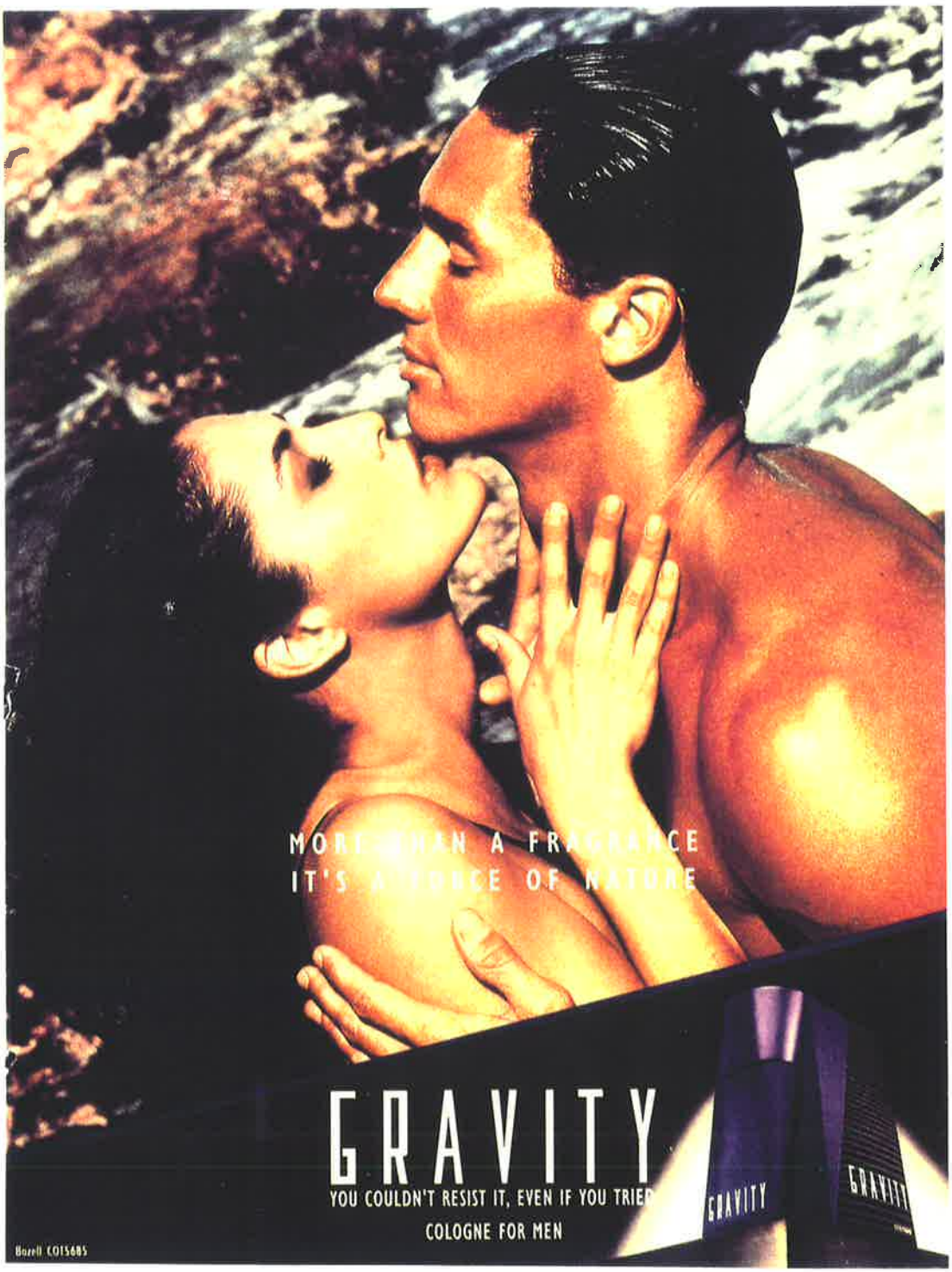

FIGURE 32

If It's Better for the Environment, Great. But ... (*Who Weekly*, 3 October 1994, p.3)

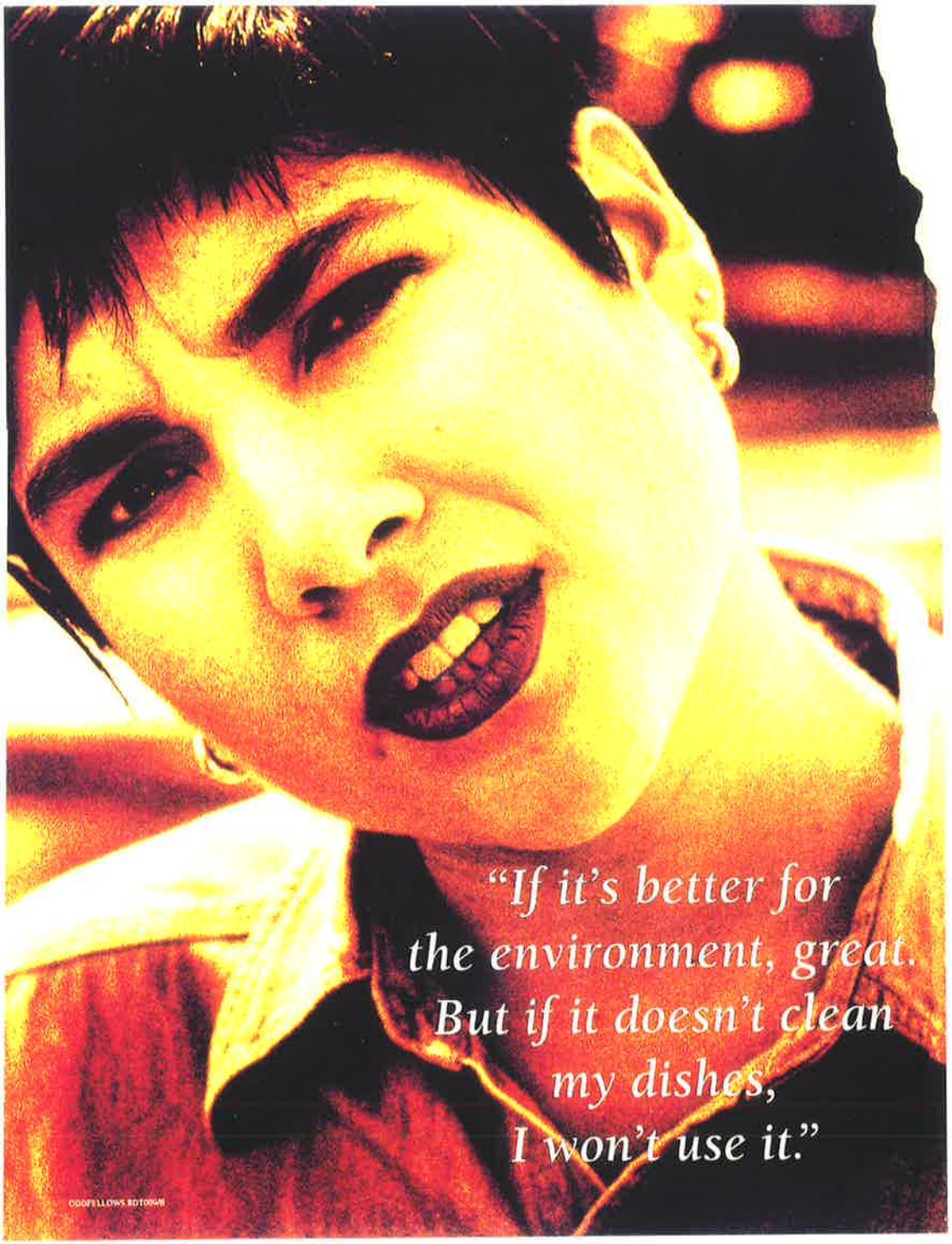

FIGURE 33

Hardie's Ageless Weatherboards. Friendly to Nature and to Owners (*The Australian Women's Weekly*, February 1994, p.247)

Hardie's ageless Weatherboards. Friendly to nature and to owners.

