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Abstract: Australia's first women's refuge was established in 1974, marking a crucial outgrowth of women's liberation activism that placed domestic violence on the public agenda. To maintain refuges, feminists seized opportunities presented by the progressive Gough Whitlam Labor government. This convergence between a reforming government and the women's movement meant that Australian feminist refuges were among the first in the world to receive state support, in 1975. Maintaining this support required feminist activists to engage with the Australian state. They framed their claims in two ways: they foregrounded women's traumatic narratives of experiences of domestic violence, and they asserted that refuges were a distinctive feminist service. Adapting to a constantly changing political context, however, advocates found it difficult to distinguish their activities from charitable refuges. Their emphasis on women's trauma foregrounded a victimized political subject while the movement's emphasis on fostering "self-help" was co-opted by advocates of neoliberal governance.

On Saturday, March 16, 1974, residents of Westmoreland Street, Glebe, in inner-city Sydney, Australia, watched a group of women carrying brooms and shovels break into a vacant house and change the locks to establish their residency. The women christened the refuge "Elsie" after the house's nameplate and transformed it into a women's refuge. They left a note in their neighbors' letterboxes which read: "A group of women from Women's Liberation has today opened no. 73 Westmoreland Street as a refuge center for women. The refuge is open to any woman or child who needs emergency accommodation and is particularly intended for women who need to escape from violent domestic situations." They promised to "give free accommodation to any woman in need. We will be orderly and quiet. We only want to offer refuge." They ended with an appeal: "We hope you will support us." It was signed "Elsie Women's Refuge."[1] Elsie's neighbors generously supplied beds, a lounge suite, and a refrigerator, while further gifts of clothes, toys, and food arrived over subsequent days.[2] This assistance was crucial to Elsie's survival: Anne Summers, one of the refuge's cofounders, later explained that Elsie survived for nine months on donated supplies and volunteer labor, and that workers sometimes felt guilty that they were "forcing already distressed women and children to live a hand-to-mouth existence."[3] At the time Summers encouraged women

to work at Elsie, stating that volunteers "found this practical activity very rewarding and a welcome change from abstract theorizing about how badly society treats women while not actually doing anything about it. . . . It is important to support Elsie. She is helping women to help themselves but she needs help too."[4]

The story of Elsie's founding, as Australia's first feminist refuge, has entered the lore of Australian women's liberation. Elsie quickly became a symbol of feminist direct action, a place where its founders hoped that "women [could] find shelter, aid, advice and the space to think outside of their nuclear families."[5] Yet the note that Elsie's founders wrote to their neighbors encapsulated the dilemma that faced refuges in 1970s Australia: how would they survive? At first, activists sought donations from the public, but they very quickly turned to the state, appealing to both state and commonwealth governments for help, which made sense in the context of the Australian state's historic role in the provision of welfare, especially for women.[6] Women's refuges responded to the need for emergency accommodation for women and children who were fleeing violent men, and they also provided other forms of support. Elsie was constantly full, accommodating more than 850 women and children in its first eleven months.[7] After Elsie's establishment, ten more feminist refuges opened in Australia the following year.[8] The women's movement "discovered" domestic violence through refuges, and feminist refuges drove the process of "exposing, conceptualizing and responding to the problem of domestic violence" in the public sphere.[9] Refuges provided a crucial response to domestic violence: it took more than a decade after the first refuges opened for governments to offer any other policy responses to the problem.[10] The campaign for refuge funding raised awareness about the necessity of refuges and argued for their distinctively feminist response to domestic violence. Advocates used various strategies to secure support for refuges, working both within the state (as "femocrats," or feminist bureaucrats), and as activists addressing the state.

Australian women had long looked to the state to secure rights and protections, and they seized the opportunities presented by the progressive Gough Whitlam Labor government (elected in December 1972) to extend this support to new feminist initiatives like refuges and women's health centers. This unique convergence between a reforming government and a highly engaged women's movement meant that Australian feminist refuges were among the first in the world to receive state support, in 1975. Yet while securing government funding for refuges happened relatively early, it forced feminist refuges to adapt to a constantly changing political context to maintain it. Government changes at both state and federal levels created ongoing uncertainties. The federal Labor government provided the first refuge funding in 1975, but their successors, the Liberal–National Coalition, gradually reduced it between 1976 and 1983, as it delegated the distribution of funds to state governments. Under Australia's federalist system of government (with independently governed states working together under a central federal government), this produced uneven refuge funding across the country, disadvantaging refuges in conservative states and advantaging states with sympathetic governments, as was the case in New South Wales (NSW). When Labor returned to

