

1 WAY 2 C THE WORLD:
WRITINGS 1984–2006

Internationally acclaimed author Marilyn Waring is highly regarded as a public intellectual, feminist leader, environmentalist, and social justice activist. Elected to New Zealand's Parliament at age twenty-three, she quickly rose to prominence on the political world stage. Since leaving Parliament in 1984, she has published numerous books and articles. This collection of essays, a selection of her popular journalism as well as new material, reflects on many important issues of our time. Here Waring provides incisive and illuminating commentary on a wide range of topics such as human rights, gay marriage, globalization, the environment, and international relations and development.

At home and abroad, Waring is a lively travel guide and astute observer, whether she is discussing global warming, women's rights, or life on a farm in New Zealand. Her work has stood the test of time: her accounts of being in India when Indira Gandhi was assassinated and in Ethiopia during the 1984 famine remain as vivid and relevant as her more recent writings on the post-9/11 world. Brimming with Waring's characteristic wit, compassion, and insight, *1 Way 2 C the World* is bound to fascinate and inspire.

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1 Way 2 C the World

Writings 1984–2006

Marilyn Waring

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*For my dear Canadian friends
Terre and Gerry and Peggy
and
Joanna and Brettel and Ange*

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Acknowledgments

Canada has been a very special country for me. It embraced my early work *Counting for Nothing/If Women Counted* in school and university curricula, and in the National Film Board of Canada documentary *Who's Counting? Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies, and Global Economics*. I have been invited to and spoken in a good deal more of this beautiful country than most of its citizens get to in their lifetime. I have developed deep lifelong friendships there, and I have been given the opportunity to think and work with many people in Canada. Significant new work collected in this book had its birth in Canada, and the book's dedication is to a group of very special Canadians.

I began writing in 1984 when David Beatson, then editor of the New Zealand *Listener*, asked if I would like to write a fortnightly column for the magazine after my retirement from the New Zealand Parliament. I didn't want to commit myself to anything at all. 'But,' he reasoned with me, 'you may find you need the place for political catharsis, and you could probably do with the money, small as it is.'

He was right on both counts. I never knew how many short essays would appear over the next five years. Much to the chagrin of the subeditors (who complained with increasing intensity over time), many of them were hand written and faxed from far-flung places on the planet, arriving marginally before deadline, still needing to be typed and set. I never kept copies of what finally numbered more than 100 pieces.

I had also written columns for a brief time for the editor of the Wellington daily newspaper, the *Evening Post*. Computer literate by that time, I had retained these scripts.

Neither the *Listener* nor the *Evening Post* ran footnotes or citations. I have done my best to recover or find many of these, but some have completely evaded my memory or more recent search engines.

The University of Toronto Press sent the text of this work to North American readers whose feedback on what they enjoyed influenced the major cull: what was in or out, and in what order.

Many other people have provided different sorts of material for my comments over the years. Some of them have been happy when they have recognized themselves, others have been offended. Most were just fellow citizens of the planet with whom I shared a moment and a place in time.

Portions of this book first appeared in the *New Zealand Listener* as part of the series of columns 'Letters to My Sisters.' Several pieces were published in the *Evening Post*, and one in the *Waikato Times*. The essay 'Civil Society: Community Participation and Empowerment in the Era of Globalisation' was published as an Occasional Paper for the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) when I was a visiting scholar in their Toronto office in 2004. The essay on 'The Pacific Region' was first published in the book *Voix Rebelles du Monde* by French NGO ATTAC in 2007. Most of the essay 'Do Unpaid Workers Have Rights?' was also published in *Managing Mayhem: Work-Life Balance in New Zealand*, edited by Marilyn Waring and Christa Fouché (Wellington, NZ: Dunmore Publishing, 2007).