No native forest trees are felled for Hardie's Weatherboards or Hardiplanks. No toxic chemicals or preservatives are necessary to protect them from the elements and they won't rot, burn or attract termites.

So whether you prefer the traditional look of Hardie's Rusticated Weatherboard, the smooth finish of Hardie's Old Style Weatherboard, or the stylish appearance of Hardiplanks, you'll not only enhance your home but protect the environment too.

Call Hardie's now on 008 021 321 and they'll send you our free colour brochure which gives you all the good news about our environmentally friendly building products.

HARDIE'S fibre cement building products

FREE COLOUR BROCHURE
Phone **008 021 321**
or post this coupon to:

James Hardie & Coy Pty Limited

BEWARE Your HOME could make y

Bugs and beasties, fumes and germs ... the place where you live may not be as healthy as you think. But don't panic – there's a lot you can do to make it fit and well

Clean means healthy

DON'T let the cleaning cloth from the bathroom be used in the kitchen – it'll spread bacteria and germs.
DON'T mix cleaning products or use two or more chemicals in the toilet – it could be dangerous to combine them.
DON'T use the kitchen sink for dirty jobs such as cleaning shoes, washing out the rubbish bin and so on. Keep it for food items and washing-up.

DO keep all your cleaning cloths separate – never use the same ones for surfaces, dishes and floors.
DO use separate utensils for feeding your pets – and don't let them jump on the work surfaces.
DO use a good-quality household disinfectant on all surfaces which are likely to come into contact with hands.
DO change bath and handtowels regularly – dirty towels and face washers just pass bacteria back onto clean hands and faces.

Wipe out all the damp

● *Colds* ● *Aches* ● *Chills*

Musty bed linen and furnishings, mildewed clothes in cupboards, mould spots on walls ... if these are familiar, beware! Damp can make you ill – and it'll rot timbers and rust metalwork, too.
TAKE ACTION: Act as soon as you see the signs – dampness on the inside of windowsills is a sure giveaway. First check that ventilation is adequate. If your damp problem is bad, call in a damp-proofing specialist. Meanwhile, wipe mould off walls with diluted bleach and make sure appliances are properly vented, especially tumble-driers and free-standing kerosene heaters.

Every room needs fresh air

● *Listlessness* ● *Congestion* ● *Chestiness*

Good ventilation gets rid of bad smells and helps prevent condensation and damp. Plugging gaps to exclude draughts can cause problems, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. Windows, doors, chimneys, air bricks and grilles are vital for fresh air and good health.
BREATHE AGAIN: Check ventilation regularly. Extractor fans eliminate smells and keep air dry. Ionisers and vaporisers help clean the air and are great for dust or pollen allergies.

Gas appliances poisoning you?

Animals can bring in pests

Pangs from paint

FIGURE 34
Beware, Your Home Could Make You Sick (*The Australian Women's Weekly*, June 1994, pp.64-65)

PART IV

EXAMINING THE ETHICAL EDIFICE

10

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

> Finally, we are presented with ways of acting, in spite of, or in the fact of the 'postmodern abyss'. All of these writers challenge us to acknowledge and respect difference, or diversity, without being paralysed by it ... These writers have not lost sight of certain key principles of the Enlightenment - justice and equality - but they have seen through the exclusivity involved in the application of those principles. They are calling for a new, more inclusive moral vision, shaped by the consciousness of the borderlands, informed about racism and sexism, xenophobia and homophobia, homelessness and poverty. They are offering a theory of social transformation, based on an oppositional worldview ... and a powerful critique of the dominant culture ... rooted in communities of resistance ... informed by principles of justice and equality, caring, tenderness and love (Leonie Sandercock, 1995 forthcoming, 31-32).

SUMMARY

In this work about Australia in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries, I have approached a complex question about how the feminine, the home and nature are constituted and contested as part of a biopolitics of life, a discourse on health (chapter one). I have emphasised several other related issues: embodied subjectivity, time and history, power and knowledge, the metaphor of the body and the manner in which these constructions sites are ethical and moral terrains. The research has been informed by two assumptions: that meaning is contingent and that history is partly made in the present. I have suggested that time and knowledge are richly multi-directional rather than continuous or discontinuous, both of which imply a singular linearity that is characteristic of modernity. I have also placed the study in the context of interdisciplinary feminist and environmental poststructural scholarship.

I have outlined how these questions of theory are indebted to poststructural and specifically Foucauldian methodologies, and indicated how other scholars - including those in environmental studies - have used his work with much promise. I have also responded to three particular critiques about such poststructural approaches (chapter two). First, Foucault demonstrates a limited explicit grasp of how forcefully gender inscribes other power effects onto feminine bodies, subjects and populations. However, this lack does not mean that his insights should not be used within feminist scholarship, and his work on surveillance, governmentality and normalisation are particularly applicable to how the feminine, the home and nature have been constituted in our society.

Second, Foucault's relativism has been viewed as political weakness. In my opinion, this charge is countered by three things. One is Foucault's own considerable political activism. Another is his later confessions about using relativism as an heuristic device. A third is the emergence of various movements whose members acknowledge the liberating effects of his studies. Indeed, in our society complex relations among language and meaning, power and knowledge, and ethics and morality require us to embrace sceptical and relative positions, whether we choose to acknowledge such a requirement or not. I have illustrated the relativity of our lives by examining the heterogeneity with which we have constituted the discourse on health and the meanings of the feminine, the home and nature in this discourse.

Third, some of Foucault's critics fear that abandoning modernity - and any sense of reality beyond our linguistic construction of it - renders 'a nature in crisis' improbable if not impossible. They see such an outcome as false, misleading and dangerously distracting. In response, it can be argued that our conceptions of nature are indeed mediated through language, and that nature is a polyvalent symbol. Nevertheless, environmental limits do exist. Foucault was keenly aware of the material world, suggesting that if we could answer questions of *how* we constitute ourselves, each other, and the contexts in which we live, we might be able to more sensibly address ethical and moral questions (see various essays in Rabinow 1984). This is why I have made the constitution - the meaning - of particular phenomena my focus in this research. So, my response to critics who suggest that the linguistic turn in analysis threatens the safety and political edge of claims about pending environmental dislocations, is that of course the possibility of limits brings the possibility of crisis. What intrigues me and has been central to my work is asking *how* we conceive of these limits, these crises, our bodies and selves, and *how* we organise society to cope with these challenges in ways that we think are ethical and moral. The archaeology and genealogy of the discourse on health is one small part of a much wider and more penetrating discourse on the constitution of the ethical subject. As I pointed out in chapter one, deliberations about these various issues are made all the more complex because of the shifting quality of meaning in language: none of the characters with whom we deal is guaranteed to hold still for us; heterogeneity must be embraced and accommodated.