federal government in 1983, they offered ongoing funding for refuges as a homelessness service rather than an integrated women's service. This was regarded as a victory after years of struggle, although it was not without some costs. All of this took place against a larger transnational backdrop of ideological change: from the late 1970s, the Australian state transformed from social liberalism to neoliberalism. Social liberalism had long provided the framework for a distinctive relationship between the women's movement and the state: neoliberalism saw new logics of efficiency and competition dictate the provision of government services and funding, which were profoundly unsuited to feminist goals.[11] Nonetheless, women's refuges have persisted as a frontline response to domestic and family violence. They nurtured feminist perspectives and practices in responding to this violence and kept it on the political agenda. In contemporary Australia, as in many other nations, domestic and family violence is understood and defined within the same frameworks established by feminist refuge advocates in the 1970s: as a gendered problem to which refuges remain a crucial policy response.[12]

Feminists in the 1970s sought to remake the Australian state in response to women's distinctive needs: they wanted to change how domestic violence was understood, and transform the state's response to it to reflect feminist goals and principles. Refuges were the cornerstone of this reform project, as they were many other Western democracies.[13] In this project to reform the state's response to domestic violence through government-funded refuges, feminist refuge advocates were enacting an early form of "governance feminism." In their foundational works on governance feminism, legal scholars Janet Halley, Prabha Kotiswaran, Rachel Rebouché, and Hila Shamir point out that feminists have long worked to produce changes in governmental power and practice, and that acknowledging feminist governance is essential to analyzing its achievements as well as its adverse effects.[14] As feminists have sought incorporation into state, state-like, and state-affiliated power, Halley insists that we ask: what forms of feminism "make sense" to power elites as they gradually let women in? And what do feminists do with their power?[15] Feminists have long engaged with powerful elites and sought power in their own right. By naming this practice, governance feminism draws our attention both to the influence feminists have exerted to successfully produce changes in governmental practice and to its uneven effects. When analyzing feminist campaigns, we must ask: what arguments did they use, what claims did they make, and what were the implications of these claims for the kinds of power they gained?

The history of feminist engagements with the Australian state offers illuminating answers to these questions. To this end, this research focuses on how feminist refuge advocates in NSW argued for state support for refuges in the first decade of their operation, 1975–1985, as an Australian case study of governance feminism. I argue that feminists made two key arguments for the importance of refuges: first, they shared women's narratives of their experiences of domestic violence to demonstrate the prevalence of violence and the necessity of refuges, and, second, they stressed that refuges offered a distinctive feminist service, which fostered self-help and offered unique expertise about domestic violence. Refuge workers made these arguments in their advo-

cacy from the outset.[16] These claims were, by any measure, successful: the sector gained and expanded funding—and legitimacy—over the decade. Against formidable odds, the feminist refuge movement successfully advanced a feminist analysis of domestic violence as a problem rooted in gender inequality, a perspective that has framed public discussion of domestic violence ever since. Yet in many ways this was a costly success. Even in Australia's distinctive context, with 'femocrats' (feminist bureaucrats) working within the state, engaging with a nonfeminist, neoliberalizing state meant that refuge advocates found it difficult to distinguish their feminist claims from existing gendered discourses of charity and dependence. Their strategic emphasis on women's trauma and vulnerability foregrounded a victimized political subject rather than advancing a structural analysis of violence. The insistence that refuges were a feminist service opened refuges up to attack from antifeminists. The struggle to secure funding amplified certain claims and downplayed others: it became clear that the vulnerable female subject was more likely to secure state support than a feminist one. Finally, advocates of neoliberal economics co-opted the movement's emphasis on fostering 'self-help.' Refuges were innovative but were also forced to adapt their claims-making to rapidly changing political contexts. The strategies employed by refuge advocates—and the state responses to them—prefigure broader transformations in the relationship between feminism and the state in the late twentieth century.

