

Introduction

Any era that is simultaneously as dynamic, as glorious, as conflict-ridden, and as traumatic as the 1950s and 1960s were will have many rememberers.¹

What a luxury this is – I wrote in my diary in December 2000 – to walk alone in frost-edged woods on a crisp New England day. The river is frozen in part, with white floes strange to my Australian eyes. The winter woods do not lack colour: the crisp brown leaves, a quick crackle and a grey squirrel flits away, red berries, white birch trunks. Walking back through a venerable and well-endowed campus, with gardens, ponds, statuary and a sense of solidity and entitlement, I feel the joy of life and the wonder of being a woman with work to do in such an environment. Yet I had also enjoyed a privileged moment in time as a student in Australia at a women's residential college in an era that now seems as far off as the nineteenth century. I too am a rememberer.

Dipping into women's lives in the 1950s and early 1960s at Smith College I found many echoes of my own and a few differences. We shared, most of us, a lack of urgency about careers, a feeling that we would inevitably marry and produce children, be interesting wives to be sure, but wives nevertheless when that word still was a matter of pride. We shared a love of learning, of diving into literature, history, languages for their own sake, often for pleasure rather than for grades. After all there were plenty of jobs and few of us would be encouraged to take higher degrees. We thought we were individuals but we shared the uniforms of the time: Bermuda shorts at Smith, twin sets with Peter Pan collars at Janet Clarke Hall. Cashmere sweaters were universally desired except by that small minority who signalled rebellion,

1 Neil Smelser, quoted in Clark Kerr, with Marian Gade and Maureen Kawaoka, *The gold and the blue: a personal memoir of the University of California, 1949–1967, volume two: political turmoil*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2003, p. xxii.

even then, with sloppy joes and bare feet. How did that world change between my generation of women students and the young women so purposeful, so busily planning their careers, who now throng the Smith campus, and the campus of my old university in Melbourne?

When did the world change for twentieth century women? Was it when Betty Friedan's *The feminine mystique* was published in 1963? Friedan was a student at Smith College, albeit at an earlier time. Or was it with the publication of Germaine Greer's *The female eunuch* in 1970? Greer trod the grounds of my alma mater, the University of Melbourne, drank coffee at 'the caf' and had become a legend by the time I got there. Was it with the introduction of the Pill? Let us arbitrarily decide on a date – 1965 – and see what that produces. In Australia Sir Robert Menzies was the prime minister and the Rolling Stones toured the country. Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins led the Freedom Ride through country New South Wales. In the US the Vietnam War caused turmoil in the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson and civil rights activists stormed the South. In 1964 on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley the free speech movement had galvanized rebelling students. Could life ever be the same?

Was this turmoil anticipated? Stephen Graubard, reflecting on 40 years of the journal *Daedalus*, claimed that many issues reveal much about the time in which they were published. None revealed more than the Fall 1964 issue, 'The Contemporary University: U.S.A'. 'It would be correct to say that this was almost the last moment when one could still believe that the American universities were essentially sound', he wrote, 'that no major troubles were impending. Indeed, there is something almost alarming in the quiescence, the sense of security and stability that permeates the greatest number of the essays in this issue, so different from what was written and said only a few years later.'² This could equally be said of the Spring 1964 issue of *Daedalus* on women. It boldly declared feminism moribund.

I am not the first to choose 1965 as a turning point. French demographer Louis Roussel claimed 1965 as 'a rare axis of change', one

2 Stephen R. Graubard, "'Daedalus': forty years on', *Daedalus*, 128, 1999, pp. 22–23.

that led to the ‘banalization’ of previously condemned behaviour.³ Where might we find evidence of such a transformation? And what did it mean to its participants? The University of California (Berkeley) yearbook of 1965 focused on student protest and free speech. It was the end of an era, the beginning of a more open and sexually liberated climate at universities and colleges. The UC yearbook, *Blue and gold*, looked back at ‘a year filled with a new discontent, a new cause ... the Vietnam question pounded in the hearts of thousands’. It noted that ‘by taking care of their own disciplining, the students of the University of California have proven that they are capable of governing themselves’.⁴ But did that inevitably include women? Could women be trusted to discipline themselves?

