

The “perpetual hazard”: Middle New Zealand attitudes to marital infidelity in the agony aunt columns of the New Zealand Woman’s Weekly, 1950 editions.

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Social norms about the conduct of married life change over time. This paper examines New Zealand norms about marital infidelity as represented in the agony aunt columns of the New Zealand Woman’s Weekly in 1950. It concludes that sexual adventures outside of marriage constituted a significant challenge to contemporary beliefs about trust and romantic love within it, and that women facing this dilemma were given the task of saving the marriage. However, advice on how to do this was contradictory, from withholding sex while enduring the situation with dignity, to Freudian psychologists’ instruction to provide the straying husband with more and better sex.

Widely consumed public media from the past, whether in print, film, image or sound, can provide insights into significant beliefs, attitudes and values of the communities which produced them. Twentieth century women's magazines, in particular the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* (the Weekly), can provide a fruitful source of attitudes to matters thought salient for New Zealand women at the time of publication. These included (along with recipes, fashion, knitting and sewing patterns and household tips) articles and columns about romantic heterosexual love, marriage, and divorce. This paper examines attitudes to infidelity in marriage found in 1950 editions of the Weekly, as a point of reference to show how far typical attitudes have changed in New Zealand since that time.

A regular feature of the Weekly was the 'agony aunt' column in which readers' letters about personal problems were responded to by an anonymous author, or authors. In 1950, the column was called "Ask Lou Lockheart", and letters were solicited from readers in this advertisement:

Have You a Love Problem?

If you have any affairs of the heart on which you need advice, just drop a line to Lou Lockheart, c/o N.Z. Woman's Weekly, Box 1609, Auckland, C.I., and she will help you to solve them in her weekly talk. As a sign of good faith you must enclose your name and address, and send a non-de-plume with the problem.

ADVICE CANNOT BE SENT BY POST.

Advertisement soliciting letters to the agony aunt column in the New Zealand Woman's Weekly, 1950.

According to Fisher,¹ most cultures and belief systems cite overt adultery as the most common cause of relationship breakdown and divorce worldwide, not only transculturally, but also across time. There are clearly exceptions, particularly in strongly religious and patriarchal communities, but the widespread and enduring nature of the phenomenon Fisher describes is impressive. It is therefore possible to speculate that attitudes to infidelity may have had some commonalities across time within New Zealand in the second half of the twentieth century, but also some differences. As part of a study of changing attitudes to romantic love, marriage and divorce in New Zealand (Brewer, 2015), letters to the agony aunt columns in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* in the years 1950 and 1980 were analysed to discover whether, considering the major upheavals in social attitudes

during the intervening decades of the 60s and 70s, infidelity had similar or different meanings for two generations of New Zealand readers. This paper focusses not only on the meanings that infidelity had for the women readers who wrote to the 1950 agony aunt, 'Lou Lockheart'² but also for the attitudes represented in her replies. It will conclude with a brief discussion of changed attitudes found in the 1980 columns.³

The nuclear family of a married couple and their biological or adopted children was the predominant template for private life in the New Zealand of 1950,⁴ a world in which young and old were recovering from the privations, griefs and upheavals of the Second World War and the Great Depression which preceded it. Wives and fiancées of returning soldiers were encouraged to vacate paid employment in favour of ex-servicemen, and to treat them with gentleness and tolerance, especially if they were greatly changed by the trauma of battle.⁵ A settled domestic life, safety and prosperity were the promise of post-war life in 1950 and the nuclear families which were at its heart. Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage (1872 – 1940), prime mover in progress towards making New Zealand a comprehensively welfare state (and despite being a bachelor himself) had promoted wages for men which were sufficient to support a whole family,⁶ and *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, already a household staple since its inception in 1932, produced 'common sense' on all matters domestic, including instruction on how to maintain a marriage when something like infidelity threatened its stability.

In the notebooks he wrote while imprisoned under Italy's fascist regime in the 1930s, Antonio Gramsci, a Marxist activist and philosopher, talked about the notion of 'common sense' as a folk philosophy which includes attitudes generally held within communities.⁷ He proposed that these sets of community opinions, based on beliefs and values, are one of the forces which work on private citizens, normalising and rationalising their subordinate roles in regimes which privilege elite groups. It is a flexible concept which can also be used to demonstrate how socially constructed attitudes are, and how they can therefore be subject to change over time. Couples in romantic relationships, particularly if they are in trouble, will be concerned about local and contemporary 'common sense' – what other people will think about their marriage. What can they safely tell their family and friends? What should be kept private, and from whom, and what can be made public? Crucially for this paper, what do other people think about infidelity, and what should the couple do about it? The answers to these questions may determine whether they persevere, or give up

the fighting and cut their ties to one another. One way to find out what community attitudes might be in a couple's individual case is to consult an 'agony aunt', whose brief is to provide wise counsel in terms of what is community 'common sense' at the time.