Feminism, Citizenship, and the Australian State

This research is a case study for a larger project investigating how the sexual and feminist revolutions of the late twentieth century transformed Australian citizenship.[17] Historically, white Australian women looked to the state to alleviate their oppression: historian Marilyn Lake demonstrated that for much of the twentieth century, white women made claims on the state in the language of maternal citizenship, a discourse that largely excluded Indigenous and migrant women.[18] First-wave feminist reformers had campaigned against male violence (and women's enforced dependence on men) as part of their campaigns for women's suffrage and citizenship rights, although most assumed that men's violence against their families was largely a working-class problem.[19] Feminists demanded that the state support women's freedom by protecting them from male violence.[20] However, for much of the twentieth century, the relegation of family violence to civil law and psychiatry depoliticized and degendered it until the women's liberation movement "rediscovered" domestic violence in the 1970s.[21] Arguing for the creation and funding of women's refuges continued women's longstanding relationships to the state. The female citizen identity foregrounded by feminism was also, implicitly, white. Like the maternal citizens of the early twentieth century, the public advocates for the refuge movement were almost all white women. Many Indigenous women experienced racism in refuges: one told Indigenous public servant Pat O'Shane that "all whites think the same way about blacks. If someone goes to a white organization and she's been beaten up they think that's typical of blacks."[22] By the late

1970s, Indigenous women called for dedicated Indigenous women's refuges, and the first in NSW, Cawarra, opened in 1980, but in the first decade of campaigning, the movement's broader claims on the state for support typically subsumed Indigenous (and migrant) women's distinctive needs.[23]

Australian feminism became institutionalized in the early 1970s, far earlier than comparable movements in other countries, as some feminists began to work within the state to support and deliver feminist reform. These feminist bureaucrats—dubbed "femocrats"—were one of the most distinctive characteristics of Australian second wave feminism.[24] After Prime Minister Gough Whitlam appointed a women's adviser to his staff in 1973 (Elizabeth Reid, the first femocrat), feminists entered both state and federal bureaucracies and worked to translate feminist ideals into public policy.[25] Progressive state governments made similar appointments, such as the Neville Wran Labor government, which came to power in NSW in 1976. In this close engagement with the state, working within government to secure feminist reform, femocrats were early embodiments of governance feminism. Their relationship to the state was much debated by their contemporaries and was often regarded with suspicion: many activists argued that it was impossible to avoid becoming co-opted by the state if one chose to work within it. However, by the early 1990s feminists were beginning to develop more multifaceted understandings of the state itself rather than viewing feminists and the state as mutually exclusive and always opposed. Social policy academic Sophie Watson suggested that "if the state is theorized as a complex set of distinctive institutions, relations, hierarchies, discourses, interests and players . . . Feminists are . . . likely to adopt different strategies at different times and in different situations."[26] Political and social theorist Anna Yeatman argued that, rather than conceiving of the women's movement as outside the state, feminists needed to imagine the state as constituted in part by the movements and interests that interact with it.[27] She argued that women's services were not only a claim on state policy and resources, "but the nature of that claim and the advocates for the claim were shaped by how the state and its actors construed the claim."[28] Therefore, an ongoing negotiation between feminist refuge advocates, the media, and various state actors, including femocrats and political representatives at both state and federal levels, produced the women's refuge program's meaning, scope, and funding. These interactions produced the possibilities for refuge funding and the kinds of claims and identities activists deployed as they made claims for this funding.

The Case Study: NSW Refuges

This case study focuses on NSW, Australia's most populous state. Not only was NSW the birthplace of the Australian women's refuge movement, but the history of refuges in NSW is not as well documented as in states like Victoria.[29] One important exception is policy analyst Janet Ramsay's examination of the development of domestic violence policy in NSW, which highlighted the strategic alliances forged between "refuge feminists" and femocrats in securing refuge funding.[30] Examining the experience of refuges

in different Australian states is important because the different politics and policies of each state, as well as the decisions made by the commonwealth government, shaped the movement. Examining the experience of refuges in different Australian states is important because the different politics and policies of each state, as well as the decisions made by the commonwealth government, shaped the movement.[31] Historian Suellen Murray has demonstrated that in Western Australia, a state government hostile to refuges hampered their development by depriving them of funding, while social work academic Jacqui Theobald showed that in Victoria, an avowedly feminist refuge movement extracted important concessions (such as the right to keep their addresses secret) from a moderate Liberal government.[32]