In the UC-B yearbook the women of the senior class no longer wrote of marrying Ted and raising five children as they had in the early fifties. Now they were women who ‘will travel then attend law school’; ‘will teach junior college, then graduate study’; ‘gain real estate license’; ‘graduate school in social work’.⁵ Marriage did not rate a mention. In Australia, where ‘students were being asked to stand up and be counted in political demonstrations on the streets of Adelaide’,⁶ obedience to traditional rules seemed increasingly irrelevant. In Brisbane, Queensland, in 1965 two women, ‘wives of university lecturers’ (as they were described in the popular press), chained themselves to the public bar of the Regatta Hotel in protest at women’s exclusion from that important social space.⁷ In campuses such as Berkeley, home to a massive and sustained anti-war movement, in Queensland or in South

3 Nancy F. Cott, *Public vows: a history of marriage and the nation*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2002, p. 202.

4 *Blue and gold*, Associated Students of the University of California at Berkeley (ASUC), 1966, p. 117.

5 *Blue and gold*, ASUC, 1952, 1959, 1966.

6 Pauline Payne, *St Ann’s College: the first fifty years, 1947–1997*, St Ann’s College, North Adelaide, 1998, p. 78.

7 Marilyn Lake, *Getting equal: the history of Australian feminism*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999.

Australia, nothing could have seemed as banal in these turbulent times as a concern with the hours at which women returned to their dorms.

Yet a preoccupation with every detail of women's behaviour and sexuality was a major aspect of the 1950s and early 1960s. University study did not exempt them. Elaborate rules determined the hours at which women students could leave their residences, could socialize, particularly with men, how they should dress and what careers they should consider. Some institutions still had women's wardens. If 1965 marked the end of an era what did that era look like? And what were the seeds of its destruction? Can we detect them in the imaginings and practices of women of the times?

Much has been written about the turbulent changes of the late 1960s. Yet the 1950s and early 1960s have not played a major role in histories of the twentieth century. They are often seen as dreary, suburban, conformist. Those years have been viewed through a Cold War lens, through the rise of consumerism, even by a narrative of growing access to therapy in an increasingly Freudian climate. But what happened to women in the 1950s and early 60s? Were they all confined to the suburbs, to becoming 'station wagon wives', wives and mothers living the consumerist post-Kinsey dreams of the day or, worse, filled with 'suburban neuroses'? Were they waiting, in narcotized sleep, for the words of a Friedan, or a Greer?

Sylvia Plath, poet and mother, could not wait that long. In 1963 she took her own life, overwhelmed with despair. Was her death in some inexplicable way emblematic of the sheer impossibility of the dream: of being a wife and mother and at the same time a fully creative, independent self? Plath struggled with those anxieties at a time in which there was no name for the despair creative women felt, no explanation other than the individual one, no demons other than personal ones. Within the 'bell jar' of neurosis there was no escape. Germaine Greer has claimed that if the new feminists were around in 1963 Sylvia Plath would not have had to commit suicide.⁸ This is debatable but Greer herself helped to name

8 George Stade, 'Afterword' in Nancy Hunter Steiner, *A closer look at Ariel: a memory of Sylvia Plath*, Faber and Faber, London, p. 74.

the demons, to enjoin women to stop blaming themselves for unachieved perfection, to name patriarchal society as the enemy.

This book tells the story of a significant group of women who confronted the prescriptions of the times. They went to colleges and universities in increasing numbers, trained for the professions and developed a life of the mind. They expected to be interesting people and to have interesting lives. At the same time they were urged to listen to their hearts, to marry young, to devote themselves to their children and communities. Helen Horowitz has written of the continuing importance up to the 1960s of campus life, a predominantly male culture in which the peer group was vitally important in the formation of student identities in the United States.⁹ This campus culture was taken up by women in the 1950s with a major emphasis on romance and sexual attractiveness. That emphasis, some have argued, was so strong that it indirectly eroded women's career identities.¹⁰ Can we find evidence of this? Could women's education, in this context, help them to think outside the square? Would they redefine success? I argue in this book that they were already undertaking the revolution that was to burst onto the English-speaking world in the 1970s.