Marilyn J. Waring
Aotearoa/New Zealand
February 2008

Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALRANZ	Abortion Law Reform Association
ATTAC	Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens
BPW	Business and Professional Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CUB	Civil Union Bill
EEC	European Economic Union
EEZ	Economic Exclusion Zone
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FPP	First past the post
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GDP	Gross domestic product
G7	Group of Seven (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, U.S.)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IHC	Intellectually handicapped Children
ILO	International Labour Organization
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency

MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
NCW	National Council of Women
NDP	New Democratic Party
NGO	Non-government organization
NOW	National Organization of Women
NZFU	New Zealand Federation of University Women
NZRFU	New Zealand Rugby Football Union
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
SIS	Security Intelligence Service
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
SNA	System of National Accounts
SNI	System of National Income Accounts
SOS	Sisters Overseas Service
SPUC	Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child
SROW	Society for Research on Women
STV	Single transferable vote
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNSNA	United Nations System of National Accounts
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIS	United States Information Service
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
WEL	Women's Electoral Lobby
WHO	World Health Organization
WONAAC	Women's National Abortion Action Campaign

1 Way 2 C the World

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Introduction

The previously published writing in this collection appeared in the New Zealand *Listener* as 'Letters To My Sisters' between mid-1984 and early 1989. Sometimes there were stories behind my story, but ones I dared not tell at the time because of my circumstances. I could never be sure about the security of the public fax that relayed the fortnightly writing to Wellington, whether in India when Ghandi was assassinated, or in Ethiopia at the height of the 1984 famine. I have taken the liberty of adding some of this previously unpublished material.

Series One collects five essays from very different contexts providing some guidance for the way I see the world, and perhaps some of the reasons why my lens is focused, as it is, on New Zealand and the South Pacific region. The pieces include elements of my childhood in the 1950s and observations of another childhood some forty years later. I explore my feeling of belonging to Aotearoa/New Zealand as a fourth generation Pakeha. I remember the feminist politics of the seventies and the outrageous discrimination in women's lives. The series also includes the letter that began the *Listener* columns, written in 1984 while I was still a Member of Parliament, and from a place and experience that would forever shift my perceptions of power, politics, abuse – and feminism. Indeed the adaptation of the letter form was a deliberate response to all that. I was prepared to write of how it had been for me there, but I made no apology for addressing a selected audience as 'My Dear Sisters.' I did not care to bother to explain myself to men anymore. The last essay in this series is on the Pacific – a region of patriarchal violence and endemic corruption – a region where few outside of it can name the countries of which I write.

Series Two contains three small vignettes on women of influence, moments captured in the time of the essays. Bella Abzug, Maria de

Lourdes Pintasilgo, and Gertrude Mongella are honoured here, but none of these essays speaks to the broad strokes of influence these women have had in their communities, in the political life of their countries, and on the world stage.

Being invited to conferences, or on fact-finding or advocacy missions is '1 Way 2 C the World,' which is the subject of Series Three. In 1984 I was invited to a 'Roundtable' in New York, sponsored by the Sisterhood Is Global Institute. I thought it might be a good idea to travel via Thailand, Burma, India, and Ethiopia to be better briefed for the meeting. I thought it might 'do me good' to investigate some of the more harrowing circumstances in which my sisters lived. So this was not a tourist jaunt, and I did not set out to have a good time.

The trip to China in 1985 was as one of a six-person team travelling under the auspices of the New Zealand China Friendship Association. In retrospect we were scenting and sensing some of the undercurrents that led to the democracy movement and its end in Tiananmen Square some three years later. My trip to Brazil was as one of a team invited by Ruth Escobar, Brazil's representative on CEDAW. Brazil was holding hearings on its new constitution, and we lobbied, spoke, advocated according to the wishes of our hosts. It wasn't all work: one weekend I did manage my only stay in a beach home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. In the Philippines, I was one of a team asked to write a report on human rights. We were guests of Gabriela, the superb Filipina women's organization.