Variations between the three different kinds of refuges operating in Australia in the 1970s further textured the refuge movement. Religious organizations had long provided some limited emergency accommodation services for women (alongside homelessness services for men), which would have been used by some women seeking refuge from violence, and after the government made funding available after 1975, some organizations accepted it. Faith-based crisis accommodation and refuge services saw their role as restoring families rather than critiquing family structures, and they rarely acknowledged the role that violence played in women's homelessness until feminist refuges forced recognition of the problem.[33] Feminist refuges, created by radical feminists who sought sweeping social change, were the most visible and vocal. They were collectively organized, nonhierarchical, and sought to involve residents in their operations. A third group of refuges, created by volunteers in local communities (especially outside the major cities), were usually liberal feminist in orientation and evidence of the wider popularity of the refuge concept in the broader community.[34] Historian of Australian volunteering Melanie Oppenheimer notes that there was an upsurge in community volunteering in the 1970s that was supported by government to unprecedented levels, and this included a number of community-led women's refuges.[35] Feminist refuges were the first to receive government funding, although by 1979, of the one hundred refuges in existence in NSW, women's groups ran half while the remainder were church-run.[36] However, feminist refuges were at the forefront of the campaigns for funding between 1974 and 1985, and this study focuses on the ways that women in the NSW refuge movement argued for state support. The archive for the study is scattered and piecemeal. The peak body for NSW refuges did not form until 1983, and no archives of the organization are available to researchers. [37] Gathered from a range of sources, evidence of the NSW refuge movement's claims and activities includes correspondence to the government, reports, feminist periodicals, and press coverage in two leading Sydney newspapers, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

While divided on whether to seek state support, refuge advocate's circumstances demanded it: from the outset they were hampered by funding shortfalls and overwhelmed by demand for their services. Just months after opening, Elsie workers reported that residents shouldered "the additional burden of organizing the refuge which, in desperation, they've turned to for support and comfort."[38] While refuge advocates were

at first proud of the commitment of their volunteers, they came to view reliance on unpaid workers as exploitative.[39] Feminists also saw funding as politically important because they believed that the state should take responsibility for victimized women and children. While the response from both state and federal governments did not completely meet growing demand, the state responded relatively swiftly: Elsie was established in March 1974 and received one-off commonwealth funding less than a year later, in January 1975. By mid-1975 the commonwealth had established a national women's refuge program, providing 100 percent of both capital and recurring costs for refuges under the umbrella of the Federal Health Commission.[40] By any measure, this was a remarkable achievement for a women's liberation initiative, and the work of feminists shaping public policy within the Whitlam government was crucial to this success.[41] Refuge feminists became "participants in the policy arena," and their success meant that refuges became the key feminist policy instrument to combat domestic violence.[42]

After securing this funding, the feminist refuge movement had to engage in regular contests with the state to defend and expand it. After the defeat of the Whitlam Labor government in December 1975, the new Malcolm Fraser government maintained support for refuges, although in 1976 it reduced the federal contribution to 90 percent of operation costs and 75 percent of capital costs, and the states administered the funds. In 1977 funds were further cut to 75 percent and 50 percent, respectively.[43] State governments were expected to cover the shortfall, and while the NSW, Victorian, and South Australian governments did so, conservative governments in other states only offered half the required funds.[44] Refuges in those states were expected to raise the rest of the money themselves, which favored charities that had access to donations and a volunteer workforce.[45] Nevertheless, the refuge program was popular with the public and celebrated by government: in 1978 Home Affairs Minister Robert Ellicott heralded refuges as "one of the most significant of our Government's initiatives for women."[46] The number of refuges increased throughout 1977–1979, although this expansion was arguably achieved by underfunding existing refuges and seeking the support of the states.[47] Elected in 1976, the new Wran Labor government in NSW supported women's issues: the premier appointed a Women's Co-Ordination Unit, which defended and extended state refuge funding as federal funding waned.[48]

In the early 1980s, the Fraser government wound back commonwealth funding for refuges. Fraser was motivated by three intertwining ideologies: a policy framework of "new federalism" that sought to reduce commonwealth expenditures and push them back to the states; the growing influence of the conservative New Right within his party, which saw refuges as contributing to family breakdown; and neoliberalism, which, as political scientist Marian Sawer has argued, demanded that the "competition state" must replace the welfare state.[49] Reducing the size of the commonwealth government had wide-ranging impacts on refuges. A reduction in commonwealth refuge funding occurred in 1980, and in the 1981–1982 budget direct commonwealth funding to refuges ceased entirely, with decisions about the allocation of funding (and cuts) delegated to the states.[50] The election of the Bob Hawke Labor government in 1983

saw a return to commonwealth support for refuges, as noted earlier. From 1985 the implementation of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) scheme once more created ongoing commonwealth funding for refuges, although by placing refuges under the umbrella of homelessness, it fell short of the refuge movement's goal of a federally funded, holistic women's services program.[51]