Primarily, then, I have focused on those strategies in health discourses that invoke the feminine, the home and nature in diverse ways. These sites of meanings are bodies - vessels into which polyvalent meanings have been poured. They are contested terrains, substances on which normalisation and transgression are given effect through adherence to or resistance against surveillance, governmentality and discipline . I have also proposed that the body of the home - *oikos, domos* - has been neglected in environmental studies, demonstrating throughout the research that there are fascinating and complex issues of feminism and environmentalism that intersect at this construction site.

Certain contemporary stories of British and Australian health reform that constitute these categories of meaning in problematic ways have come under scrutiny here (chapter three). I have, for example, analysed how the body is a site for the shifting construction of binaries such as wellness and illness, sameness and difference, discipline and deviance but is rarely acknowledged as such. I have also suggested that the body thus becomes a site on which different moral codes are inscribed.

In exploring an archaeology of the feminine, the home and nature in *late nineteenth century* health debates, I have outlined what I consider to be some of the important features of this era (Part II). In general terms, I have argued that contradictions in meaning arise from the play of forces among diverse groups and subject positions, and I have alluded to the idea that these forces are influenced by pervasive, ideological and naturalised moral discourses about what is cultural, masculine, public and healthy, and what is not.

I have also proposed that in philanthropic and professional circles, the popular press and the legislature, women and men have created many different and dissonant measures by which to discipline unruly and pathogenic nature in ways that have served to reinforce the position of women

in the home and, conversely, in ways that have also given effect to a broader political profile for women. They have also sought to celebrate the bounty seen to exist in healthful and harmonious nature, which is viewed as a blessing to corrupt culture. Again, these forces and plays of meaning are bound up with discourses about what is ethical and moral, disciplined and healthy, normal and correct.

In specific terms, I have suggested that the constitution of health has involved an ethical and moral debate and that meanings that were ascribed to bodies and selves, power and knowledge, were produced through various disciplining strategies. In the case of the Australian Health Society, for example, methods to educate the public about health involved producing statements where some behaviours and events were viewed as moral, others as immoral. Often, these prescriptions emphasised diverse categories of meaning - not simply gender, location and putative connection to nature or culture, but class, education, ethnicity, religion, politics, age and so forth. In the case of the population debate, the same generalisation can be made. In both discourses, the home was viewed as a crucial site in the drive to healthy and moral nationhood, and women were seen as particularly and naturally suited to this project. Not surprisingly, these debates were not without contest. Birth control, for example, could be viewed as healthy and moral or unhealthy and immoral, depending on who produced the discourses about it and how.

Furthermore, the feminine was also seen as an important body on which to express not simply the natural beauty and goodness of the woman but of her whole family: her body reflected the moral order of the home and its occupants. Paradoxically, a nascent ethic of consumerism was part of this production of the natural feminine body and yet particular kinds of consumerism were also rejected in campaigns to protest profligate cruelty and thoughtlessness. In these various contests, nature was generally viewed as a stage set to human action. The extension of moral consideration to animals was partial and problematic (as it remains). By and large, instrumental values dominated discussions about animal welfare, although there was a limited radical edge to these issues.

In relation to such issues as food adulteration, home economics, and the safety and health of the home, the prevailing myth about women being the natural occupants of the home was only partly challenged in this era. This cult of domesticity was a narrative about who was inside or outside a moral order. Healthy and functional homes and families worked within a particular regime of discipline - cleanliness, productivity, heterosexuality, conformity, which is to say adherence to the explicit and tacit rules of the dominant cultural norms. Anything beyond this regime was transgressive, unhealthy, immoral - unless one was part of the group which was resisting such definition, and then one adhered to a whole other range of disciplines that were, themselves, normalising. A partial exception to this flexibility derives from the reification of particular ethics and morals at law as noted by the passage of the South Australian Public Health Acts. Nominating in a legal framework what is right and wrong, how these are to be measured and enforced, or their transgression punished, changes how particular discourses work, because it tends to solidify myths about who or what is normal or deviant, healthy or unhealthy.

In *the late twentieth century*, discourses remain about having and rearing children, extending ethical consideration to animals, providing hygienic and safe homes occupied by healthy and natural people imbibing pure and wholesome foods, and living in ethical ways; the form and substance of these debates have changed and sometimes radically so (Part III). For example, some impediments

to women's involvement in society have been successfully challenged on the grounds that sexism is unethical. Nevertheless, informal and institutional barriers remain to gender equity. Paradoxically, for example, women can still be viewed as the natural occupants of the home and as potent custodians of nature in diverse discourses including those - such as ecofeminism - that purport to enhance the pursuit of equity. These discourses, too, impinge on what it is to be a moral woman, an ethical citizen of the earth.

In moving to explore a genealogy of the feminine, the home and nature in the late twentieth century, I have made myself part of the research, using memory-work to explore my own embodied experiences of femininity, domesticity, and the natural, particularly as these are expressed in concerns about health and morality. I have examined how these concerns are commodified in bureaucratic documents which function to promote allegedly new forms of living in our bodies, our communities and nature, also examining how natural health has been commodified in the recent popular press. Finally, extending beyond the particular themes addressed in chapters three to eight, I have used the device of a short story to explore how changes to the constitution of my four chosen categories may have gained effect in terms of abstraction, substance and form.

I have also proposed that our conceptions of living are influenced by the ways in which we tell the stories of our culture, a process which is neither fully unilinear nor fully discontinuous. Indeed, these stories are complexly multi-directional and such fluidity allows for the production of counter-memories and counter-narratives: stories of difference, the local and the micro-political, that challenge the political and philosophical effects of binaries such as those with which I have been concerned. What are some of the conclusions that might now be drawn about this research?

CONCLUSIONS

In his last works, Foucault expresses an interest in the ethics of living - how we constitute ourselves as subjects and others as objects, and how we accord value to these. I noted in chapter two that Foucault moves from archaeological to genealogical concerns, and then to examine the discursive and material constitution of the self, values and truths. I also alluded to the idea that the discipline of bodies and subjects, the writing of time and history, and the production of knowledge and power comprises a series of acts in which the other is rendered similar: for how can we descend from the other? The real challenge begins when we realise that the construction of otherness - what was simply framed, in this case, as the feminine, the home and nature - is extremely complex. The other is a constantly shifting terrain, and its membership depends on the ethical and moral positions that we occupy.

In my opinion, such matters of value attribution are central to continuing research in environmental studies and feminist research. The body, the subject, spaces and places, health and nature are all moral categories. They are social constructions whose specific form can be changed radically, and yet which remain powerfully embedded in narratives about what is good and bad, right and wrong, or possessive of value. In a crucial way, then, this work has been concerned with exploring meaning - with construction sites - and with establishing that meaning itself has certain properties that impinge on our discourses of morality. It is part of the development of an

environmentalism indebted to poststructural insights, concerned to examine language and meaning, and the ways these function in environmental scholarship, policy and praxis.

Meaning requires contrast, which raises the spectre of hierarchy (masculine/feminine, public/private, culture/nature, health/illness). It is context-bound, which raises the spectre of temporal and spatial determinisms (the era in which I live is more moral than yours was; we are more progressive; this place is ill; you have transgressed in this site). It is arbitrary yet readily fossilised and reified, which raises the spectre of naturalisation (it is natural for women to be primarily responsible for the home and its occupants, and for them to be closer to nature; this connection is precious, is pathological). Meaning is micro-political, inscribing such contrasts as sameness and difference or inside and outside, themselves highly charged and shifting moral categories, onto small sites such as the human body or the home (I am normal, you are normal; they are abnormal). It is meta-political, giving effect to sites such as the suburb, cities, regions and nations (this place is sick, this place works well, this place needs help). It is fluid and crosses the alleged boundaries between these small and large sites.