Agony aunt columns from women's magazines – which have been providing such advice since the 17th century – are therefore potentially a good source of information for the social historian about community attitudes, particularly about family, and what communities in the past considered the proper conduct of intimate relationships. How seriously can we take them, though? They have generally been considered trivial, and perhaps fraudulent. This was taken from a report on the school library for the annual Epsom Girls Grammar School (EGGS) magazine in 1952.

The pictorial magazines are easily the most popular in the reading room and it is a sad fact that many excellent magazines are rarely opened. When the Library is extended the former magazines, requiring no concentration, will be placed at one end of the reading room and the more intellectual at the other.⁸

Undoubtedly, the EGGs librarian in 1952 would have included the *Weekly* among the magazines banished to the end of the reading room along with others "requiring no concentration" (and so appealing to feckless Auckland school girls). A proper discussion of this trivialisation of agony aunt columns – as with other matters coded as feminine – must wait for another time – suffice it to say that the anonymity of agony aunt columns allows the rare opportunity of hearing relatively unedited individual voices from the past talking about matters usually kept private. Even if fraudulent, the letters reflect their authors' attitudes, and what they perceive are those of the audience, and so the 'common sense' of the time.

The *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, first published in 1932, dominated the New Zealand women's magazine market, and was a staple in many homes throughout the period 1950 to 1980.⁹ The letters which constitute the data set of this study were selected from agony aunt columns in the 52 editions of 1950 for their accounts of the relationship difficulties of married couples. The magazine has always been targeted at women (although in 1950 was clearly also read by many men – 10% of the letters were from men) and the contents elided much in the way of Maori voices. It is therefore probable that the

letters were from individuals who were for the most part heterosexual, European and female. What was happening within other groups in New Zealand cannot be inferred from the discussion to follow.

The first edition published on 5 January 1950 advertised pieces ranging from serious articles entitled "'Interpol' Wages War Against Crime" and "John Dasset Writes about 'Alcoholics Anonymous'" to the less sober "Torchy Writes from the Mediterranean", "Exclusive from London, a cardigan for the fuller figure" and advice on how to "Pep up your meals".¹⁰ Sexual infidelity is a recurring theme through the agony aunt columns in 1950. Nine of the 34 letters to 'Lou Lockheart' about marriages in difficulty concerned infidelity, and they constituted the largest number of letters on a single issue.

Conventional romantic beliefs in the West assume sexual fidelity and so an affair, however brief, can undermine the very foundation of a relationship. Dominian describes how, after an infidelity is revealed:

The spouse feels shattered, betrayed, helpless, is afraid of being abandoned and is likely to become jealous. There is a general and specific loss of trust, which is hard to rebuild, and ... the sense of hurt often remains.¹¹

Another description of one of the emotions of the wronged spouse by Kipnis is equally poignant: "Realizing that people are talking; that friends knew and you didn't; that someone has been poaching in your pasture, stealing what is, by law, yours is a special kind of shame".¹²

Analysis of selected letters about infidelity can give a picture of both the correspondents' emotions and the agony aunts' responses. Here is an example of the former from the first edition.

"Unhappy Wife" has discovered that her husband (25) has been seeing a girl (16). She is 22. "I'm wondering whether to make the break now? I could not go through all this heartbreak again. I love him and trusted him, but it can never be the same. He says I am silly, etc ..."

