

Women Talking Politics

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Taking Stock: Women's Participation

Women Talking Politics is once again on the move! Its first destination is the World Wide Web; check out www.otago.ac.nz/politicalstudies/wtp to see the work in progress. You can add information and links by contacting the newsletter. The newsletter is also on the move to Canterbury; from 2007 the newsletter has a new editorial team in the Political Science program. If you would like to contribute articles, book reviews, conference reports, conference announcements, research notes, or general notices of interest to readers, please send details to:

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This edition of the newsletter presents summaries of two major census reports on women in New Zealand - Women's participation, and a census of Maori Women. Full versions of both reports are available online.

I am so grateful to all those who have contributed to the newsletter during my time as editor. In this busy 'output' focused world, I have been heartened by the number of women willing to contribute their expertise and time towards a greater good. Let's keep it up!

Best wishes to you all for 2007

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Newsletter of the Aotearoa / New Zealand Women and Politics Network

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The New Zealand Census of Women's Participation 2006

Susan Fountaine

(Co-author, along with EEO Commissioner Judy McGregor)

Would you like to know how many female ministry appointees there are at the Trans-Tasman Occupational Appeal Authority? Or on the Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre Trust Board? How about the percentage of female partners at Phillips Fox? Or the number of women politicians on the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee?

The answers to these and many other questions can be found in the New Zealand Census of Women's Participation 2006, published in April 2006 by the Human Rights Commission and the New Zealand Centre for Women and Leadership at Massey University. This second census expands on the first, which was published in 2004, and covers:

- NZSX, NZDX and NZAX companies;
- statutory bodies and crown companies;
- district health boards;
- the judiciary, and legal practitioners and partners;
- university professors and associate professors;
- school boards of trustees;
- unions;
- newspaper editors and media companies;
- MPs and select committee membership;
- local government councillors and mayors;
- defence forces.

As the above list indicates, the 2006 Census is a rich 'one stop' source of a wide range of gender-based data, documenting various sectors of public life and the community.¹ Although it presents some mixed evidence about the status of women in New Zealand, its key message remains the overall lack of progress, fittingly described as 'glacial' and 'grindingly slow'.

This lack of progress is apparent in a number of the report's key findings. For example, while women make up 41 per cent of state sector statutory boards (representing strong progress towards the government's 50 per cent target by 2010), they hold just 7.13 per cent of board directorships of NZSX top 100 companies (up from 5.04 per cent in 2004), 5.29 per cent of directorships in the 40 companies listed on the NZDX, and comprise 5.74 per cent of directors at NZAX companies.

Similarly, in the legal profession, the Census shows a small increase in the percent of female partners at the country's top legal firms (from 14.12 per cent in 2004 to 17.24 per cent in 2006), but mixed results at company level. For example, between the two censuses, AJ Park almost doubled its number of partners, from 10 to 19, but the number of women remained static at two. Presented another way, the census data show, for example, that 63 per cent of the top 100 companies listed on the NZSX, and

¹ It should be noted that unfortunately, few of the data sets include ethnicity data. We would like to see public agencies reporting by gender and ethnicity.

75 per cent of NZDX and NZAX companies, have no women on their boards. Following the April launch, these findings and the lack of progress were well covered by the news media, particularly the business outlets. Newspaper headlines included 'NZ women lag in business world'; 'Women's progress to top jobs "dismal"'; 'Old boys network still rules; and 'Women missing from boards'.

The Press newspaper in Christchurch emphasised the university data, proclaiming on its front page (with particular attention to the poor performance of the University of Canterbury), 'Varsities lag on gender balance'. The overall university results indicate that women comprise 16.91 per cent of senior academics, up slightly from 15.82 per cent in 2004. Half of the universities improved their gender proportions, and half regressed (Auckland, Lincoln, Otago and Waikato) between 2004 and 2006. Although Massey had the biggest overall increase in senior women staff, student newspaper Chaff's verdict was: 'C+, Massey could do better'.