Construction sites - the spaces and places in which meanings are made - are thus ethical and moral sites with diverse material expressions. This modern episteme is a transition between forms of subjectivity. In this transition we have asked what it is to be natural and healthy, and how it is that we can be these things within particular ethical frameworks and moral codes that touch on domesticity, femininity, liberalism, socialism, evangelism, consumerism or secular forms of spiritualism. Between the alleged death of the Cartesian subject and the anticipated birth of the kind of Cortézarian swinging subject adopted by Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth (1992), there are thus all manner of challenges to the morals and ethics of the modern episteme.

In *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Friedrich Nietzsche argues that morality has several guises and can be seen "as symptom, as mask, as tartuffery, as sickness, as misunderstanding" but also "as cause, remedy, stimulant, inhibition, poison ..." (1887/1994, 8). For him, good and evil are bound by context, and morality can become a slavish, destructive and ideological tool that stifles heroic living, the courage to know. In his introduction to Nietzsche, Keith Ansell-Pearson argues that Nietzsche's position on morality "can stimulate reflection on the deepest ethical and political concerns. His example should be able not only to perplex and disturb, but to inspire and provoke ..." (1994, xxiii). In the research reported here, I have had cause to reflect on the complex problem of how we are discursively and materially constituted as healthy or ill, and how these categories invoke judgments of morality and ethical standing.

I have considerable sympathy with the idea that moral strictures are often politically loaded and constraining, particularly when they prevent thoroughgoing critiques of profoundly difficult questions, such as what is it to be in nature? in culture? to be political? to be embodied in different ways? to be ruled or to rule? why do dominant political and economic interests win even when they seem to lose? Nevertheless, I feel a sharp and abiding concern when I ask how we might live without morality, which is what Nietzsche's assertions seem, at first glance, to require. Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth (1992) also makes this point when she asks how we are to deal with each other when we have abandoned the idea of universals and centred subjectivities, posing the equally demanding question who are *we*? Relativity makes a challenge of heterogeneity and difference. Any decisions about how to live ethically and morally are made more complex when it is recalled that a great deal of

moral behaviour seems to be interiorised; through biopolitics and governmentality we become the "disciplined product of the civilising process of ancient morality ..." (Ansell-Pearson 1994, xvi).

Discourses on health are moral discourses. Both in their interiority and in their links with other forms of signification, ways are created by which we seek or are urged and persuaded to live as healthy (moral) subjects in spaces and places that are also imbued with goodness, rightness and trueness, however these are defined. Discourses on health establish diverse forms of discipline and technology thought to be essential for correct living. Such forms tend to be presented as positive, useful, creative and empowering, although ambiguity often surrounds who are the beneficiaries of these attributes.

For example, when women act as arbiters and conduits of types of morality that are scientifically exercised on their bodies, the bodies of their families and their homes, as well as on social and natural bodies, they use localised form of power by virtue of the fact that they are resisting other portrayals of the feminine as unruly, embedded in pathogenic nature or as culturally empty. Conversely, when women celebrate these other allegedly undisciplined forms of power they also empower themselves, reversing patriarchal and mechanistic prescriptions of lack and deviance. Thus, different subjects and different groups create very different moral codes. When they attempt to exact the compliance of other groups, discipline runs the risk of becoming colonial and imperial, unless and until these other groups actively desire and identify with new codes and principles.

Therefore, the feminine, the home, nature and health are shifting sites for the complex operations of morality. Metaphor, metonymy and myth are powerful mechanisms by which these constellations of moral discourse gain meaning, circulate, are reified and come to be challenged. Indeed, story-telling is critical to the transmission of moral codes, whether such narratives derive from institutions such as the state, the law, the church, the school, the prison, the asylum, the clinic, the academy, the media or the home, or from informal and ephemeral relationships. Such story-telling is always political as well as moral, reflecting diverse and strategic manifestations of the sacral and the secular, liberal and plural positions, socialist and radical positions, or the place and function of desire. Moreover, wherever such tales appear absolute, under scrutiny they are shown to be relative. As Foucault asserts, words do not keep their meaning, desire is not universal, ideas do not always retain their logic, and life and language are full of accidents, invasions, ploys and disguises. Thus, the discourse on health is a discourse that is highly politically and philosophically charged, relational, relative and polyvalent. It is rendered all the more complex by the roles and functions of time and history, embodiment and subjectivity, and knowledge and power. Patently, its effects on the constitution of the feminine, the home and nature, along with disparate other categories of meaning, are manifold and shifting.

In the desire to create and deploy healthy systems of correct living that draw all people to them, some ideological positions within environmentalism and feminism surrender to morality the status and function of a natural entity. Morality comes to be viewed as something discovered in nature, like a law, rather than something that is socially constructed, context-specific and strategic. Ethical arguments about our place in nature, nature's place in culture, the rights of non-human nature, or the place and effects of science, technology, myth, ritual, and other forms of knowledge, seem to falter on this tendency to forget that discourses on ethical living are not and, in my opinion, never can be homogeneous, natural or universal. Hence, what we arrive at here, at this end of a

beginning, is the idea that the feminine, the home, nature and health are complex, heterogeneous and shifting sites in a wider moral discourse about what it is to be same and other, inside and outside, us and them.

The implications of these various observations, assertions and speculations for environmental studies are tantalisingly ambiguous, and require further research. So finally, certain research agenda arise from this work. First, it is clear that insufficient attention has been paid to the importance of the home as a site in which environmentalism, gender roles and relations, and health issues converge in complex and interesting ways. Although the home has been crucial to some feminist analysis, it has figured only marginally in environmental studies to date. There is a need to examine the home in greater detail, particularly in terms of how this site of public and private morality is both problematic in relation to, and potentially transformative of, the conception of nature.

Second, it is apparent that widespread and in-depth analyses of women's contributions to environmental issues in Australia have been neglected in several disciplines where such research might have been expected. In the Australian Health Society, the Bands of Mercy or the Women's Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and, more recently, in the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Wilderness Society, or Greenpeace, women's involvement is worthy of specific investigation and this work has yet to be done in any significant fashion. Indeed, the documentation and analysis of women's participation in the environment movement, including in groups involved with urban, social justice, development and other campaigns, is long overdue outside feminist work.

Third, poststructural methodologies have an important though poorly utilised place in environmental studies, particularly in relation to the incisive critique that they could bring to bear in examining the pervasive and complex rhetoric deployed in the constitution of nature. These methodologies pose specific challenges to the notions that knowledge can be discovered and that nature can be managed, two ideas that have come to characterise much formalised environmental studies. However, the manner in which much poststructuralism has been written makes it inaccessible to many people, and thus there is a pressing need for those involved in creating the knowledge of poststructuralism to make their work more inclusive and comprehensible.

Fourth, it is clear that theorising the anti-essentialist body and the self is increasingly important in research that examines the discourses, social practices and material effects of our complex societies. In social scientific research premised on the belief that reality is socially constructed, it has become almost passé for people to declare their position in relation to the research they undertake, making statements about the myths of modernity and all that it entails. Nevertheless, there remains considerable scope to deploy methods of analysis and means of self-placement that depend on subjective tools of research. In this instance, I have in mind the use of memory-work, photography, poetry and other personalised forms of reflection to examine the foundational beliefs of the researcher as well as of the researched.