Assuming, as Lou Lockheart appears to, that "seeing" means "Unhappy Wife" has proof of an affair, even in 1950 there was no legal impediment to her divorcing her unfaithful husband: the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1928, which was still in force, had infidelity as its first of a number of reasons for granting a divorce (*New Zealand*

Official Yearbook, 1950). She does not appear to be at that point yet – she uses the past tense for “trusted”, but the present for “love” – but is very distressed and, despite her husband describing her concerns as “silly”, she believes that “it can never be the same”. “It” seems to mean the romantic love she thought they shared. She seems to be writing to get an outsider’s ‘common sense’ view: is it ‘silly’ or normal to be so disillusioned by his behaviour? She’s unsure whether her distress is an appropriate reaction. ‘Lou Lockheart’ gives her what she is asking for – a firm opinion:

... you married “for better or worse,” didn’t you? You are having a spot of “worse”. That hardly justifies tossing everything overboard. Other things – ill-health, loss of a child, work, even sanity – have spoilt marriage for some time or forever. Yet the married will weather such and go completely berserk over the perpetual hazard of infidelity. When you show a marriage partner that you mean to abide by your contract you may be surprised to find how well the other will do the same. So more marriage and fewer childish revolts!¹³

The agony aunt appears to agree that “Unhappy Wife” is indeed being ‘silly’ to object to the affair. She reminds “Unhappy Wife” of the vows she made when she married in church, where she promised to bear the “worse” along with enjoying the “better”, and that she signed a “contract” at the time which was binding in law. In using terms such as “childish revolts”, “going completely berserk” and “tossing everything overboard” and herself minimising infidelity as a “perpetual hazard” she is heaping ridicule on hapless “Unhappy Wife”.

This expression of emotion by the agony aunt may suggest tension around the topic,¹⁴ and that she is ‘pulling “Unhappy Wife” back into line’ – enforcing ‘common sense’ on a wayward member of the community by using these sarcastic terms. This exemplifies Gramsci’s insight that ‘common sense’ is one of the ways inequities which privilege the powerful (assuming the husband has more power than his wife by virtue of his role as breadwinner) can end up being taken for granted by the less powerful. Lou Lockhart’s tone is designed to reprove and perhaps humiliate, and her message arguably makes infidelity that much easier for husbands because it scolds their wives into accepting it without threatening the marriage.

For the 1950 readers, however, there appear to have been competing voices about the meaning of infidelity within marriage.

The first is voiced by “Unhappy Wife” herself. She has an ideal of marriage – especially of one founded on romantic love – that includes passion, trust and sexual fidelity, and is contemplating ending her marriage because these have been lost. She was not alone in expecting marriage to be the continuation of a romance. A group of letters from probably young wives bemoaned the prosaic in their husbands even when there was no infidelity, and recalled previous lovers who were more romantic. “Had It” has a husband who never notices her, pays her a compliment, or says he loves her” (27 April, 1950, p. 30); “Jack’s Wife” complains that Jack rarely talks to her or does repairs around the house, preferring to read Westerns. They appear to be disillusioned when the romances they viewed in Hollywood movies, like Frank Capra’s *It Happened One Night*, with their masculine, brooding heroes (played by Clark Gable in this film) irresistibly attracted to articulate, wilful heroines, do not occur within their own marriages.

A second view comes from the church. Christian denominations, of course, condemn infidelity in the harshest terms, and although divorce was legal in 1950 providing fault could be proved, the Roman Catholic Church at the same time claimed marriage was, according to Reverend James Kavanagh in a 1950s handbook for Catholics, “an indissoluble union ... that makes for the sustained happiness of husband and wife, in spite of occasional ups-and-downs”.¹⁵ It would seem that infidelity was still no justification for dissolving the union, and was also just one among other potential ‘downs’ which married folk must endure. Lou Lockheart appears on the surface to agree with Kavanagh about the indissolubility of marriage, with the addition of ridicule of the young wife’s unhappiness and exhortations to set a good example to her husband by ‘abiding by her contract’ – as though the legal document has also a moral or even religious imperative.

A third view purports to be scientific. According to Celeslo, the main advice given by American ‘experts’ to betrayed wives at the time was to look to themselves and what they had or had not done, to ‘drive’ him to stray. For example, they were asked if they had been willing to have sex when he wanted, or if they had failed to keep their appearance attractive.¹⁶ This advice is more obvious outside the Weekly’s agony aunt column. An article in the 21 September edition entitled “Danger Points Are Money and ‘In-Laws’” is one of a series on “Marriage and Morals ...” by Ernest Jones “the most distinguished of all living psycho-analysts (sic).¹⁷ Its Freudian approach (sub-headings include ‘Sex Confusion’ and “Soft” Men’) attributes “general unhappiness” in marriage to “lack

of gratification”, and infidelity in men to having a wife who “wears the trousers”, since the husband is emasculated by a dominating wife. Its illustration poses a couple being married in front of a preacher and standing on top of a document entitled “Final Divorce Decree” reminding the reader that if marriage isn’t performed correctly (with the wife being appropriately womanly, the man being manly, and the ‘gratification’ being terrific) then the unthinkable might happen. It is therefore a warning, and an encouragement to heed the advice of what were the leading psychological experts of the day.