Series Four has its focus on two issues: relationships between New Zealand and the U.S. when New Zealand committed to its nuclear free policy, and the changes in the form of the parliamentary electoral systems in New Zealand, from first past the post (FPP) to the mixed member proportional (MMP) system. The last in the series, a letter to then prime minister Bolger, concerns relationships with Indonesia at the end of the Suharto regime, but the matters raised are constant for all trade, diplomatic, and development relationships.

For fifteen years I spoke about being at home on the farm as 'my real life,' so this is Series Five. Life wasn't, and isn't, all just earnest serious politics for me. I love good books, great music, and life outside office or hotel walls. I love to ski, play golf, bodysurf, and walk carefree on long beaches. From 1986 onward, when I bought the first farm and the goats came 'home,' I would have preferred to have written about daily activities there and the fun things in life. But unless one is Vita Sackville West or May Sarton, this is not a commercial prospect. These are just a taste of such times, and I hope that the joy that they brought me can be shared by

the reader. The vigilance required to sustain the environment of our precious planet is the last of the subjects in this series.

Sometimes this happens: feminist Michelle Landsberg reviewed *Counting for Nothing/If Women Counted* for the *Globe and Mail*, and this drew it to the attention of Pamela Adamson who saw the possibilities of a film documentary. Terre Nash came on board as director, and the result, *Who's Counting? Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies, and Global Economics*, became one of the best selling NFB documentaries, and young Canadians have had to watch it in many academic courses since.

Hans Messenger was working at Statistics Canada and saw my work as a challenge not a criticism, and he did much to enhance the visibility of unpaid work and the environment in the work of Statistics Canada. Women activists and academics sought to use the arguments and analyses and construct their own research. Innovators such as Mark Anielski in Alberta and Ron Colman in Nova Scotia were working on alternative indicators.

For many years I have been stimulated by the response of Canadians to my work and the opportunities to write and lecture during my visits to Canada. I have spent some of the best times of my life in Canada and with Canadians, and all of the essays in Series Six owe their genesis to Canadian people and events.

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SERIES ONE

The Grounds for the Lens

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In 1999, the Waikato Times newspaper wished to begin a series of articles from 'old' local identities with the theme of nostalgia. I was asked to write the first of these, and I chose to write about the small village of Taupiri, where I lived the first fourteen years of my life.

1 Under the Mountain

Nostalgia is associated with homesickness and a yearning for the past. Whenever I leave New Zealand I am homesick, not for anywhere in particular but for a light and colours and topography and air, for what my senses expect of Aotearoa.¹ Any yearning I have for the past is associated with those senses fully expressed as a child, and thus associated with Taupiri.

Some of the stories I most remember are those told by my maternal grandmother remembering her childhood there. About the morning when there was snow on the Hakarimata ranges. About being dressed in her finest clothes by her mother and put in the gig for the two of them to drive to Taupiri where my great-grandmother cast her first vote in the election following the 1893 suffrage victory. About the heavily tattooed Maori bearers who would emerge from the paths through the tea-tree-laden swampland carrying the dead to the burial grounds on the hill beside the Waikato River.

Taupiri is a sacred place, and Tainui² people are brought home to be buried there. For many years I was surrounded by the calling and prayers and protocol that surrounded the tangi, or funeral processions, close to my home, in the shadow of the mountain. Taupiri has a special place in the kingitanga movement, which emerged in the 1850s as Maori came under increasing pressure to sell land. They determined on unity under a king to assist resistance to confiscation, land wars, and sale. So we kids knew about Te Putu and Tawhia ki te rangi and Potatau Te Wherowhero, the first Maori king. We knew that the first school had

1 Aotearoa is the original Maori name for New Zealand. Maori is an official language of New Zealand. Many New Zealanders use 'Aotearoa' instead of, or along with, 'New Zealand' to describe where we are from.

2 Tainui are a major indigenous Maori iwi or tribe.

been the mission station school across the river at Kaitotehe, and that William Colenso's³ deserted wife and children had lived there.