Fifth, there is a need to continue examining the nexus between health and consumerism. These two discourses, and the material practices that they create and are created by, have pronounced effects on how women operate and are represented in diverse contexts that have local and global resonance and significant implications about how nature is constituted. Research and policy abound on health and consumerism in local communities and international forums alike. Nevertheless, these kinds of documents and measures are founded on a prevailing assumption (that

here) about the homogeneity of women and the absolute surety of an external and objective environment. More work is needed to question the rhetoric of health and consumerism, with a view to pointing out to environmental activists, as well as their traditional foes, that rhetoric and programs for social transformation can only ever be partial. This message is not a welcome one, and is often interpreted as meaning that political activism and projects for philosophical change will rarely succeed; success typically being viewed as something that involves permanent and widespread transformation. Arguably, we need to come to grips with how relativity and partiality provide strength and flexibility, and we need to embrace small, local and mutable transformations as well as significant societal shifts.

Sixth, and as a corollary of this last comment, it seems important to take up the challenges laid out by Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth, Michel Foucault and other scholars who have been working through the dilemmas of modernist time. I remain ambivalent about the idea of history as linear or as discontinuous (but also somehow linear), and assert that there is some strategic worth to be found in exploring the theoretical implications of multi-directional narratives of history. I believe that relativity and partiality belong to such narratives, and that spaces are opened in these methods of story-telling that permit new visions to be created and appreciated.

Finally, I am convinced that these various observations and research agenda are particularly important in environmental studies. This interdisciplinary area is no longer at the cutting edge of social theory, where transformative politics and radical solutions to complex problems are advanced. Indeed, it is increasingly difficult to find anything other than blunt instruments in environmental education, policy-making and management. It has, for example, become standard to use the discourses and social practices of rationalism in environmental rhetoric, even among groups once considered removed from the mainstream. Best practice, performance indicators, goals and targets, mission statements, strategies, conservation plans, environmental impact assessments and eco-everything have become the terms and the tools of the trades that are environmental studies, research and administration in Australia. Rationalism has become the naturalised ideology of the field of study. Having noted this state of affairs, it is nevertheless vital to remember that power is not possessed in total ways in these arenas, although it is exercised in them to profound effect. Rather, power is also exercised with considerable - though less recognised and publicised - effect in multiple small sites, and in diverse and productive ways, by individuals and collective groups who believe in the idea that social transformation and environmental activism are plausible, imperative and creative. Clearly, then, there is a need to investigate how these micro-political sites of change are constituted and come to constitute other realities about nature and the biopolitical technologies that are enacted in and around this construction site. Therefore, much remains to be done, and the potential for new forms of environmental research and praxis is pronounced and exciting.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

TRANSCRIBED CONVERSATION ON LAURA SHEPLEY

The following conversation about Laura Shepley with Kate Stratford, her granddaughter, was recorded on Saturday 24 June 1995, 2 Reseda Court, Wynn Vale, South Australia. Kate had read a draft of the first two parts of the thesis by this time, and was familiar with the subject matter. Nevertheless, we undertook no preparation for this conversation beyond my asking her a week in advance, and her reflecting as she pleased on this era in her life and her memories of the stories she was told or created about her grandmother's life, during the intervening days between being asked and being interviewed.

Well, Laura must have been born in 1874. She was both typical and atypical of her era in ways that I will try to explain later. When she was eleven she was taken out of school because of the death of her mother and she remained at home to house-keep for her brothers (I'm not sure now whether there were three or four) and her father.

[Do you know what it was that her mother died of?]

No I was never told and although I was interested it was somehow something you didn't ask about, and I'll deal with that a bit later.

She ... she would have been 16 in 1890 and in 1892 she would have been married for six months when she had her first baby. I don't know whether the fact that she was pregnant prior to marriage affected her, but it affected her eldest daughter Evelyn, my mother, throughout the entire period of her life ... because the concept of virginity up to the marriage ceremony was very strong in those days and in fact for another 50 or 60 years at very least.

During that decade she had three other babies. They were all girls and the youngest one must have been born in I think 1899. The eldest one as I said was Evelyn Alberta, the next one was Hilda Gladys and I think she probably was born in 1894. Louise Ethel was probably born 1896 or 7 and Gertrude Ann would be 1899. Then she had no more children, although at that time she could only have been about 25 or 26, and it was a matter of intrigue as to the cause of her lack of further conceptions. There was a vague rumour whose source I cannot remember that she had found a way to prevent conception. What that way was nobody seemed to know. She also was one of these women who finished menstruation early, at very least by the time she was forty is what I recall having been told. I don't know anything about breast-feeding or the health of the children except that Louise contracted meningitis when she was thirteen months old, survived, but had a hearing loss in one of her ears for the rest of her life.

I'm not sure what sort of a house they lived in initially. My grandfather was a clerk on the railways at the time of marriage. He was called Charles William. I remember him as a very handsome man even in his seventies ... and as a kindly man. The house in which I remember them, and in which I think they had lived for more than 30 years [so from around the turn of the century], was a solid home; not necessarily what one could describe as substantial but - um - it had a small front garden which had a wall and railings and a gate and a tiny bit of lawn and flowers; and the front door was quite ornate with leaded light panelling at each side and then you went into a hallway where the rooms on the ground floor were to the right and the staircase was to the left; and of course that was a mark of affluence because, with so many houses in the north of England, one entered the living room straight from the street. The front room or, as it would have been known in those days, the parlour, was very well furnished. I remember blue being a colour.

My grandfather went on to become part of a manufacturing firm of shirt makers and he rose to the position of confidential secretary to the owner who was ultimately knighted for his services, and this was a very considerable reflected lift in social terms for the family. The front room had conventional type of furniture; the three piece suite, a lovely china cabinet, bookcases. There were plenty of books.

[Did your grandmother read?]

I think she probably read them when she was younger. She was quite literate. Letters that I had from her when I was old enough to judge were - um - grammatically correct, punctuated, no spelling errors. She ... she read the newspapers and I think she did look at women's magazines - um - 'Women's Home' or something like that I seem to remember. She took an interest in world affairs and she was reasonably well informed.

[Did she have specific interests]

I don't know of any in particular. I think she belonged to a women's group. Both she and her husband were teetotallers. My grandfather smoked a pipe - no, pipes - he had one for every day of the week and a little ritual which involved the care of his pipes, and he was very particular about them being in tip top shape.

But when you went the lounge was at the front. Then you went into a main living area which was also a dining area (both rooms had fire places of course) and that was carpeted. I don't remember much about the dining suite. What I do remember is my grandfather coming home for lunch. He had sufficient time to come home and have his lunch, and then he would have a nap during which everyone would have to be quiet, which was quite a trial for me.

She was very much really in charge of the home and of the domestic details, and these sorts of things would certainly have been her purview. The kitchen, which was off from the dining room, it looked over the back garden, and it was ... it was a back garden that was probably about the same size as your front garden [20m by 5m]. No it would have been bigger, a bit bigger, maybe half as big again. And it had a lawn and flower beds. It was set out quite formally. The house also had a cellar, which I was not allowed to go down because the steps were steep and I [laughter] I always did want to go down into the cellar and I never did get down there. A cellar was very useful in those days because there was no refrigeration. So it was cool. I remember the walls were whitewashed. And that was the ground floor area. I'm not sure, but I think there may have been an outside wash house, what would have been called a wash kitchen or laundry and that would have had a copper for boiling the clothes and boiling the laundry.

[Tell me a little bit more about the kitchen, Kate. Was there a wood stove or was it gas? Was there gas lighting?]

