

FOREWORD — KUPU WHAKATAKI

The website of The New Zealand Women’s Law Journal — Te Aho Kawe Kaupapa Ture a ngā Wāhine says that it is “the only academic publication that is solely dedicated to publishing and supporting the work of women lawyers in New Zealand”. It joins a number of other prestigious women’s law journals around the world.

The mission statements of the various journals show how important these publications are to broadening legal scholarship so that it encompasses other voices and points of view and, in the process, enriches the law and contributes to a better, more inclusive society.

The Michigan Journal of Gender and Law is “dedicated to providing a forum for exploring how gender issues (and related issues of race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, and culture) impact law and society”. The Columbia Journal of Gender and Law aims to promote “dialogue, debate, and awareness that will broaden the very concept of feminism”, while the Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy takes an expansive view of the law to meet its goal “not only to explore what the law was and is, but what it could and should be”.

The UCLA Women’s Law Journal says that it “uses the power of language to educate people and make women’s voices heard”. It focuses “not only on the common struggles of women, but also on diversity as a strength in feminist legal scholarship”. It seeks to “represent the reality of all women’s lives and experiences, without separating voices into exclusionary categories”. The Australian Feminist Law Journal (published out of Griffith University) “focuses on scholarly research using critical feminist approaches to law and justice”. The Canadian Journal of Women and the Law’s mandate is to “provide an outlet for those wishing to explore the impact of law on women’s social, economic and legal status, and on the general conditions of their lives”. It aims

to “increase the volume and improve the accessibility of legal scholarship by Canadian women”.

In the tenth anniversary edition of the *Harvard Journal of Law and Gender*¹ the editor, Christine Littleton,² described the importance of feminist jurisprudence and of the journal as follows:³

Rather than seeking merely to distinguish ourselves from others, in the time-honored manner of traditional male legal discourse, feminists must explore the paradox of commonality in diversity that is our experience as women. Part of the strength of the feminist jurisprudence which the *Harvard Women’s Law Journal* has helped to foster has been the embracing of just this paradox.

Te Aho Kawe Kaupapa Ture a ngā Wāhine is off to a good start in living up to these words. The first edition of the *Journal* begins with a speech by the Chief Justice of New Zealand, the Rt Hon Dame Sian Elias, identifying her experience as a woman in the law. This is followed by an analysis of the State of the Nation by Caren Fox, Deputy Chief Judge of the Māori Land Court, Deborah Chambers QC, a leading barrister, and the President of the New Zealand Law Society, Kathryn Beck. Louise Grey and Nicole Ashby, both currently working in large commercial law firms, contribute other articles on the profession. The range of articles indicates a commitment to using multiple voices and experiences to explore the position of women in the legal profession.

The *Journal* embraces diversity more generally in all its manifestations, including in thought, ethnicity, and perspective. Tunisia Napia’s piece on challenges for women and *tikanga* Māori exemplifies this. The *Journal* has an international perspective. Taylor Mitchell considers the role of gender in the negotiation and text of the Paris Agreement. It is also not afraid to tackle somewhat thorny issues that invariably disproportionately affect women, such as Joy Guo’s consideration of paid parental leave and Anjori Mitra, Erica Burke and Jackie Edmond’s contributions addressing abortion law, both domestically and in terms of international human rights law.

1 The oldest continuously published feminist law journal in the United States and “devoted to the advancement of feminist jurisprudence and the study of law and gender”.

2 Now a professor of law and women’s studies emerita at UCLA.

3 Christina A Littlejohn “In Search of a Feminist Jurisprudence” (1987) 10 *Harv Women’s LJ* 1 at 7.

Everyone involved with this publishing initiative is to be congratulated on the quality of this inaugural edition. And I look forward to the next one.

Hon Justice Susan Glazebrook

9 October 2017

Supreme Court of New Zealand