Value of the Census data

As the above examples suggest, the Census data is attractive to the news media, not only because of its 'negative' news value,

Prime Minister and Chief Justice), 'the profile of these individual women at the top does not reflect the status generally of women in professional life and may mask the true picture of female representation in senior roles in other areas of New Zealand public life'(McGregor & Fountaine, 2006, p.1).

The Census also helps New Zealand to fulfil its commitment to The Beijing Platform for Action, which recommends the regular collection of gender data to monitor and evaluate progress at various levels of decision-making. This allows for international comparisons, and gives an independent and objective view of women's power and participation. This data is also backed up by other, albeit less 'scientific', attempts to capture influence. The Listener's recent 'power' special, for example, now in its third iteration of identifying New Zealand's most influential, notes that almost 85 per cent of the 93 different people who have made the list since 2004 have been male.

Promoting change

The 2006 Census includes a new addition, in the form of a proactive 'agenda for change'. This outlines proposals for action by stakeholder groups ranging from gov-

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but because it is a bench-marking report providing objective information about women's representation in senior positions, and participation in various sectors of the labour market. In effect, this helps balance out the more populist idea, occasionally present in media reporting, that New Zealand women have already achieved gender parity. As we write in the report's introduction, noting the widespread interest in the 'public' face of women's power (e.g. female

ernment, the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee, and the media, to training organisations and individuals. This agenda has already prompted Parliamentary attention and action, with the Minister for Women's Affairs Lianne Dalziel expressing her commitment to exploring whether the Nominations Service might be 'translated into something that works for the private sector'.

Importantly, the Census agenda also encourages board chairs, directors, and investors to consider the make-up of their boards and how they might do better. Jane Diplock, Chair of the Securities Commission, was one who has reflected (favourably) on her Commission's gender balance and expressed her desire that more balance be found in corporate life in the future. In a speech to the Wellington branch of the Institute of Directors, she noted the research showing 'that having women on the boards of companies is not just the right thing to do but the bright thing to do'.

Pumpkin Patch, commended in the Census as the only company to achieve gender parity on its board of directors, continues to be an example of such a successful company.

The Census also identifies three ways of developing women for boards of directors: finding the talent, developing the talent, and supporting mentoring and networking schemes. These ideas have relevance to a cross section of industry and community groups, and are vital if New Zealand is to address its current under-performance (behind comparable countries) in terms of boardroom participation. We urge women to consider registering their CVs with the

Ministry of Women's Affairs Nominations Service (and/or encouraging other women to do so), investing in companies with a good track record on gender, and advocating gender balance to any other companies they have shares in or are involved with. Making use of existing or developing new support networks is also encouraged. Here at Massey, for example, the Centre for Women and Leadership was inspired by the Census to do more to provide opportunities for cross-campus networking opportunities for women staff.

Conclusion

The practical value of quantifiable, systematic information on the status of women, gathered together into one document, can not be underestimated. Such objective data can and does raise media and public awareness, and acts as leverage to advocate for policy changes and new initiatives. 'It is a timely reminder for companies wanting to exploit the opportunity to appoint women, not out of a sense of tokenism, but because it is good for business' (p.49).

If you'd like a hard copy of the Census please email S.L.Fountaine@massey.ac.nz or visit http://www.neon.org.nz/newsarchive/women_census2006

Maori Women in Aotearoa: a Survey

Ministry of Women's Affairs

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In 2006, the Ministry of Women's Affairs commissioned Massey University's Research Centre for Maori Health and Development to survey 1500 Maori (58 percent of whom were women) across 600 households. This work was part of a longitudinal study of Maori education, housing and employment (Te Hoe Nuku Roa Study). The results were published in May 2006. Download a copy at www.mwa.govt.nz/news-and-pubs/publications/maori.

The following is a summary of some aspects of the survey (reproduced here with the kind permission of the Ministry of Women's Affairs).