What I remember of it was that it has been gas lighting but it was electric by that point, when I was visiting there. Um ... the upstairs consisted of two good sized bedrooms, a smaller bedroom and what I think was called a box-room where you could store boxes and cases and things of that nature, and that was also furnished traditionally with double beds and a single bed and wardrobes. There were no such things as built in closets ... and dressing tables featured also. Oddly enough, my memories of the upstairs are fairly dim.

[Was there a bathroom?]

Um ... yes and there was a lavatory inside as well; it was upstairs. So it was a reasonably spacious house - um - considering that neither Laura nor Charles William had not much of an education as we understand it.

[Tell me what her duties were. Did she have a maid come in, or a washerwoman come in?]
She did have a - um - a cleaning woman and the laundry - sheets and pillow cases and towels - um were sent out to a ... to a laundry. The laundry was collected and brought back two or three days

later. And that too was - um, when one considers the majority of people's socioeconomic status - that was quite something.

[So how would you categorise them? Were they lower middle class?]

They would probably be at the lower end of the middle section of the middle class. They were well spoken. They did have the speech melodies, the prosodic elements, of north country English, but I don't ever recall their speech being ungrammatical. I don't ever recall hearing her swear or use obscene language. I don't ever recall hearing my grandfather. They were in many ways a gentle couple.

[How long were they married?]

Fifty years anyway, I think ... no, 52 it must have been, because she died when she was 70 and they were married when she was ... I think ... 18, just. She may have been 17 - 18 . She was 18 when my mother was born in the March, so she would have been 19 the following November.

[And she predeceased him?]

She predeceased him by six months. He was five years older than she was.

As a person she was a very quiet, silent woman. Not withdrawn so much as indrawn. She had a strong sense of responsibility. The home was impeccably kept. At one stage for instance she must have ... when you consider that ... um - although the girls did not have each a separate room (because there were four of them they had to share), they did have their own beds, and those beds in those days were flock mattresses which meant you had to take the sheets off, you had to shake up the mattresses, then you had to put the sheets back and the blankets, so that bed-making in those days was quite a chore.

All laundry, of course, was done by hand but she had that help I've mentioned. But all the personal laundry would be done by her.

[On a Monday perhaps?]

Yes.

[Did she adhere to those social conventions?]

Yes, and of course you know, the ... the feminine structures, for instance I can recall that the blinds and the curtains had to be open by a certain time or you were considered to be lazy, 8 o'clock in the morning; if they were closed beyond that time except on holidays, that was a sign of ... well, a household that wasn't all that well run.

Laundry had to be ... whites had to be really white, and not necessarily with bleach either. Um ... bleach was used by some women but not by a lot of women. The whiteness was maintained by sufficient washing and boiling regularly. That was a hygienic measure because the boiling killed a lot of bacteria.

[So did they have water piped to the home ?]

Yes. There was hot water and there was cold water. The water was heated from the dining room fire place with what's known as a back-boiler. There was an airing cupboard where the cistern, the hot water cistern, aired the laundry. And even the sheets that went out for washing were aired in that laundry [sic]. The actual physical state of people's homes was considered to be very important in terms of indicating the ... I guess one could say devotion of the woman to her home.

She, she was an excellent cook and um ... she um ... in fact she could make a Yorkshire pudding like nobody else that I've ever tasted [sic] even in the exclusive restaurants. And of course,

one washed on Monday and one sort of did the ironing. Whatever ironing was left was done on Tuesday. In those days, women used to change their clothes; they would dress for their husband coming home, so that you weren't in your work clothes. Um - you would also of course dress to go shopping. Now, for some of the shopping you would send an order into the grocers and it would be delivered. Other shopping you would go out and you would do it yourself and bring it home using whatever public transport was available or even walking with the shopping bags. Wednesdays and Thursdays you would devote ... bedrooms would be done one day because they were upstairs and then the lower part would be done the next day.

[And the cleaning woman would do this with her or for her?]

I'm not sure about that. I think probably with her and I cannot now recall whether she came once a week or twice a week. Um ... but it - it certainly was a help.

[And this would have gone on ... if they moved into that house at the turn of the century, the girls would have been ranging from six to about one?]

Um ... my mother would have been 8 and Gertrude would have been 1.

[And were the children expected to participate and have little chores?]

I think they would have because my cousin and I had chores when we used to spend our holidays with them after they retired. They had best clothes of course. I don't recall them going to church, but religion must have come into it. My mother talked about belonging to the Methodist chapel, so I presume my grandparents were Methodists although um ... later on the Anglican church became a feature.

She always dressed well, and of course, um ... such details (although they would not be discussed publicly) as underwear; you never went out with underwear that was in holes. That would have been the ultimate disgrace to have fainted or been in an accident and people discovering you had holes in your underwear or stockings. Very much frowned upon.

She was a good darner. I can remember her darning socks in the evening and I can remember darning socks with her.

[And ... I would like to go back for a moment to the women's organisation, the women's club. Was she involved in philanthropic activities that you know of? And as well as that what ... did she have furs or feather hats? What was her opinion of ... do you remember her talking about nature?]

No. Not a great deal about nature. Oddly enough she wasn't much of a gardener. She wore fur and she did wear hats with feathers in because they were in fashion. She was not vegetarian. There would be the roast on Sunday always with Yorkshire pudding and roast potatoes and a vegetable. Um ... there was certainly no shortage of food - um - but she for instance personally always ate the refined foods, rather than the natural foods. It was just not part of her ethos. She would bake cakes and they would be white flour and white sugar. Um ... there was an adequate protein diet; the Sunday roast of course would be eaten cold on Monday, that was the traditional, absolute tradition. She of course was in long dresses in those early days. She never did wear short skirts ever, and she would I think probably have died rather than worn trousers.

[And what about her activities with the women's organisations? Do you know if she was involved in any philanthropic activities in those years?]

I don't know whether she was or whether she wasn't. I think through a church group or a um ... a temperance society, I think I mentioned that earlier ... whether she did or not. She was not a person to whom one could talk easily. Although she was only five feet one, she was formidable.

[What was typical and atypical of her?]

Um ... her conformity to the standards that were expected from her in terms of her socio-economic group in terms of her home, her furnishings, her clothing, the clothing of her daughters. What was atypical was that she ah ... was probably, with obviously the full support of my grandfather, keen on education, because my mother had a high school education right through to 17. Her next sister Hilda didn't want it. Louie went on from high school, or grammar school as it was, to college. And Gertie went to grammar school but left in her mid teens because she didn't want it. Now that, for the part of the country in which they lived and for the time, a hundred years ago [sic], was very progressive for women and - um - while I don't recall her being very active in the women's movement, her eldest daughter, my mother, was a very ardent feminist and she would have picked some of that, I think, from my grandmother, or my grandmother's views on women. I can't think of any other ways in which she was atypical. Typically she had little sayings such as "children should be seen and not heard like china dogs on a shelf". "Be good sweet maid and let who will be clever" is the first line of an autograph that she wrote in my autograph book.

[tape two, later in the afternoon of the same day]

Well I ... perhaps because again her family was female, it was typical and perhaps yet atypical that she must have made provision for them to have music lessons and piano and violin.

[These were signs of accomplishment in a young woman at the time?]

They would have been. As well, Louie or Louise, and Evelyn showed some artistic ability and this was encouraged, and I remember that Louise as well was very good at craft work, both in metal and in leather. Um ... they also um ... were singers. Now I don't mean that ... I don't mean that they were um ... trained but I can recall now that they were in choir work, and I can also recall that social evenings consisted of the families that were within a particular purview getting together and having an evening meal and then - ah - a musical events [sic] or series of events. Television and radio simply didn't exist, and that was the way in which they filled their time.

