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Chairpersons and goddesses: non-sexist usages in New Zealand English

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Introduction

Sexist language has received a great deal of attention in the last fifteen years (e.g. Bodine 1975, Lakoff 1975, Spender 1980, Baron 1986, Poynton 1989, Cameron 1990). Feminist linguists (who may, of course, be of either sex) have debated the ideological implications of sexist usages largely along Whorfian lines: while some argue that women are intolerably disadvantaged by being constrained to use "man made language", others assert that by identifying the limitations and problems inherent in sexist usages, they can be challenged and changed. Deborah Cameron (in press) comments that we currently have a proliferation of variants and a sociolinguistic situation "in which every alternative is politically loaded, because the meaning of each is now defined by contrast with all the other possibilities". In other words, choices such as *Mrs* and *chairman* can no longer be regarded as neutral or unmarked; they reflect an ideological position just as clearly as non-sexist forms such as *Ms* and *chairperson*. An examination of some of these variants in New Zealand English can therefore provide interesting information on where New Zealand language users stand on this issue.

Most research in the area of sexist language in New Zealand to date has focussed on perceptions of sexist usages, and attitudes and policy towards non-sexist language. Wilson and Ng (1988), for example, demonstrated that New Zealanders' perceptions of the meaning of so-called generics, such as *he* and *man* are changing. Sentences using these pseudo-generics 'primed' New Zealanders to perceive mainly male images. Similarly a study of 11-17 year olds found that for these young people the words *man* and *he* were associated primarily with the masculine linguistic category (Ng 1990).

Another study investigated attitudes towards sexist usages among Otago academics (Stewart, Verstraate and Fanslow 1990). The researchers found that while the academics considered their consciousnesses had risen in this area over recent years, in fact the men's consciousnesses had not risen as high as the women's: the men, for instance, were less likely than the women to regard terms like "prehistoric man" as sexist. Margaret McLaren (1992) reviewed the policies of the seven New Zealand universities with respect to sexist language. She reports that by 1989

official policies on sexist language were in place at four universities, Lincoln, Waikato, Victoria and Canterbury (in their order of enlightenment). But Otago, Auckland and Massey still had no official policy in this area.

New Zealand newspaper policy on sexist language has also been examined (Holt 1988). Vivienne Holt wrote to ten newspapers and a Christchurch columnist, Bruce Scott, seeking views on the use of forms such as *Ms*, *Chairman* and *Chairperson*. *The Press* appeared most conservative, reporting that they deliberately avoided *-person* forms and still used *-man* as a generic, and describing forms like *chairperson* and *spokesperson* as 'confections symptomatic of the age' indicating 'an over-sensitivity to cries of "sexism"' (Holt 1988:16). The *New Zealand Herald* and the *Dominion* also reported that they banned *-person* usages and the *Otago Daily Times* and the *New Zealand Herald* expressly forbade the use of *Ms* at the time of Holt's survey. The most progressive papers were the *Waikato Times* and the *Manawatu Standard* which reported that they generally used *-person* forms, and the *Manawatu Standard* used *Ms* as the 'standard honorific for when a woman's preference is not known' (1988:13).

These views indicate the over-riding influence of gate-keepers such as newspaper editors (who are still predominantly male) on this area of linguistic usage. They are also relevant since they report newspaper policy at the time when the press section of the Wellington Corpus of written New Zealand English (WNZC) was being assembled, underlining the importance of the careful sampling which was used in collecting this material.

Ms-usage

As the comments from newspapers suggest, the honorific *Ms* has attracted a great deal of attention. Letters to the Editor in a range of newspapers and in *The Listener* testify to the attention this issue received throughout the 1970s. The tone of most commentators was condemnatory:

> mothers whether married, widowed or divorced, object to having 'Ms' foisted on them.
>
> ((Mrs) Joyce Ellwood. *Listener* 20/3/76.)

An article by Hilda Phillips, which provoked a spate of responses, took a similar view:

> Today's women are so predatory, one automatically assumes that if a woman is single, it is from choice. So why the devious manoeuvre to imply that one *might* be married but doesn't care to flaunt it. The 'Ms-Miss' fools no-one but herself; it's obviously not from choice.....
>
> (Hilda Phillips 'Don't Call me Ms' *Listener* 21/8/74.)