Education

Maori women rate their education status highly, which is an interesting finding given that fewer than half of Maori women have a formal secondary school qualification. Women have slightly lower rates of qualification than Maori men, and women's rates have decreased slightly over time. School qualifications held are mostly School Certificate (or the equivalent) with few (ten per cent) having a higher school qualification. About one-third of Maori women have a post-secondary qualification which has required at least three-month's study. This too is a lower rate than that reported for Maori men. Currently, for those Maori women who are in study (about 20 per cent), more are in tertiary institutions followed by schools (six per cent).

Health

Most Maori women rate their health status as being high, a trend which has been evi-

dent over the course of the survey. Most women report that they have very sober habits when it comes to alcohol, yet half of Maori women report smoking – a very high rate. Most Maori women do not have private provision for health or sickness insurance. About 20 per cent of Maori women report having a major/minor disability. A majority of women report that they have sought medical treatment in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Access to culture

Most Maori women feel that their ability with te reo Maori is poor. A large majority of Maori women prefer to identify as Maori, although a small but growing proportion prefer not to identify as Maori (up to 12 per cent in wave three). Most women reported a good knowledge of their whakapapa. They also said they had visited a marae in the previous 12 months. Knowledge of iwi was very good, but knowledge of hapu and/or waka was not as good. Most Maori women also reported that non-household whanau members lived in their immediate communities.

Te reo Maori

The majority of Maori women are dissatisfied with their te reo Maori language ability. As many women were happy with the availability of te reo Maori on TV as were unhappy. Unsurprisingly, most Maori women were raised in English language only speaking households.

Maori women who are employed

Employed Maori women in the Te Hoe Nuku Roa Study typically live in a couple

situation with children; are more likely to live in and own their own home (freehold or with a mortgage). Employed Maori women typically rate their education level highly, are more likely to have a formal secondary school qualification and slightly higher rates of holding a post-secondary qualification requiring at least three

are not satisfied with their te reo Maori ability, and were mostly exposed to English up to the age of 15 years.

Maori women with a notional cultural identity

Maori women with a 'notional cultural identity' are those whose Maori Cultural

"It is possible to build up a picture of how Maori women with a 'notional' identity differ from other Maori women."

months' study. Employed Maori women tend to self-rate their health highly; they report higher levels of alcohol drinking and smoking tobacco (although all Maori women have relatively high rates of smoking). They are more likely to hold private medical or sickness insurance. Employed Maori women prefer to identify as 'Maori' although more are likely to express a nationalist identity (Kiwi or New Zealander). They have high knowledge of their iwi and moderate knowledge of their hapu and waka. Most also report having other whanau as members of their immediate community. Employed Maori women are not satisfied with their te reo Maori ability, and were mostly exposed to English up to the age of 15 years.

Maori women who are not employed

Not-employed Maori women in the Te Hoe Nuku Roa Study are more likely to be sole parents and living in rented accommodation (being less likely to own their own home). Not-employed Maori women are more likely to be attending an educational institution. Not-employed Maori women report that they drink alcohol less often and smoke slightly less often (although all Maori women smoke at relatively higher rates). They report higher levels of requiring medication and having a major/minor disability. There are no differences in having required medical attention in the year prior to the survey. Not-employed Maori women

Identity (MCI) score is between 0 and 6 (out of a possible score of 18). Fewer than ten per cent of Maori women are members of this group (two per cent, three per cent, eight per cent in the three waves respectively). It is possible to build up a picture of how Maori women with a 'notional' identity differ from other Maori women. Maori women with a notional identity:

- Are more likely than other Maori women to live as a couple with children
- More often live in a no rent/no board situation
- Are more likely than other Maori women to own their own home
- Have decreasing rates of full time employment
- Are more likely than other Maori women to have a formal secondary school qualification
- Are more likely than other Maori women to be attending an educational institution
- Are more likely than other Maori women to have a condition requiring medication and are also more likely to have required medical attention in the previous 12 months
- Have the strongest preference for a nationalist identity, although the majority prefer Maori as an identity
- Are more likely to have been exposed to an English-language only speaking environment as a child.