Illustration to an article entitled “Danger Points Are Money and ‘In-Laws’” is one of a series on “Marriage and Morals ...” by Ernest Jones, 21 September 1950,¹⁸ page 62

An earlier article entitled “Will This Marriage Last?”¹⁹ also explains what makes for a good marriage. It is a strong affirmation of tradition, albeit using justifications from contemporary psychology, in that it regards “acceptance of the conventional patterns of life” as psychologically “well-adjusted”, “mature” and demonstrating “emotional stability”. It stigmatises those whose marriages are unhappy as not only emotionally unstable, poorly adjusted and immature, but also potentially “mavericks, lone wolves, dissenters ... (and) ... iconoclasts”. The idea recalls what Giddens describes as the expert, scientific voice framed as absolutely trustworthy in the mutable communities of the modern West. Nevertheless, as we will see, in private, women were not all swallowing whole this apparently credible advice. It promotes a conservative view of marriage which, despite partially aligning with Lou Lockheart’s, was to be fundamentally destabilised in the decades to follow, proving the ‘dissenting’ voices to be more indicative of the changes that were to come than the ‘well-adjusted’ ones.

Lou Lockheart’s advice to “Unhappy Wife” is clear – it is the voice of the Church and of a kind of pragmatism: give up your silly romantic notions, grow up and face the fact that all grown-ups know – infidelity is always a possibility, but should not be allowed to destabilise the family. To further explore her point of view, here is another piece of advice from the agony aunt, to “Distressed” who has discovered her husband of many years has been having multiple affairs:

If you can do so calmly, I think you should speak to him and tell him that you are not going to be shared. That you’ll remain to look after your children and be provided for (you might get finance arranged legally or by personal agreement), then make the best of it.²⁰

I take “not going to be shared” as a euphemism for withdrawing from the marital bed (another euphemism, of course, this study is full of them). The measured tone also contrasts with the sarcasm of her response to “Unhappy Wife”. It is possible that ‘Lou Lockheart’ was written by different journalists in different editions, but also that the same author is showing more sympathy to the older wife of a serial philanderer, than to a very young woman still influenced by ‘silly’ notions of romantic love.

You will have noted the contradictory advice: in the same year that Lou Lockheart advises this reader to withhold sex from a straying husband, as we have seen, the ‘professional’ expert, in the form of a

prestigious psychologist, has suggested the answer is for the wife to always do what her husband says and to offer him more and better sex.²¹ Nevertheless, in both cases, it is up to the woman to save the marriage. Arguably, these different views of infidelity have in common that they make it the wife's responsibility to deal with her husband's infidelity and keep the marriage intact. The psychological view may see the wife trying to revive romance in her marriage (a strategy 'Lou Lockheart' recommends elsewhere) and the religious view asks her to suffer in dignified silence, while withholding sex.

Some support for the beleaguered wife was available from the communities of women also spending their young married lives in the post-war suburbs raising children. In Helen May's study of this cohort of New Zealand women, "Brenda" describes how keeping the couple together was 'common sense' within the community as a whole, and informal strategies were used to help them:

It was for the sake of the children that we must keep married at any costs. We would take each other's children when marriages were rocky. Lots of times I would have kids stay here a week – someone whose husband was having an affair. We would let them go for a holiday.²²

None of these strategies was intended to be public knowledge, however. Deborah Cohen's account of secrets within families – and the concept of family privacy – includes Edmond Leach's famous 1967 description of the nuclear family "with its narrow privacy and tawdry secrets",²³ and May notes that for New Zealand women "... there were many aspects of marriage that were shrouded in silence".²⁴ She includes amongst them unwanted pregnancies and criminal abortions, with infidelity being added to this list of 'hazards' which must be suffered in order to keep the family together. In this way, errant husbands in 1950 were left largely free to carry on affairs with other women while keeping their families intact under a veneer of respectability.