Thereafter the issue resurfaced sporadically, with the number of letters favouring *Ms* increasing over time. In the 1990s *Ms* is offered as an option on a range of forms, official and unofficial, and the 1988 State Services Commission booklet on non-sexist usage gives it an approving nod. Nevertheless, Jenny Shipley, currently both Minister of Social Welfare and Minister of Women's Affairs, prefers *Mrs* according to an interview in 1987 (*Listener* 5/12/87), while Ruth Richardson, the Minister of Finance, apparently 'resents' *Ms* and prefers no honorific at all (Holt 1988:15).

In Australia, Anne Pauwels (1987) examined changes in attitudes to *Ms*-usage between 1975 and 1986. Using Monash University records she found that use of the title *Ms* increased from 3.9% in 1975 to 11.9% in 1986, with single women aged between 23 and 30 the largest category of users of *Ms*. Interviews with 250 randomly selected women in Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney revealed that most women (87%) were familiar with the title *Ms*, but only 20% reported they used it. Most (64%) described it as a title for women which did not reveal marital status. Others however had different interpretations. Some saw it as applicable only to divorced or widowed women, or to those in a de facto relationship, or as an indication of a woman's feminist politics. Illustrating Cameron's point that there is now no neutral choice, Pauwels notes that in these cases, rather than being used as a title which does not reveal marital status - i.e. a replacement for *Mrs* and *Miss* - *Ms* functions as an addition to the system, providing a three-way choice, thus exacerbating the asymmetry between women and men.

> The 'three versus one' title system means that, today, even more information can be disclosed through a woman's personal title than in the past (Pauwels 1987:151).

A small New Zealand study examined the use of *Ms* by educated Wellington women working in the public service. Brian Milne (1991) obtained responses to a simple questionnaire from 43 women in the Ministry of Commerce. Overall, almost half (49%) of these educated professional respondents reported using *Ms*. Of these, two thirds (67%) were single, almost a quarter were married (24%), and the remainder (9%) were divorced. Though *Ms* was most popular among the single respondents (64% of this group used it), it is worth noting that almost a third (31%) of married respondents used it too. Perhaps predictably, no-one over 50 used *Ms*, but, encouragingly for feminists, half of those in the youngest age group (16-29 years) reported using it. This was, however, a lower proportion than among those in their 30s where 60% said they used *Ms*, a result which echoes Pauwels' finding that young Australian women chose *Ms* less often than women over 30. She suggested that perhaps feminism was regarded as passé by young people but Milne's figures suggest this would be going too far for the New Zealand women he questioned. It is important to bear in mind, however, that Milne's data were collected from an educated group of women in a relatively high income bracket, and

cannot be regarded as in any way representative of New Zealand women in general.

Corpus data provides a rather different picture of *Ms*-usage in Australia and New Zealand.[1] Comparing just the press sections of the WNZC and the Macquarie Corpus, the sections most relevant for analysing current usage, it is clear that Australian newspapers are well ahead of New Zealand papers in the acceptance of *Ms* as an honorific, as table 1 illustrates.[2] *Ms* is clearly far more frequent in the Australian than in the New Zealand press material.

Table 1
Relevant *Miss/Mrs/Ms* forms from two Corpus Press sections

	WNZC press section (NZ usage)		Macquarie press section (Australian usage)	
	No.	%	No	%
Ms	14	14.7	53	42.7
Miss	4	4.2	11	8.9
Mrs	77	81.1	60	48.4
	95	100	124	100

A second interesting and surprising feature of these distributional data is the fact that *Ms* is more frequent than *Miss* in both corpora, though *Mrs* remains the most frequently occurring form. Despite its unpopularity in the 70s, *Ms* has clearly become acceptable, at least for referring to unmarried women, by 1986.

The numbers are small, but *Ms* occurs more than three times as often as *Miss* in the newspaper material of the WNZC, and *Ms* is over four times as frequent as *Miss* in the parallel section of the Macquarie Corpus.

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[1]The four corpora used in the analyses undertaken for this paper were (1) the Wellington Corpus of written New Zealand English, 1986, (2) the Brown Corpus of American written English, 1961 (Frances and Kucera 1982), (3) the LOB Corpus of British written English, 1961 (Johansson and Hofland 1989), (4) the Macquarie Corpus of written Australian English, 1986 (Peters, Purvis, Martin and Jenkins 1990). All four corpora have been constructed on similar lines using the same basic discourse categories. However, it should be noted that word frequency counts are available only for the newspaper files of the Macquarie corpus (179681 words) to date. *Micro-OCP*, a computerised concordance programme, was used for the analysis.