Higher education for women is a key to social transformation. Education has been seen as both a change agent and as a force for conservatism in the lives of women. Could it be both at once? A consideration of the place of women in higher education inevitably forces a link with wider social, political and economic change. While university women in the 1950s and early 60s could be seen as a privileged cohort, they led the way for a larger number of their sisters in the years ahead. They were the graduates considered as 'reserves' for the labour market – or, worse, as 'wastage' from the system of higher education by administrators concerned with 'manpower' needs of the emerging economy. They attended universities when it was said that 'every boy or girl with the necessary brain power must ... be encour-

9 Helen Horowitz, *Campus life: undergraduate cultures from the end of the eighteenth century to the present*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1987.

10 Dorothy Holland and Margaret Eisenhart, *Educated in romance: women, achievement and college culture*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990.

aged to come forward for a university education'.¹¹ Yet what girls with the necessary 'brain power' were to do with their education was far from clear.

Can we see this group as a cohort, to use a demographer's word? 'Every birth cohort faces its own historical conditions, alternatives, opportunities, norms with regard to the timing and sequence of demographic events', some claim. 'Each birth cohort will thus go through life with the contemporary social heritage with which it grew up'.¹² In this sense we are talking about a cohort, a specific group, whose heritage was different from those who came before and after. They faced greater transformations in their lives than the generations before, although they were spared world wars or the depression. 'No other single generation of women had its personal foundation so thoroughly jolted', claimed Shelby Moorman Howatt, class of '56 in the US.¹³ And their choices were very different from the cohorts to follow. Were they the forerunners of today's young professionals? Were they feminists without 'feminism'? Were they the cohort who prefigured the women's movement? In her recent book *New Jersey dreaming* anthropologist Sherry Ortner claims that 'the feminist movement did not come out of nowhere'. It represented 'a codification and intensification of ideas and practices that were already happening out there in the lives of real women, including the Class of '58'.¹⁴

- 11 John O'Brien, 'Universities, technology and academic work: a reconsideration of the Murray Committee and Australian universities (1957) in the light of Dawkins (1987–1988)', *Journal of Tertiary Educational Administration*, 12(1), 1990, p. 258.
- 12 Willy Bosveld and Dorien Manting, 'Helena, Lotte, Luisa and Victoria' in Anton Kuijsten, Henk de Gans and Henk de Feijter (eds), *The joy of demography ... and other disciplines: liber amicorum presented to Dirk van de Kaa on the occasion of his retirement as Professor of Demography at the University of Amsterdam*, Thela Thesis, Amsterdam, 1999, p. 127.
- 13 Shelby Moorman Howatt, 'Straddling two worlds (or) thank god we knew how to post', Class of 1958 25th Reunion Book, titled 'Connections', Smith College Archives, p. 11.
- 14 Sherry B. Ortner, *New Jersey dreaming: capital, culture, and the class of '58*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 2003, p. 243.

Did they really enjoy the best of all possible worlds, as some have put it?¹⁵ There were fewer expectations and greater opportunities as the economic long boom of the 1970s stretched out ahead. It rarely felt like that at the time. Higher education shaped their future lives in immeasurable ways. Friendships made at university often endured for a lifetime. In writing this story I have already declared my own involvement. I was a young wife in 1965 putting my Bachelor of Arts degree and Diploma of Education to good use as a high school teacher of history, French and English in Melbourne. If I was utterly typical of young educated women of the time I was blissfully unaware of it. My future as the wife of a newly graduated medico seemed entirely a matter of individual choice. I had a miniskirt and a pageboy hairdo and life was exciting. Certainly my horizons as a new graduate did not include the possibility of becoming a university professor: that was unimaginable. But my world view did include an understanding of child and adolescent psychology and an alarming sense that any lack of single-minded devotion to my future children might lead to ‘maternal deprivation’. In that I was fairly typical of the times and my story is a part of this larger narrative.

Drawing on interviews, surveys, reunion books, reports, biographical and autobiographical writing, I consider the lives of American and Australian women for whom new opportunities flowed in the 1970s and 80s. ‘Educated in romance’¹⁶ in many instances, many graduates found early marriage and children insufficient for a full and satisfying life. Those who did not marry frequently found themselves adrift – unclear what their role was in a paired-up society. The contradictions that faced them all in that complex era led to the explosive changes of the late 1960s and 1970s. The combination of glamorous bride, perfect womanhood and educated citizen was too difficult to maintain. Something had to give. While many in the community faced these contradictions, they were much sharper for highly educated

15 Judith Bardwick, ‘The seasons of a woman’s life’ in Dorothy McGuigan (ed.), *Women’s lives: new theory, research and policy*, Ann Arbor Center for Education of Woman, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 1980.