Maori women with a positive cultural identity

Maori women with a 'positive cultural identity' are those whose Maori Cultural Identity (MCI) score is between 7 and 12 (out of a possible score of 18). Most Maori women are members of this group (54 per cent, 48 per cent, 67 per cent in the three waves respectively). It is possible to build up a picture of how Maori women with a 'positive' identity differ from other Maori women. As most Maori women fit into this category the differences from the Maori-norm will be few. Māori women with a positive identity:

- Have increasing rates of full time employment
 - Are slightly less likely to own a home
 - Have a weaker preference for a nationalist identity, although the majority prefer Māori as an identity
 - Are likely to have been exposed to some Māori language as a child

Maori women with a secure cultural identity

Maori women with a 'secure cultural identity' are those whose Maori Cultural Identity (MCI) score is between 13 and 18 (out of a possible score of 18). This is the second most populated group (44 per cent, 50 per cent, 25 per cent in the three waves respectively). It is possible to build up a picture of how Maori women with a 'secure' identity differ from other Maori women. Maori women with a secure identity:

- While more likely to have higher rates of satisfaction with their ability in te reo Maori, overall are dissatisfied with their ability
 - Have a weaker preference for a nationalist identity, although the majority prefer Maori as an identity
 - Are likely to have been exposed to some Maori language as a child

Maori women who have a secondary school qualification

Maori women in the Te Hoe Nuku Roa study who have a formal secondary school qualification most likely own a home (freehold or mortgage) and are also most likely

to live in a couple with children situation, although flatting has become a more popular option over time. While there are no differences in self-reported health status, qualified women report slightly lower levels of sobriety and slightly higher rates of tobacco smoking. They also have slightly higher rates of having a condition requiring medication, lower rates of reporting a disability but seek medical treatment at a similar frequency.

Maori women who do not have a secondary school qualification

Maori women in the Te Hoe Nuku Roa study who do NOT have a formal secondary school qualification most likely own a home (freehold or mortgage) and are also most likely to live in a couple with children situation. In comparison with their qualified peers however, Maori women without qualifications are more likely to be sole parents and to be renting a home. While there are no differences in self-reported health status, women without qualifications report higher levels of sobriety and lower levels of tobacco smoking. They also have slightly lower rates of having a condition requiring medication, higher rates of reporting a disability but seek medical treatment at a similar frequency.

Maori women who have a post-secondary qualification taking more than three months study

Around 35 per cent of Maori women report that they have a formal post-secondary school qualification that required them to study for at least three months. There are some relative differences between the two groups. Those with qualifications report:

- Flatting as their most frequent and increasing household type (from 11 per cent in wave one to 36 per cent in wave three), and sole parent household has decreased dramatically (from 27 per cent in wave one to 4 per cent in wave three)
 - Renting accommodation is decreasing (from 48% in wave one to 21 per cent in wave three) and ownership is increasing (from 40 per cent in wave one to 62 per

cent in wave three, combining ownership with a mortgage or freehold)

- Optimism in terms of self-rated health, increasing sobriety over time, similar rates of tobacco smoking, somewhat larger proportion with private medical or sickness insurance, somewhat larger proportion reporting a disability (decreasing over time) and similar rates of having a condition requiring medication and having sought medical treatment in the previous 12 months.

Maori women who do not have a post-secondary qualification taking more than three months study

Around 65 per cent of Maori women report that they do not have a formal post-secondary qualification which required them to study for at least three months. Those without formal qualifications report:

- Living in households with their children (about 70 per cent over time), either as a couple or a sole parent
- Renting accommodation increasingly (from 36 per cent in wave one to 44 per cent in wave three) but mostly and increasingly owning their homes (from 49 per cent in wave one to 55 per cent in wave three)
- Optimism in terms of self-rated health, increasing sobriety over time but at lower rates, similar rates of tobacco smoking, somewhat smaller proportion with private medical or sickness insurance, somewhat smaller proportion reporting a disability (decreasing over time) and similar rates of having a condition requiring medication and having sought medical treatment in the previous 12 months.