[2]It is essential to analyse such forms in context in order to identify relevant and irrelevant forms. Instances such as *Miss Universe* and the name of a horse, *Hasty Miss*, were eliminated, for instance, since there is no possibility of substituting *Ms* for such forms.

These data will provide a useful baseline for future monitoring of language change in Australasia, but it is also worth noting that there was not a single instance of *Ms* in either of the comparably composed million-word British LOB or American Brown corpora of data collected in 1961. Given that it is very unlikely that New Zealand English would have been ahead of overseas trends in this area in 1961, I think we can safely conclude that the appearance of *Ms* in the WNZC is evidence of language change. And its higher frequency in the Macquarie Corpus suggest that Australian editors, at least, are ahead of New Zealand editors in this area of language change.

Perhaps we can also tentatively infer that *Miss* is declining in popularity and being replaced by *Ms*, while there is no such evidence for *Mrs*. To be confident of the accuracy of this inference, we would need evidence of the marital status of the *Ms*-users. However, it would certainly be consistent with Pauwels' (1987) analysis of student usage as revealed by Melbourne university files, and with her discussion on the basis of the interview data she collected from a wide range of Australian women. In both studies she noted that *Ms* was more popular with single than with married women, and she comments that married women often indicated pride in their married status and a reluctance to conceal it, or to "embarrass" or "insult" their partners by using *Ms* (Pauwels 1987:145).

Man

> The lawyers of the 19th century have decided for us that the word 'man' always includes 'woman' when there is a penalty to be incurred, and never includes 'woman' when there is a privilege to be conferred.
>
> (Charlotte Carmichaels Stopes 1908:5, cited in Sunderland 1991:507).

The meaning of the form *man* has changed over the centuries from a clearly generic usage meaning 'person' to a form referring to a specifically 'male' human being (Wilson and Ng 1988, Ng 1990, 1991, Sunderland 1991). In Old English there is no doubt *man* meant 'person'; and even in the fifteenth century it was used perfectly aptly to describe "the Blessed Virgin Mary as *mother and maiden-man* 'mother and virgin she-person'" (Orsman 1982). But by the eighteenth century its narrower more specific meaning had become established as the predominant one. A number of grammarians reacted very prescriptively to this decline in the generic meaning of forms like *man* and *he*. As early as 1553, for instance, Thomas Wilson re-asserted the precedence of masculine over feminine forms, and the use of *man* as a generic was prescribed in John Kirkby's 1746 grammar (Bodine 1975), and then enshrined in an 1850 Act of Parliament, purportedly for reasons of economy ('to shorten the language used in Acts

of Parliament') rather than grammaticality (Bodine 1975:131-132, Henley 1987:13).

An American study by Robert Cooper (1984) of 'androcentric generics' showed a dramatic decline in their use in a range of American publications between 1971 and 1979. Using a 500,000-word corpus, he examined the use of *he*, *man*, and *-man* in compounds such as *fireman* and *spokesman*, in newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and the *Congressional Record*. The rate of use fell from 12.3 per 5000 words in 1971 to 4.3 per 5000 words in 1979. An analysis of a 75,000-word sample from a British paper *The Times Literary Supplement* over the same period, however, showed no decline in the use of the androcentric generics examined, but the initial level of use was very low (3.7 per 5000 words).

In New Zealand, Miriam Meyerhoff (1987) analysed changes in the use of pseudo-generics such as *man* and *he* in five newspapers between 1964 and 1984. The five papers were selected to give some social range: the *Listener*, *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, the *Evening Post*, *Salient*, a student newspaper, and *The New Zealand Journalist*, a monthly union newspaper. Using a 150,000 word corpus, she noted the incidence of such usages per 1000 words and found that all five papers showed a reduction in the use of pseudo-generics over the twenty year period. The largest decrease occurred in *The New Zealand Journalist*, supporting the *National Business Review*'s claims that journalists are the driving force in moves to non-sexist language (a point made in a letter responding to Holt's request for comments on the paper's policy in this area. Holt 1988:16). The student newspaper *Salient* was close behind. Both these papers, however, used far more pseudo-generics in the 1964 sample than the three others, and so they had more room for improvement.