Lou Lockheart was strict in her responses to teenage girls. Three young women whose letters were responded to in the 7 December issue were given a ticking off by the agony aunt that would strip paint. Their letters are not printed – they have been silenced, only Lou Lockheart's response is printed and the implication is that they have all been having sex. To "A. and B." – two 15 year olds²⁵ – Lou Lockheart shrills "Both of you acted in an amazingly impulsive, if not absurdly supine manner. You have not been taught to behave properly and

your parents must try and mend your lives for you",²⁶ and another 16 year old in the 21 December issue, she calls "helplessly, hopelessly lacking in moral training, youthful gaiety, innocence, dignity, and all the attributes which protect young females of even more primitive civilisations".²⁷ The implicit racism of this comment aside, her assumption is that the three teenage girls themselves are morally reprehensible, as are their parents whose lack of proper oversight has allowed the young women to behave outrageously. The responsibility of the men involved is not discussed – it is up to the girls and their parents to avoid the dangers of sexually rampant men, not for the men themselves to refrain from exploiting younger girls, as it is up to the betrayed wives to cover up their husbands' adultery when it occurs.²⁸

It is worth noting that one of the men "though only 20, is married, and his wife is going to have a baby, too", and another "a boy of 18 who has since married" and is also expecting a baby.²⁹ "Unhappy Wife's" husband was also 'seeing' a girl of only 16, and was himself 25. Although, to some of us, these are all still boys themselves, it is the young wives and girlfriends who are being chastised, and tasked with fixing their marriages, or ending the relationship and regaining their chastity.

The 23 November issue includes an item which illustrates both the requirement for the female correspondent (in this case a potential girlfriend) to take responsibility for dealing with infidelity, and a cynical attitude towards other, older married men who stray.

"Sleepy Eyes" says she loves a married man for whom she works ... 'He feels the same way. He is 13 years older and wants me to go out with him ...' etc. I think you had better wake up, "Sleepy Eyes". He is not in love with you. He has no intention of getting a divorce. You can easily find another job these days. Make your motto "No poaching."

So "Sleepy eyes" must leave her job, not her aspiring lover, and she, not he, should take responsibility for protecting the man's wife, and potentially his marriage.

'Lou Lockheart' and most of her readers appear to have supported the availability of divorce. It is clear there were situations which justified a woman leaving her marriage. To a young wife who is being physically and sexually abused by her husband, she advises immediate escape, and calling the police.³⁰ However, it seems to have been a last resort. Arguably, the relative silence around how a woman could support herself if she left the marriage signals its high

significance. In a situation where the woman was unable to support herself and their children without access to her husband's income, other factors such as enduring attachment to the husband and religious beliefs about the sanctity of marriage could have been used to minimise the effects of the betrayal and allow her to carry on. The practical solution was to stay in the marriage as long as necessary, and to act as if nothing was wrong. This advice fits with the ideology of the day, to keep matters which might be negatively judged by the community within the family, and if the community did indeed know about philandering husbands (or indeed husbands who assaulted their wives and children), they too would keep up the pretence that nothing was wrong as a way of saving the faces of the individuals involved.

This muzzling of wives in the name of 'common sense', when many had already had access not only to feminist ideals from the first half of the century but also to romantic fiction, both expressing outrage at infidelity, is likely to have produced the kinds of tensions within the walls of the home which were not conducive to happiness. The children of such marriages were to be raising their own children in the 70s and 80s, and some of the impetus of those daughters into the second wave feminist movement may have been to avoid the lives of 'quiet desperation' that their mothers had lived.

By 1980 negative attitudes towards discussing family problems such as infidelity in public had undergone a transformation. No longer was this problem necessarily a secret. The increased incidence of letters complaining about it in the 1980 agony aunt columns bears testimony to that. (Brewer, 2015). The years since 1950 had seen major changes in public attitudes to private behaviour, and the nature of the traditional marriage itself had come into question, but nevertheless infidelity remained a major cause of discord within relationships. As elsewhere in the West, there were fewer marriages, and more defacto relationships; feminist ideas, even when contested, had infiltrated society at large; the sexual revolution had potentially loosened up attitudes to sexuality in general, and community beliefs in the nature of romantic love had become if anything more idealistic, but the norm of sexual fidelity within relationships had not gone away.

The distress and anger felt by betrayed spouses are just as clear in the 1980 as in the 1950 letters, but the burden of the agony aunt's advice has moved away from the maintenance of a façade of respectability. Years of unprecedented prosperity and the liberal turn in behavioural norms affected 'common sense' about infidelity too. Marriage guidance, with professional counsellors, was now an accepted

part of the scene, and the 1980 agony aunt, 'Karen Kay', routinely advised her correspondents to seek help there. She was also much more likely than Lou Lockheart to recommend that they leave, if the problems seemed to her unsolvable.