16 Holland and Eisenhart, *Educated in romance*.

women. They began to question established restraints. Studying this particular group contributes to an understanding of why the women's movement occurred when it did. It also shifts the emphasis from one or two individuals, prominent as they were.

Not all women 'bought into' the romance of the 1950s. Nor did they all follow what Ortner calls the 'girl track'. Some, usually those who came from less privileged backgrounds, used their education to secure a place in the workforce, essential to supporting their families or claiming independence, even to clawing their way out of an oppressed group. Some were serious about careers to better their class position. Women teachers who remained single forged significant career paths at this time. A hardy few knew from the beginning that a life of the mind mattered and that they would pursue it no matter what. Jill Ker Conway, who left Australia to find space for an intellectual life, wrote in her memoir: 'At thirty-three, about to be thirty-four, I saw myself as a scholar ... History was what I did and would do for the rest of my life'.¹⁷ Yet that insight was not always obvious. Germaine Greer, joining the Sydney 'Push', wrote, 'I found what I did not know I was looking for, seriousness and scruple, in the service of the truth'.¹⁸

In the chapters that follow we see women enjoying their years of learning, struggling with life after campus, redefining their lives as circumstances changed, and reflecting now on a long gone era. We see them struggling to develop student identities as attractive *and* intelligent women, tactfully intelligent, as one put it – a notion that seemed to many a contradiction in terms. Some became leaders, activists and icons, keen to improve the position of women, to offer tempting models of womanhood (Germaine Greer, Jill Ker Conway, Gloria Steinem, for instance). Some, tragically, like Sylvia Plath, had ended their lives by 1965. Others followed mundane paths, but were ready to reinvent themselves at the call of 1970s feminism.

Many enjoyed long and unanticipated careers. What was distinctive to the educational experience in the US, what to Australia? Both

17 Jill Ker Conway, *True north: a memoir*, Vintage Books, New York, 1995, p. 149.

18 Anne Coombs, *Sex and anarchy: the life and death of the Sydney Push*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1996, p. 111.

societies experienced significant upheavals at this time and interesting similarities emerge in the outcomes. Both the United States and Australia gave birth to significant movements of women's liberation. Did the very different political contexts really matter? As we shall see, women in all parts of the English-speaking world dreamed of escape from the cloying circumstances that constrained them. 'Even in the 1950s', American poet Anne Stevenson believed, 'American women were streets ahead of their British counterparts in terms of what they expected of and for themselves'.¹⁹ Were Australian women ahead? In spite of national differences the stories of women's lives at this time are remarkably alike. By drawing from two societies the distinctiveness of each is magnified.

The US experience magnifies the contours of university life. More American women attended colleges or universities than did Australian women. By 1957 one in every five US women attended college. It was becoming a common life experience. By 1965 they were 38.6 percent of the enrolment.²⁰ By contrast fewer Australian women, indeed fewer young Australians generally, undertook degrees and women represented only 26 per cent of the enrolment by 1965. Their presence could easily be overlooked in large co-educational institutions such as the universities of Melbourne or Sydney.

In the United States women of colour were a significant proportion of college graduates. They led the way in combining work and family, a matter frequently of necessity rather than choice. In Australia, shamefully, Aboriginal women scarcely registered as graduates: a tiny handful attended teachers' colleges in the period. For this reason, women of colour and Aboriginal women do not play a part in this narrative except through their exclusion, which underlines the racially

19 Cited in Janet Malcolm, *The silent woman: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes*, Picador, London, 1993, p. 73.

20 Linda Eisenmann, 'Women and postsecondary education in the post WWII United States: expectations and behaviour', paper presented at European Social Science History Association Conference, Berlin, 24–27 March 2004. See also Linda Eisenmann, *Higher education for women in postwar America, 1945–1965*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 2006.

privileged role of white women at this time. This exclusion was to animate several of the movements on campus for civil rights in the US, for Aboriginal rights and the abolition of the White Australia Policy in Australia – movements that most often found their genesis in religious clubs such as the YWCA and the Student Christian Movement.²¹

A range of institutions characterized the US scene: they might be Ivy League, public, private, religiously based, co-educational or women-only. In Australia at this time all universities were large co-educational state institutions, and most students were ‘commuters’ in American parlance, travelling to the campus daily on trams and buses. A handful of residential colleges provided for women only, although the single-sex nature of those institutions did not stretch to classes and clubs. But the stories of those who attended them are remarkably the same, with the possible exception of the strong women-only liberal arts colleges of the United States. Here, it can be argued, where a lengthy tradition of strong academic achievement prevailed, the contradictions women faced were even sharper.