I analysed and compared the use of generic *man* in the press sections of the WNZC, the Macquarie and the British LOB corpora. As mentioned above, psychological research makes it clear that the form *man* now signals 'male' in the minds of many New Zealanders. Consequently, it is now rather difficult to identify uncontroversial instances of 'generic' *man*. Many instances which may have been intended as generic can be challenged as misleading, in that they inappropriately suggest 'male human being' to many readers. These are pseudo-generics: i.e. forms which claim to be generic while in fact suggesting 'male'. Examples include phrases such as "the tax man", "the man in the street", "as good as the next man", and so on. Aware of the problems such usages raise, many writers try to find an alternative to *man* in such phrases. In analysing the data on instances of generic *man*, I classified such phrases as generics in a 'broad' sense.[3]

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[3]I used the following criteria for the 'broad' category of generics:
Substituting *person* would not lose relevant information about the referent.

There are, however, some instances of *man* where, whatever their reaction to the choice of the word *man* for the purpose, I am confident most readers would interpret the intended referent as 'humankind' rather than a specifically male human being. The following are examples of such usages:

"fearful of what man can do to man"
"the right of man to life"
"the rights of the common man and the tyranny of the state"
"the primitive Neanderthal man"
"the dawn of modern man".

These usages were classified as generics in a 'narrow' sense.

Drawing such distinctions is obviously problematic. One person's intended generic may be another's clearly male referent. One consequence is what feminist linguists have called "slippage",[4] not only in people's usage, but also in interpreting their meaning accurately for purposes of corpus analysis. Table 2 presents the results of my analysis.

Table 2
Generic *man* from press sections

	WNZC Corpus 1986	Macquarie Corpus 1986	LOB Corpus 1961
man	134	122	151
generic *man* (narrow sense)	11 (8.2%)	8 (6.5%)	15 (9.9%)
pseudo-generic *man* (broad sense)	10 (7.5%)	28 (22.9%)	32 (21.2%)

It is clear from Table 2 that there were few instances of generic *man* in its narrow meaning of 'humankind' in any of the three corpora. However, it appears that New Zealand usage differs from Australian in the use of the broader category of *man* as generic. Here Australian press usage

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Substituting *person* would make it clear that this referent could be female, and that there is nothing inherently masculine about the reference to justify the use of *man*.

4"Slippage" is when an utterance starts of as a generic but slips into masculinity during its progress: eg. "The lack of vitality is aggravated by the fact that there are so few able-bodied young adults about. They have all gone off to look for work, leaving behind the old, the disabled, the women and the children" (cited in Cameron, in press:11, from *Sunday Times*).
"Man is unique among the apes, because he grows a long beard, and it is to this he owes his superior intelligence" (cited in Cameron 1985:23, from the *Women's Journal*, December 1981).

appears to more closely resemble the older British LOB usage, and there are far fewer instances of these pseudo-generics in the New Zealand press material. It thus appears that New Zealand press usage is changing in this area at a faster rate than Australian, in that New Zealand reporters are using fewer pseudo-generics. Before making too much of New Zealand's apparent lead in this area, however, (especially in the light of the fact that it reverses the trend noted in *Ms*-usage) I would want to obtain a more representative sample of judgments on which usages should be classified as generic in the broad sense.

Chairpersons and spokespersons

Turning to non-sexist *-person* forms, the numbers of these were so small in the corpora that it seemed more useful to examine not just the press usage but the whole one-million-word corpus where it was available. A comparison of the data for *-person* vs *-man* or *-woman* forms in the WNZC, LOB, and Brown corpora gives some indication that there has been some linguistic change in this area in the last 25 years, but that it is not very great.