According to New Zealand sociologist, David Swain, writing in 1979, "Divorce is important. It is a legal event fraught with human and social significance" (p.114). As this paper hopes to show, a focus on divorce, and relationship difficulties which might lead to divorce, provides an insight into social attitudes in previous historical periods, not only about relationship breakdown, but also about romantic love itself and the nature of our expectations of it. These matters are central to our experiences of happiness in our adult lives, and have an impact on the homes in which we raise our children. Agony aunt columns provide narratives recounted by the real-life protagonists which then might be challenged by the agony aunt, producing two interpretations of what is causing problems in this central relationship of the correspondent's life. A third point of view may be provided by 'experts', reported on in magazine articles. As readers we consume these multiple narratives, and the attitudes we discern in them may reinforce or challenge attitudes we ourselves hold about our own relationships. Divorce is important to all of us, not just the divorced or the children of divorce, because it reveals information about the central relationships in our lives which determine our own happiness.

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6 Brookes, Barbara. *A History of New Zealand Women*. (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2016), p. 249.

7 Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the "Prison Notebooks" of Antonio Gramsci*, trans. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith. (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p.322.

8 *75th Jubilee Book of Memories Epsom Girls Grammar School, 1917 - 1992*, (Auckland: Epsom Girls Grammar School, 1991), p.92.

9 Brewer, Rosemary. "You married for better or worse, didn't you?" An Analysis of Changing Attitudes to Love, Marriage and Divorce in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 1950 and 1980. (Master of Philosophy thesis) Auckland: Auckland University of Technology, 2015), p.60.

10 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 5 January 1950, front cover.

11 Dominian, Jack. *Marriage: The Definitive Guide to What Makes a Marriage Work*. (London: Cedar, 1995), pp.166-167.

12 Kipnis, Laura. "Adultery" *Critical Inquiry*, 24, no.2 (1998): p.300.

13 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 5 January, 1950.

14 The response also refers to "complexities not revealed in one letter". The husband may be a returned serviceman from WWII, one of those whose wives were instructed to be tolerant of infidelities committed when they were serving in the war ("When Your Soldier Comes Home", Walker, 1998, pp 56-62). It is possible the general tolerance shown to these men, some of whom were traumatised, was extended to forgiving even post-war transgressions of this nature.

15 Kavanagh, James. *Manual of Social Ethics*. (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son Ltd, 1955), p.32.

16 Ceello, Kristin. *Making Marriage Work: A History of Marriage and Divorce in the twentieth Century United States*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), p.86.

17 He was indeed very "distinguished", being Freud's main interpreter to the English-speaking world, the author of an early biography (Jones, 1953), and a long-standing colleague of Freud's. p.50.

18 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 21 September, 1950, p.62.

19 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 27 April, 1950, p.10.

20 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* 29 June, 1950, p.34.

21 Such contradictory advice demonstrates how overly simple Friedan's (1963) critique of women's magazines was - magazines are written by many authors, so are not univocal, and competing positions may be expressed, even within the same edition.

22 May, Helen. *Minding Children, Managing Men: Conflict and Compromise in the Lives of Postwar Pakeha Women*. (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), p.103.

23 Leach, Edmond. "A Runaway World" REITH LECTURES Lecture 3: Ourselves and Others, 26 November 1967 - Radio 4

24 May, Helen. *Managing Children, Managing Men: Conflict and Compromise in the Lives of Postwar Pakeha Women*. (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), p.95.

25 The age of consent had been 16 since 1896 URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/gender-inequalities/page-2>

26 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* 7 December, p.34

27 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* 21 December, p.34

28 The reproving tone of the agony aunt when addressing the misdemeanours of younger correspondents may indicate something about social attitudes to the young in general, especially when compared with her expressions of greater compassion to "Distressed" and other older and longer married correspondents in letters not discussed here, especially if there is a general belief that the young need to be disciplined to return them to a proper path.

29 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* 7 December, p.34

30 *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, 15 June 1950, p.34.

ENDNOTES

1 Fisher, Helen. *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery, and Divorce*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), p.40.

2 'Lou Lockheart' is a pseudonym and there were no clues to the agony aunt's identity, so I am assuming the author was female, since that is how she was represented.

3 Men too wrote letters about straying wives, but that interesting material is not within the scope of this paper.

4 Phillips, Jock. *A Man's Country: The Image of the Pakeha Male - a History*. (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1996), p.221.

5 For an example of this, see May, Helen.