For this reason I draw in some depth on the experience of students in women’s colleges. But this was not just the legacy of liberal arts colleges. Lois Banner certainly felt that doors were opening at UCLA in the 1950s. ‘It seemed as though I was learning a powerful language to enter a new world, with the professors its gatekeepers and the good grades I received my ticket of admission’.²²

Their education took place against a backdrop of significant social currents. The most pervasive was that of the Cold War, a climate that not only reshaped the political and ideological climate but impacted on notions of sexuality, on possible femininities and masculinities. Heterosexuality was reinforced, the nuclear family normalized, any deviating from its prescriptions viewed as subversive and dangerous. Progressive campus clubs shrank or disappeared and ideas of so-

21 See for instance, Renate Howe, *A century of influence: the Australian Student Christian Movement 1896–1996*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2009.

22 Lois W. Banner, *Finding Fran: history and memory in the lives of two women*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998, p. 109.

cial justice went underground into religious societies and movements. Lecturers learnt to keep their lecture topics within acceptable limits as surveillance on campuses increased.

Linked to this climate was the growth of the social sciences of 'adjustment'. Psychology and sociology reigned supreme and social groups were analyzed and probed. The goal of adjustment was paramount in studies of personality, of marriage and the family, and of social roles. Those not fitting in were viewed as requiring therapy, counselling or psychoanalysis. In the United States an alarming number of young people undertook lengthy psychoanalysis to deal with issues such as weight control, uncertainty as to career goals or inability to deal with family life. While social commentators and popular novelists spoke out against such adjustment and conformity, many colleges and universities supported it directly through parietal rules and indirectly through peer group pressure. While in Australia psychoanalysis was not as prevalent as a solution to life problems, nevertheless at institutions such as the Cairnmillar Institute in Melbourne, Dr Francis McNab began to offer therapy to deal with 'suburban neuroses'. Career guidance for women was usually absent. Where it existed, it served to constrain women's choices to the socially acceptable pathways of the time: teaching, journalism, librarianship and, increasingly, psychology.

The increasing affluence of the period and the growth of rabid consumerism also shaped the lives of young graduate women of the 1950s and early 60s. They were needed in the workforce as schools, universities, media and retail outlets expanded. They were drawn into the growing professions in greater numbers, although rarely with equal reward. On the other hand they were targeted by advertisers and retailers as consumers, prey to the lure of reaching the desired attractiveness of the era, of attaining the desired household objects with which status was increasingly measured.

In spring 1964 US sociologist Alice Rossi declared feminism moribund. There was no overt anti-feminism in American society in 1964 she wrote, not because sex equality had been achieved, but because there was practically no feminist spark left among American

women. 'There are few Noras in contemporary American society', she lamented, 'because women have deluded themselves that the doll's house is large enough to find complete personal fulfilment within it'.²³ Yet all was not dead for feminism even if the younger generation was deaf to its call.

The conflicting currents did not escape the attention of graduate women from an earlier generation, alarmed at what they saw as backward steps for women. The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) resolved in 1955 that: 'An enquiry should be undertaken on the use made by women of their university degrees'. The results of the enquiry, to which both the US and Australia contributed, were placed 'at the disposal of UNESCO and the IFUW representative working on the Legal and Economic Status of Women'. This was serious business to be taken to the highest levels. In Australia the enquiry revealed, *inter alia*, considerable discrimination against women: that, for instance, 'no woman is a professor in an Australian university',²⁴ that in the Education Department and other government departments 'women who carry a comparable responsibility with men receive only a proportional salary'.²⁵ Worse, women who married, even those who had attained senior positions, were required to resign and become 'temporary' on marriage. Perhaps there were good reasons for women's low aspirations.