On my paternal side, Harry Waring had opened his first butchering business in Taupiri in the 1880s and his grandson, my dad, was working there when I was born. It was still a small village, and the population has always numbered in the hundreds. So everyone knew everyone else.

For most travellers, Taupiri is a blur on the map, with nothing to distinguish it from a myriad of similar towns around the country. But for me as a child, the whole place was a playground. We could rove and roam pathways, riverbanks, school fields, sports grounds, backyards, and paddocks freely, as if they were our own. I remember the shock of the UK immigrant newcomers, who were building their house, telling us we were trespassing and couldn't take the shortcut through their property from the dairy factory on our way home from school. Trespass wasn't the sort of word you used in Taupiri.

We climbed what we called the 'mountain' regularly in my childhood, avoiding the sacred burial ground on the western side. In the 1840s it was described as a 'beautiful hill, one mass of living verdure, towering upwards, a perfect cone,' and, in the 1950s, it was still worthy of that description. After pushing through the bracken and gorse of the bottom slopes, the path carved through beautiful bush. Occasionally, there were fires that would raze the southern side after some stoker on a steam train had hurled his coals from the train to the tracks on the mountain's edge. Over the years, these outbreaks took their toll and, even before the pines took over, the forest remnants were all but lost.

I lived right under the mountain, but there were days in the winter I couldn't see it at all. Between the Waikato and Mangawara Rivers a thick fog would descend and often not lift at all. Some of the locals associated this with the spirits of the buried Tainui people, but for me it was just damp. You could leave Taupiri and be in sunlight five minutes either side of the village, but be fogged in all day at home. I hated this, and the memories of fog and its continued presence in later years finally drove me from the Waikato. At other times of the year the river was the centre of attention. We waterskied there, went eeling, played in leaking canoes fashioned out of corrugated iron.

3 Colenso was a missionary, botanist, and historian who was responsible for the first printing press and first printing in New Zealand.

The other centre of town was the Taupiri Domain. The highway runs right through that space now, but it was my field of dreams. We lived directly opposite the Domain, beside the bowling and croquet clubs. The tennis, netball, rugby, cricket, and athletics clubs met weekly at the Domain, dependent on the season. My brother and I played everything, not just because we wanted to but because if any team was ever short they came over to 'see if one of the Warings could play.' As well, we kids played softball and soccer and built rope swings on the old oak trees in preference to the regular playground constructions there.

Everyone knew everyone. Several times a year I knocked on every door in town, selling Girl Guide biscuits or the gestetnered school magazine or tennis club raffle tickets. And every year the local Seventh Day Adventists, the local IHC (Intellectually Handicapped Children)⁴ collectors, and the local (Beijing-aligned) member of the Communist Party of New Zealand would knock on our door. My father bought me Bertrand Russell's *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*⁵ from one of these visitors when I was a teenager. None of us could have envisaged the role that small book would play in New Zealand politics in 1984.

We had native trees planted around the perimeter of the school grounds and we all knew their names. Anyone who could sing was in the school choir and in the Maori concert group coached by one of the local kuia, an older Maori woman steeped in cultural knowledge. We took these things for granted.

The pub closed at 6 p.m., so everyone knew who was there every night and wobbled home. We knew who got pregnant and who the dad was. We knew solo mothers and transvestites and boys who would be in trouble with the coppers. We knew who got slapped around at home, and who had no school lunch. If the local factory or the abattoir works didn't have a job for your boy, someone around the town managed something. We watched out for each other.

We went blackberrying and mushrooming in teams, and the whole town seemed to go to one of my relative's farms every Guy Fawkes Night for a huge bonfire and barbecue. If you held anything in the big hall, say a school concert, the whole town came, even people with no children at school.

4 IHC is New Zealand's largest provider of services to people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

5 Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press (1968).

I don't have any trouble being nostalgic for all that sort of life. It seems long gone. I know in later years I chose to live rurally because there was still the possibility of capturing some of that sense of community.