One point is probably worth mentioning at this juncture, and that is that they - neither Laura nor her husband - owned a private motor vehicle of any kind. They were entirely dependent on the public transport systems for any travel which they did. Now, whether they did any travel in the 1890s, I'm not clear, I don't know. I do know they did travel to the west coast of England, the north west coast - um - for holidays at the seaside. That was, again, very traditional and very typical, and they tended to go through to the north west rather than the north east coast, and the reasons for that are completely obscure as far as I'm concerned.

She must have had reasonably good health because ... there is no oral tradition of her having had difficulties with her pregnancies outside of the normal ones. However, the effects perhaps of diet in the last century where animal fat usage was very high - I know she made pastry for example with lard - um ... and - ah - as I said previously, use of refined foods. She ... she suffered from anaemia in the last part of her life and died from bowel cancer, and that was perhaps a build-up

from less than desirable dietary practice and from ignoring such aspects of health as good bowel hygiene. During her mid-life, too, she hit a crisis with severe eczema which recurred very regularly, and which was treated with a spirit lotion that was very painful after it was applied because it smarted. Now, from the vantage point of today, it may well have been that the eczema represented a psychosomatic phenomenon in terms of deep seated frustration which she was totally unable to express verbally. She was a bright woman, and to have been confined from the age of 11, which would mean 59 years, in the largely routine domestic chores that were traditionally assumed by women, could have been a frustration of which we can only perhaps hazard a guess now with the knowledge that we have of how frustration and stress build up.

Health measures which persisted from the nineteenth century to probably the era of antibiotics were, by modern standards, somewhat primitive. Inflammatory conditions would be treated with bread poultices.

[Do you remember how they were made?]

The bread was chewed - bread and butter was chewed - and then it was put onto a muslin gauze and put onto the place that was inflamed. That would be in terms of an infected wound or a boil or something of that kind of phenomenon, and due I s'pose mainly to the ... various bacterial strains of staphylococcus. Why it was considered - or even actually was - efficacious is certainly not clear to me.

One of the main adages for minor ailments was starve ... starve a fever and feed a cold. And, of course, colds were a very definite recurring phenomenon, and those were treated with such remedies as hot milk and suet, lemon and honey um ... My grandmother swore by a pre-prepared concoction called Compo, which in actual fact was as effective as any remedy I have subsequently come across.

[Was it homoeopathic?]

It was ... it was herbs and that kind of mixture. It certainly wasn't purely a chemical based - ah ... tincture. Tinctures of course were very much a part of it.

[Did she have a medicine cupboard do you remember?]

Yes she did, with bandages in it, and plasters and scissors, and little bottles of chamomile, and linseed oil was used, and lanolin was used. Later, of course, vaseline, which was a petro-chemical, um ... Eucalyptus oil. Doll's flannel when you had bad chest, that was put on your back and on your chest itself.

[And what is Doll's flannel?]

It's a very finely woven material which is red - or was red - in colour. I haven't seen any around for - not since my childhood. There was knowledge of sterilisation, that is boiling cloths and bandages even, if they were to be reused. A lot more - ah - bed rest was in vogue than is currently the case. Of course, that's due to the fact that the needs of the circulatory system were not as well defined and documented as they are today. And - ah - if ... one hit something which was fairly serious, such as one of the pneumococcal group - um - and had the respiratory infections, then bed was the place and you were kept there, and you were also kept very warm. Um - when you had the fevers you were actually helped to sweat them out with such oils as the eucalyptus group.

[Tell me a little bit about the family doctor.]

The family doctor was a person who was very much associated with the family. He looked after her health for well over 40 years, and she even travelled back into Yorkshire to see him when she was living on the north west coast in retirement; that's the extent of the connection there. My mother went back into Yorkshire to be under the care of the family physician for her one and only confinement, and - um - he was, I would say, a - a classic stereotype of the doctor who patted you on the head and gave you encouragement, but whose knowledge was nowhere near as extensive as it currently is, um ... and who certainly hadn't got the remedies for most illnesses at his disposal as he have today. I have only the vaguest recollections of him. Now whether he attended her in the confinements I don't know, but I do know that he must have been in attendance between 1900 and 1905 from the length of time that he was in charge of her health care, and she had considerable faith and trust in him.

[Can you describe her physical appearance for me? How old were your [sic] earliest memories of her?]

My earliest memories of her would be when I was around about 4 to 5.

[So that would have been 1930, so she would have been ...]

Forties ... fifties ... She was 52 when I was born. I remember her as a small lady. She ... she was not thin but she wasn't fat; she wasn't even plump. She was about the build that I personally am. [142 cm and say 63 kg]. She had the most beautiful blue eyes and this white white hair, and she was quite striking looking right up the end because of the colour combination. She had a very pale oval shaped face with - um - a regular nose and ... medium sized mouth. Her lips were somewhat thin, but always very red. She didn't use make-up. I'm pretty sure she didn't even powder her nose, at least not in the days when I knew her. She may have used it when she was much younger, but I don't even recall my mother saying anything about make-up in relation to my grandmother.

She wore the traditional wedding ring and engagement ring, and she wore a watch. I don't remember her wearing earrings. I remember her wearing brooches and necklaces, all of which seemed to me to be lovely. They were not, of course, necessarily real stones - if they were representing diamonds - because they simply were not in that bracket of buying lots of jewellery.

But ... she didn't wear many bright colours [sigh] ... sombre tones of grey, and black and beige. I don't recall her wearing white very much at all. Those are the predominant colours that I can recall from those early days. I think it was a reflection of her long-term emotional tone, looking back. Whether this was, well - it would of course in part have be due to her early background and the tragedies. Her family was connected with the pits, the collieries. They actually either managed or owned them, and I don't know how many tragedies struck, but I do know that some of those men were lost in pit accidents and so on.

[One last question I would like to ask you - um ... is what is your perception, your perception of ... Let me rephrase that. Do you recall having a perception as a child of your grandmother's childhood or youth or early adulthood? Did you try to imagine what it must have been like? In other words did you create stories or narratives about the recent, what would have been the recent past, when you were a child?]

Yes, I ... I know I wondered about her childhood, and I wondered about how at 11 years old you could cope with a house and a family of men but, although I think I probably might have

ventured to ask her questions, she was not forthcoming. She didn't squash me or tell me that she was angry or upset or anything, she just avoided the issues and um ... I'm not sure what the reasons might have been for this reticence. And also her daughters didn't talk about that early period or a great deal about the early period of their lives.

I remember that my mother went to school at 3, and as soon as she'd learned the route to the school she went on her own, with her mother watching her across the fields to make sure she got there safely. But details of how they felt, and how they perceived their world came mainly through the home environment, their wider community, the social values and expectations and um ... whatever religious principles might have been operative. For example, Sunday we were not allowed, when we were visiting, to play games or do anything except read books.

[That really leads into a question about morality. Now, you've mentioned Charles William. Who was ... of the two was one the moral ... leader? Was there one who you thought perhaps set the tone?]

I think that she was a strong role model. She was for me; whether she was for her daughters or not - to the degree that she was for her grand-daughter - is difficult for me to be sure. I can basically only speculate and ... My mother was very antagonistic towards her father for reasons that were totally obscure to me, and still are, even though I have given them a lot of thought. And she was hostile because of what she perceived as his treatment of her mother. I never ever saw him be unkind or cruel to her. They would have mild disagreements, but there were never any serious quarrels when I was there. I think the only postulate that I can put forward is that she [my mother] thought that he should have done a lot more in the house.