Table 3
Comparison of *-person* forms with equivalent *-man* and *-woman* forms in WNZC, LOB and Brown corpora

	WNZC (NZ) 1986	LOB (UK) 1961	Brown (USA) 1961
chairperson	6	0	0
chairman/men	109	119	78
chairwoman	2	0	0
frontperson	1	0	0
frontman/men	2	0	0
frontwoman	0	0	0
handyperson	1	0	0
handyman/men	1	0	2
handywoman	1	0	0
sportsperson	1	0	0
sportsman/men	8	6	12
sportswoman	0	0	0
spokesperson(s)	4	0	0
spokespeople	1	0	0
spokesman/men	36	22	24
spokeswoman	2	0	0

Table 3 includes all the *-person* forms found in the corpora. It strongly suggests that New Zealand usage has changed, since it is unlikely that forms such as *chairperson* would have been found in a 1961 sample

of New Zealand English when they did not occur in a similar corpus of British or American English collected at that time. It is also clear from Table 3 that *chairperson* is the most frequent and well-established of these forms, though even that is not very frequent compared to the number of instances of *chairman*. Incidentally, there were no *-person* forms at all in the Macquarie press section (the only section currently available for analysis), though there were two instances of *salespeople*.

It is often said that forms such as *chairperson* are used only to refer to women, with the implication that no self-respecting male would use, or allow himself to be referred to, by such a term (see, for instance, Sunderland 1991:517). But this claim was not supported by an analysis of the referents of *-person* forms in the WNZC corpus.

Table 4
Sex of *-person* referents in WNZC

	Male referent	Female referent	Unspecified/neutral
chairperson	1	1	4
handyperson	-	-	1
frontperson	-	-	1
spokesperson	1	-	2
spokespersons	1	-	-
spokespeople	-	-	1
sportsperson	-	-	1
chairman	99	4	4
spokesman/men	20	-	16

The overwhelming majority of the instances of *chairman* were identifiable as male, a sad reflection of the social reality that it is men who hold this position most often, even in 1986. There are four instances where a woman is referred to as a *chairman*, e.g. "the chairman of the airport committee, Cr Helene Ritchie". So, despite the evidence from psychologists that most people interpret *man* as indicating 'male', some New Zealand newspapers persist with such out-dated pseudo-generic usages.

The most common meaning of the form *chairperson* in the WNZC is non-specific with respect to the sex of the referent, since it is used to refer to the social role itself rather than to any specific individual, e.g. "no hierarchical structure, no chairperson, and no subscriptions". A check to identify the groups involved in such *-person* references revealed that two instances referred to peace groups, while another referred to the role of chairperson in industrial conciliation. (Incidentally, there was only one instance of *chair* as a synonym for *chairperson* in the WNZC, and it referred to Helen Clark's role on a parliamentary committee). There was also one example of a male *chairperson* and one of a male *spokesperson*,

and the form *spokespersons* also referred to two men - contradicting the widely held belief that *-person* forms automatically imply 'female'.

Some feminists object that forms such as *spokesperson* and *chairperson* render women invisible, concealing the fact that women are increasingly filling such roles. However, in view of the evidence that most people interpret *-man* forms as implying 'male', the fact that the sex of half the instances of *spokesman* was not apparent from the context suggests that this is a potentially even more misleading usage. In at least some cases it is clear that New Zealand newspapers are still using *-man* forms to refer to women. Hence the sex of a *spokesman* cannot be confidently deduced from a sentence such as "A police spokesman said a farmer found the dead man's car in a ditch". It is possible, then, that the contributions of women in such positions are subject to two independent layers of concealment.

Morphological marking: -ess, -ine, -ette

Another area where language treats the sexes differently is in the use of suffixes to mark the female form of occupations and social roles such as *aviatrix*, *usherette*, *heroine*, and *hostess*. The female form is morphologically marked by an affix attached to the unmarked form. Feminists note the implication that the male is the norm, the female a secondary or derived form, an image encapsulated in the biblical account of woman's creation.

Is New Zealand usage changing in this area? Casual observation suggests that such affixed forms are becoming less acceptable. Certainly theatre companies such as Wellington's *Downstage* no longer use forms such as *actress*, though some women take the view that women should endorse such marked forms since they make women visible. *Actress* is another example, then, of the ideologically-based 'feminization' vs. 'neutralization' problem (Hellinger 1989) of choosing between terms which make women visible but which may carry derogatory connotations (e.g. *authoress*) and terms which do not distinguish women from men, but which may thereby render women invisible (e.g. *pilot*).

In order to make some assessment of whether there was any evidence of language change in this area, I compared the frequencies of occurrence of the following suffixes in the 1986 WNZC with those in the1961 British LOB corpus. (See Holmes forthcoming for a more detailed analysis of the meanings and uses of these forms in different corpora.)