Making Claims

In their attempts to secure power and funding for refuges, how did feminist refuges frame their claims on the state, and how did these claims change over the decade? The fact that refuges were always full was evidence of their necessity, but beyond this, the movement had little research into domestic violence that could underscore their claims. Personal accounts from survivors were crucial to raising public awareness of women's refuges and the needs they served.[52] Refuge advocates argued that refuges offered a safe place for women and children with nowhere else to go. Suellen Murray demonstrated that the media never portrayed domestic violence from the perspective of female victims: her analysis of newspaper cartoons from the mid-1970s shows domestic violence was portrayed as an equal battle between husband and wife, and if women were victims, then violence against them was probably warranted.[53] The refuge movement's stories of women experiencing violence were powerful and new in this context. These stories appeared in feminist periodicals and newspaper articles, and they were usually anonymous, reflecting the prevalence of psychological rather than structural understandings of domestic violence, which attached shame to victims. Eileen's story was published in the Sydney *Women's Liberation Newsletter*: "I have a husband who is a very violent alcoholic and treats us so badly . . . so the only place I feel safe and really secure is here at the refuge."[54] According to a refuge worker, the overwhelming nature of the problem meant that "at Elsie we are constantly full, and this is the situation of all the refuges in Sydney. We are always turning women away, and they have no alternative but to tolerate the violence of their lives, until a refuge can take them."[55] These stories underscored women's vulnerability to violence and the economic and psychological factors that trapped women in their homes.

Yet in the hands of the mass media, these stories could be prurient, focusing on "bad" men and blameless victims rather than a feminist analysis of domestic violence. The *Sydney Morning Herald* featured several stories of female survivors: one account described a "pretty little thing" who "tries a diffident smile" and who "hangs her head" as she tells of being beaten by her husband while living in a country town.[56] Another recounted the story of "Blue-eyed Meg" who "was used to being bashed up [because] Her husband had been doing it for 13 years." These women had both "fled" to Sydney with their children where they were struggling to access public housing.[57] Refuge activist and researcher Ludo McFerran suggested that the media's projection of a refuge resident as a "faultless working class wife and mother, trying to protect herself and her brood from the psychotic and inebriated batterer" was also used by the refuge movement to

secure community support.[58] This might owe something to the work of Erin Pizzey. In 1971, Pizzey founded the first feminist women's refuge, Chiswick Women's Aid, in the United Kingdom, and her ideas about domestic violence achieved transnational circulation via her influential 1974 book *Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear.* Pizzey's work shocked people into taking domestic violence seriously, but as historian Zora Simic has suggested, the book's influence also threatened to subsume the other objectives of the refuge movement, particularly the feminist critique of the nuclear family.[59]

McFerran argued that while community support for refuges helped them secure government funding, such support was not "a wholehearted endorsement of [refuges'] radically feminist demands." She contended that the public—and politicians—reacted emotively to the figure of the vulnerable victim but that this ultimately "limited the sort of refuge program they projected into the Australian community."[60] By foregrounding the battered wife, the movement inadvertently framed the problem as an individual rather than a structural one, which limited the scale and scope of the policy response. It also (once again) framed women as dependents of a paternalistic state. Indeed, NSW femocrat Helen L'Orange later commented that "it was easier to get progress on areas where men felt chivalrous."[61] It also arguably framed the victim of domestic violence as a universalized white woman, obscuring the diverse experiences of migrant and Indigenous women and the fact that refuges could be unwelcoming, even racist, spaces for nonwhite women.[62] Finally, and to the dismay of refuge activists, the image of the vulnerable victim could be used to justify government support for nonfeminist, faith-based refuges. The refuge movement was dismayed that nonfeminist refuges received government funding; however, the ethos of those refuges was entirely consistent with the image of vulnerable refuge residents perpetuated by, and through, the media. Foregrounding the vulnerable victim made it more difficult for feminist refuges to emphasize their distinctive orientation.