[Now is that because your mother considered herself to be a feminist, or was an early feminist?]

I think it was very much coloured by that, and I have never been able to work out to what degree she was influenced by her own mother, by Laura. She was very very much to the fore for women's rights - er ... and one would think she must have picked it up, or picked something up in the home, in her earlier upbringing. My grandmother would have been about ... 30 or 40 when Emily Pankhurst was leading the women's suffragette movements ... it may, of course, have been that movement that caught my grandmother's imagination - tch - caught my mother's imagination, sorry, rather than my grandmother having an influence on this feminist tradition, which we have certainly had.

[Can you tell my what sort of formal knowledge you learned about in school in terms of history? Was the history that you learned ancient history, recent history as in the nineteenth century? Earlier times? Was there reflection on the recent past?]

No, there wasn't. I got Roman history and Saxon history, and the medieval period, Renaissance, but practically nothing of the Victorians or of the twentieth century. And even in university [in Canada in the mid to late 1960s when Kate was in her early 40s] that area was one that was curtailed because of the time constraints on the class offerings, so that I don't have personally a lot of background on the late nineteenth century, and all I have, of course, are my own memories of the history that's taken place in my own lifetime. But the changes in expectations, in behaviour, in relationships, in those areas of structure, the changes have been profound.

[Since your grandmother's time?]

Yes ... now, whether the problems have been dealt with is something that I cannot answer from - ah - my own background knowledge.

[You speak of problems. Which problems are you thinking of?]

I'm thinking about problems of human relationships. I'm thinking about the problems of morals and ethics. Um ... there was a strong moral flavour in my grandmother's house and it was from both ... um ... [long pause]

I think that in terms of the reduction of savagery in dealing with people, physical violence, at least in certain substrata of society have improved beyond all measure. And childrearing practices are very very different. I didn't ever feel oppressed or repressed when I was with her, but I certainly would never have questioned an instruction or gone against what she requested. That um ... I suppose it was authoritarian rather than authoritative, and I think that's one of the examples that perhaps does highlight the difference between the time that she grew up and the values that she adhered to and had absorbed, and passed on as part of my background, because I spent at least three months of every year with her from the age of 8 to 18 and she had a profound influence on my life. She was very stoical and she was very courageous in the face of illness and deafness. That skin eruption was quite something. And that was part of the stiff upper lip and - um ... I know that is still influencing me right up to the present time.

[What year did Laura die?]

I was 18, so she must have died in '43, 1943; that was in the middle of the war.

[Did you see her before she died?]

I saw her in the September, and she died in the December. I had already started my higher education at that point [diploma of speech therapy in London].

[How did she feel about you doing higher ed?]

Oh she was quietly very pleased. Very pleased. She always, and that has reminded me, she always gave the greatest encouragement [pause, tears, broken voice] ... for academic successes, for doing well in school and, very quietly, you could tell from her non-verbal behaviour that she would be very pleased when you had done very well in school. Probably this was a surrogate situation for her too.

[Kate, you were born with a dislocated hip, and of course, at the time you were born, there was not a lot they could do. Did she ever make comments ... what was her approach to you?]

She tried to treat me as a normal child but, at the same time, she never expected me to attempt physical activities that were beyond my scope. I was the eldest grand-daughter and then Hilda had a baby who died, and then Hilda died herself because of puerperal fever

[When your cousin Bernard ...]

When my cousin Bernard was born, and he lived; he is still alive, and it is with him that I spent the three months a year, because my mother was the world's worst housekeeper. She couldn't have been a bigger contrast to her mother. It would be impossible to produce a bigger contrast. You might produce as big, but you could not produce a bigger one. And she [Laura] knew that this was very upsetting and distressing for me, so she used to take the two of us together. We ... we'd be companions for one another. Bernard was three and a quarter years younger than I was. But ... she ... she must have felt it [Hilda's death] because, as I was saying, the midwife was the carrier, she was actually carrying the bacteria.

[Not uncommon either in 1929 which was when Bernard was born nor, of course, in the 1890s?]

And yet she herself didn't pick this up or, as it was known, the skeleton in the bride's closet ... was how puerperal fever was described.

[Do you know why it was described in this way?]

Because of the death rate that it caused. I don't know of the figures, what percentage of maternal mortality cases were due just to puerperal fever, but it was a fairly high number.

[Okay, so we were talking about Hilda and her death. Louie and Gertie - did they have any children?]

Er ... Louie married later in life. In fact all three girls married late, especially for the era in which they lived.

[pause ... There were four girls. Hilda married young?]

No, my mother was the youngest and she was 26.

[She married the youngest?]

She married as the youngest. Hilda and the rest of them were all ... oh Gertie was probably the same age, 25, ah - but Louie and Hilda were 30 and over, and Louie had one son and a very difficult birth, and that was the only child that she had. So two of her daughters had one child, Gertie didn't have any children at all, and Hilda had two and died with the second one, having lost the first baby when Joyce was 11 months old, and I think that was ... From the descriptions um ... there was regular reference to these events - Hilda and Joyce - with Joyce I think it must have been something like pneumococcal meningitis, and there wasn't much hope in those days if you got that kind of illness.

[Can you tell me a little about how your grandmother interacted with her environment. Do you have any memories of her wandering her garden, walking the street, taking the fresh air?]

Oh, she would be out in the garden. She would also have fresh flowers in the house - ah - not all of the time of course. And toward the end of their life - their lives - my grandparents were hard up. They would not have been hard up if it had not been for the war, but the war depreciated capital quite considerably, and they found their financial circumstances getting tighter and tighter. She was certainly aware of the need for children to be outdoors and she would make sure that Bernard and I went outside to play, and they would take us down to the beach every once and a while so that we could play with the sand and go paddling in the sea and so on.

[Did she seem to enjoy these times?]

I think she did, yes, but she - the reserve was there.

[And where do you think she gained her knowledge about poultices and fresh air? You say her mother died when she was 11 and that the rest of the people in her immediate family were male. Where do you suppose that Laura gained her knowledge? Was this taught to her by her mother, do you think, before her mother died? Eleven year olds are quite perceptive and skilled.]

Well, of course, in those days, girls matured and were expected to participate in household matters at a much earlier age than when even I was, and she may have got that folklore from that. She may have got it from relatives. I don't know. I can't remember anything about her brothers or her brothers' wives um ... I can remember a few families vaguely that she associated with in Cleckheaton. Through the networks, information would be passed, and anything that was found to

be efficacious would, through that networking, become - ah - knowledge to the local community. So that would be a way in which she would have gotten her information.

[Now just finally, if you had to sum your grandmother up in a few words, if you had to say what was your abiding memory of this woman whose life spanned from the 1870s to the 1940s, who was deprived of her mother at 11, who looked after her brothers and father 'til she fell pregnant and married, who was herself married for over 50 years to a man you say adored her, who had four daughters of her own, one of whom she lost before she herself died, and who clearly had the interests of her grandchildren at heart, what would be that memory?]

I think courage ... [long pause]

[Right, thanks a lot Mum ... Well done ...]

Very courageous little woman ... [long pause, broken voice] I was always so very conscious that she was so, as I said, she wasn't withdrawn, she was indrawn ... for reasons that never ever became clear. My grandfather always called her Ma. She was Ma for her daughters - not Mother, Ma.

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