-ette,
-ine,
-enne
-ix[5]

[5]All those English words in which this suffix occurs have roots ending in *t* and a reduced agentive suffix *r*. They all end, therefore, with the sequence

In comparing usages in 1961 with those in 1986 for the purpose of deducing change, it was necessary to look carefully at context in order to identify only those forms in the data which could reasonably have been avoided. A reference to a *suffragette* in a historical document, or to a *governess* in a biography, for instance, gives no indication that such forms are in current usage. Items referring to individuals, such as the *Duchess of York*, obviously do not provide information on changing usage in the area of sexist suffixes. Nor is there much point in comparing the frequencies of items such as *princess* at two different points in time when there is no obvious alternative form available. However, the problem of where to draw the line between "avoidable" and "unavoidable" suffixes is a very difficult one, since language changes clearly include changes in the semantic features of forms as well as the substitution of one form for another. If a form which formerly would have been used only to refer to men is now used to include or refer to women, then we have evidence of semantic change. A form such as *hero*, for example, might once have been considered inappropriate for a female referent, yet it is used explicitly to refer to a woman in the WNZC. This supports the claim that *heroine* could have been avoided.

In Table 5 I have listed all those forms from the LOB and WNZC with sex-marked suffixes which, taking account of the above considerations and of the context of their occurrence, I considered could have been avoided. In other words, Table 5 lists only those forms which could in principle be replaced by the base form and treated as forms unmarked for sex, i.e. where the sex-marking suffix is most obviously identifiable as dispensable. This table thus provides the most useful information for inferring change in this area, since these are the only forms where a change might realistically have occurred.

Though there are a few instances (e.g. *waitress*) where individual items are as frequent in both corpora, this is not generally the case. Overall there are fewer instances of sex-marking suffixes in the 1986 WNZC than in the 1961 LOB Corpus (41 vs. 64). If it is assumed that New Zealand usage when the British LOB Corpus was collected was likely to be at least as conservative as British usage in the area of sex-marked suffixes, then this suggests there has been a decline in the number of such forms used in New Zealand written texts over the twenty-five year period.

-trix. However, *-ix* specifically marks femaleness and therefore seems the appropriate parallel to the other suffixes listed here.

Table 5
Sex-marking suffixes which could have been avoided

	WNZC	LOB
-ess		
actress(es)	10	16
authoress	-	1
editress	-	1
goddess(es)	-	2
heiress	-	2
hostess(es)	10	20
manageress	1	1
millionairess	-	1
negress	-	2
peeresses	-	1
prophetess	2	-
proprietress	-	1
quakeress	-	1
villainess	-	1
waitress(es)	7	5
-ine		
heroine	11	9
	41	64

It is also apparent from Table 5 that the range of types occurring in the 1986 WNZC is considerably more restricted than in the 1961 LOB Corpus. All but one of the 15 different *-ess* forms occur in the LOB Corpus, while only a third occur in the WNZC. It is worth noting too that some forms which would once have been regarded as referring exclusively to males (e.g. *hero* and *waiter*) are used in the WNZC not only generically to include women and men, but also to refer explicitly and specifically to women. Together these points support the suggestion that the use of such forms is in decline in New Zealand written English.

Conclusion

Sensitivity to sexist language appears to have increased at least a little in New Zealand over the last twenty-five years. We lack definitive evidence in many areas, and there is some depressing evidence of lack of change in the persistence of pseudo-generic *man* and in instances where women are referred to by terms such as *chairman* in New Zealand newspapers. Nevertheless, there is probably a sufficient accumulation of positive tendencies to hearten feminists and encourage them in their continued

resistance to sexist usages. The evidence I have reviewed in this paper suggests that

* A reasonable proportion of educated women under 50 appear to be using the term *Ms*.
* *Ms* is occurring in New Zealand newspapers, despite the fact that some papers have an official policy forbidding its use.
* Forms such as *chairperson* and *spokesperson* are being used in current New Zealand written material, and they are not restricted to female referents.
* The number of instances of sex-marked suffixes appears to be in decline.
* The range of types of sex-marked suffixes appears to be declining.

Together with the psychological evidence that young New Zealanders increasingly associate pseudo-generics such as *man* and *he* with the masculine linguistic category (Ng 1990, 1991), it seems that this may be one area of current change in New Zealand English whose future direction can be reasonably accurately predicted.

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