Those who have studied the 'college' women of the period (and I use the term throughout in the broadest possible sense to include universities and the liberal arts colleges in both Australia and the US) all recognize their transitional nature. Some talk of a transitional genera-

23 Alice S. Rossi, 'Equality between the sexes: an immodest proposal', *Daedalus*, 93(2), 1964, p. 608.

24 Australian universities were based on the British system where a department would generally only have one professor, a senior scholar in the field. This is quite different from the US where almost all tenured academics could aspire to the title of professor after several years.

25 Completed questionnaire, Australian Federation of University Women, May, 1957, Papers on Access to Higher Education 1957-67, Noel Butlin Archives, Australian National University, Canberra, p. 14.

tion, others of a 'swing bridge' between tradition and the explosive era of liberation. They have been described as proto-feminists, as 'premature liberationists' (a term I particularly favour). Others speak of them as the pioneers of multiple roles.²⁶ Some saw themselves as having always supported equal rights, and were scornful of the new women's movement and what they called its strident tone. Some seemed exempt from the dominant culture of the time. Looking back over their lives many are amazed at the paths they have taken; others are regretful that they did not have the opportunities that young women have today – or, worse, that they did not seize a way forward when they might have, did not have the courage or foresight to take a new path. '[It] makes me feel annoyed with myself over lack of initiative, courage, daring', wrote one woman.²⁷ Some Noras did slam the door of the doll's house; others regretted their timidity. Some also rearranged the house to their own satisfaction.

Where possible I speak through stories that women have told: in interviews, in their own writing, even in fiction. It is in their personal narratives that the joys and despair of the period fully emerge: the joy of intellectual work, the pleasures – and dangers – of being away from home, the pain of social expectations, the despair of a student forced to leave a hall of residence due to pregnancy, another pregnant young woman who committed suicide. While researching this book I heard stories from a Jewish woman who attributes her feistiness and ability to challenge to the long tradition in Jewish women's culture, and other tales of brilliant women holding back on careers in case they outshone their husbands, and, sometimes, regretting it later. 'Life gives you lots of stories, lots of journeys, doesn't it?' one woman claimed.²⁸

26 Janet Zollinger Giele, 'Women's role change and adaptation, 1920–1990' in Kathleen Hulbert and Diane Schuster (eds), *Women's lives through time: educated women of the twentieth century*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1993, pp. 32–60.

27 Grace K. Baruch; Rosalind C. Barnett, 'Women in the middle years, 1979–1980', 1982, Murray Research Archive.

28 Respondent to survey, 'Graduating in the fifties' project, Alison Mackinnon, Australian Research Council funded research project, 1994. Respondents to this survey had attended either the University of Adelaide or the University of Melbourne.

This narrative enriches the history of women and the history of education. Can it also influence current debates? Do the lives of these women, their varied journeys, have something to offer us in the twenty-first century? Between young women graduating today and the women of the 1950s and 60s stands the women's liberation movement, a movement shaped by many of that generation as we shall see. The women's movement opposed much of the zeitgeist of the earlier period: the restriction of women's futures to marriage and motherhood, the depiction of women as sexual objects. They fought for the opening of educational pathways, of careers and salary scales to women and men alike, for the reconstitution of marriage to incorporate the household labour of both women and men and much besides. Feminists of the 1970s and 80s envisaged a different future for women. It was to be one with equal educational outcomes and shared goals, not a future where educated women attempted to ape the patterns of men's lives. In the 1970s women spoke of part-time work, of shared careers and a right to leisure for both men and women, goals that seem to have disappeared in the greedy workplaces of the twenty-first century.

Can today's young women – attempting to combine careers, motherhood and a femininity that demands perfection in appearance and performance – learn from the women of the fifties? Certainly their expectations are high – a legacy of the women's liberation movement. They frequently outnumber and outperform men in schools and universities. They expect to enter careers and professions as men do. They expect their abilities to be seen for what they are, not a reflection of their appearance. They expect, and here is the crunch, that marriage, career and children can be combined in equal parts. In effect they expect to have it all. And why not? Yet, too often, when the children arrive reality hits and young women realize the cards are stacked against them as they juggle maternity, child care and career stresses.

This book reveals that there is much to learn from the women of the 1950s and 60s, the precursors of the women's liberation movement. As times become more conservative in much of the English-speaking world and the contradictions mount, today's young women need to look back as well as forward. They might recognize in the past

the pitfalls of accepting demands for impossible versions of femininity. They may need another revolution, another turn of the social clock, perhaps another 1965.