I don't know if any of that is still possible in Taupiri. I walked the streets there in 1999 with my brother when the Waring family held their reunion. We talked to some of the locals we had known as kids. They hadn't changed, but they said the town had.

So has the country. I write this in a school vacation where the media urges children to have their senses assaulted with electronic lights and noise and at great expense.

How rich and safe my childhood freedoms in Taupiri appear by comparison.

2 The Seventies: A Feminist Perspective

In 2004, Te Papa, New Zealand's National Museum and Gallery, held an exhibition called 'Out on the Street: New Zealand in the 1970s.' A conference on 'The Seventies in New Zealand: A Decade of Change' was organized to coincide with its opening, and I was asked to give one of the plenary opening addresses. I wrote this as memoir.

I 'appeared' twice in the exhibition: the first was as the subject of the headline front cover of the 'expose' story in the Truth newspaper in 1975, 'MP's Strange Love Life,' which was part of the exhibition's coverage of gay and lesbian issues in the seventies. The second was a photograph of my parliamentary colleague Ann Hercus and me, leaping in a staged moment, before taking our places in the parliamentary cricket team for the annual game against the Press Gallery. There were four women MPs in the House at the time. As part of my 'uniform' I was wearing a white T-shirt emblazoned with the large message 'Abortion – A Woman's Right to Choose.'

Eva Rickard, Tainui Maori land activist for the Raglan Golf Course; Mira Szaszy, first Maori woman graduate, feminist fighter, and social worker; Whina Cooper, founding president of Te Rarawa, Maori Women's Welfare League, and Maori land activist; Elsie Locke, writer, historian, campaigner for peace and nuclear disarmament, and a life-long women's activist; Louisa Crawley, founding member and president of Pacifica, the nationwide Pacific Islands' women's organization;

and Sharon Alston, lesbian feminist activist and artist – I could fill these pages with a recitation of the names of New Zealand women who lived political lives of influence, and who can be particularly associated with the politics of the seventies.

In 1970 I was seventeen years old and beginning my first year of study at Victoria University in Wellington. I have spent some time remembering what influences I took with me to university: the protests against the Vietnam War, the lyrics of Cohen and Baez and Donovan's *Universal Soldier*, Peter Watkins's *The War Game*,⁶ Bertrand Russell's *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*.

For me the politics were everywhere and the adrenalin was racing for a girl from Taupiri. There was the great night of noise and protest on Willis Street outside the Grand Hotel beating the drum to 'No Maoris No Tour' in 1970. The New Zealand rugby team, the All Blacks, were in the hotel, and due to leave for a tour of South Africa, in which the Maori members of the team would be treated as 'honorary whites' for the duration of their time in South Africa. On 21 March each year I would walk through Lambton Quay and Willis Street in a line of twelve or so, carrying small white crosses to remember the Sharpville Day massacre of 1960. Later, the 1973 South African rugby tour to New Zealand was as called off by Prime Minister Norman Kirk, on the basis that it would result in riots and violence unprecedented in New Zealand. He was right; this was the result when a tour went ahead in 1981.

Now you might be thinking that these were not issues for Women's Liberation. But they meant we went searching in the silences. We found black South African anti-apartheid activist Miriam Makeba, and her music, exiled in London. Instead of Joe Slovo,⁷ we learned about Ruth First – the investigative South African journalist held in solitary confinement and finally murdered by a letter bomb in 1982 – because we went looking. We would make sure that women weren't hidden from history anymore.

We marched against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. From 1966 to 1990, 167 nuclear test explosions were performed on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls, tests used for the development of at least eight

6 A BBC TV movie made in 1965, *The War Game* was a fictional, worst-case-scenario docu-drama about nuclear war and its aftermath in and around a typical English city.

7 Slovo was long time leader of the Communist Party of South Africa and a leading member of the African National Congress. He and First were married in 1949.