Alongside claims about vulnerability and protection, feminist refuge advocates argued that refuges were an innovative—and feminist—response to domestic violence, a response that fostered women's independence and autonomy. Unlike other emergency accommodation or church-run refuges, feminists argued that "ideas about the position of women in society, the nature of family life, the position of women within marriage and the need to provide continuing support to combat a woman's isolation" underpinned their refuges.[63] The anonymity of residents in most accounts of refuge life meant that workers became the most vocal advocates for the service. Those in feminist refuges saw their work as sisterhood in action. They suggested that refuges were founded on principles of "self-help and mutual support rather than professionalism . . . a non-institutional approach," and argued that they "should be run by women for women . . . the emphasis should be on providing an environment in which women can assist each other to learn the skills they need to cope with living in the community."[64] Anne Summers explained in 1974 that Elsie ran on a "self-managing, self-help basis, and we encourage the women to try and work out their problems for themselves."[65]

This differentiated women's refuges from other emergency accommodation or welfare services and represented a new citizenship, working *with* the state to provide services for women.[66] It also advanced a persuasive rationale for feminist services.

Refuge workers argued that they developed feminist expertise by volunteering in refuges. Elsie collective members described themselves as "experts in many fields e.g. paramedical services, secretaries, accountants, furniture removalists, Family Law experts, nutritionists," adding that "we see our feminist politics as crucial to the way that women may learn to direct their lives and the lives of their children."[67] Feminist refuge workers argued they were committed not just to crisis care but to "giving women the opportunity of taking control over their own lives . . . and raising public awareness about all issues which effect women and children."[68] Politicians later adopted this discourse of self-help to endorse the refuge movement. I now want to examine how these two kinds of claims found purchase in NSW amid the struggle to maintain commonwealth refuge funding in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Securing Funding, 1974–1980

The women who established Elsie assumed that the Whitlam government's support for feminist initiatives would lead to generous funding for their refuge. Just weeks after opening, Elsie cofounder Anne Summers wrote to the Federal Ministers for Urban and Regional Development and Social Security seeking support. She stressed Elsie's self-help ethos and the urgency of their need for support, telling them that "one woman who . . . is staying with us slept in a park for four nights before she knew of the existence of Elsie."[69] Summers also emphasized that the refuge was housing many migrant women, most of whom "do not speak English and we have to organize interpreters before we can even begin to help them."[70] While governments were initially reluctant to fund refuges, they quickly made use of them: by September 1974 government or church agencies referred more than eighty percent of the women at Elsie. Refuge workers insisted that if the state was going to use refuges, they needed to fund them.[71] One of the movement's key problems was that refuges did not sit within one government department, so their funding requests were bounced between homelessness and health programs, and both easily rejected them.[72] "Meanwhile, the refuge movement continued to press its case for funding through the media. A 1975 *Sydney Morning Herald* article was typical, describing Elsie as a "dirty, patched up, inadequate place. . . . A woman would have to be in direst need to see it as a haven—and in the past three months 123 women and their 192 children did. For women whose men bash them and their children, who have no money of their own and no family or friends to turn to, Elsie is about the only place to go."[73]

Other stories marveled at Elsie's practical feminism. In a story about a nun who was volunteering at the refuge over Christmas, she commented that "it's a real self-help place. The women run the place and they make the rules themselves."[74] Yet the trope of the anonymous victim remained dominant, such as this 1976 story of "a battered

wife at Elsie women's refuge" who "ran away from her husband and arrived at Central railway with 50 cents in her handbag and two children by her side."[75] While the refuge movement successfully placed domestic violence on the public agenda, it proved unable to control its framing.

This media coverage underscored the need for refuges, and this public awareness helped secure commonwealth funding. In mid-1975 the Whitlam government faced a difficult by-election and sought to appeal to female voters. Their research found that refuges were popular with all women, an extraordinary finding less than eighteen months after Elsie's opening.[76] The government's Women's Refuge Program began in mid-1975, providing 100 percent of both capital and recurring costs for refuges under the umbrella of a new government agency, the Federal Health and Hospitals Commission. The refuges aligned with the commission's concept of "community health," which embraced preventative measures and which was underpinned by the idea that people had a right to play a role in their health care.[77] This invitation to participate in one's own health care was, on one level, an attempt to disrupt a hierarchical health system that did not always respond to the needs of particular groups of citizens, including women. However, it could also be seen as an early iteration of the neoliberal mechanism of responsibilization, in which citizens assume some key obligations of the state, and who are required to fashion themselves as autonomous, rational, and self-governing individuals in response. Refuges were part of a boom in community organizations in 1970s Australia: they responded to similar problems as existing charitable organizations but with a new emphasis on community participation and "self-help."[78] Similarly, the emerging ethos of community health might be regarded an example of what sociologist Nikolas Rose called "government through community"; "community" was an institution that could be used to "encourage and harness active practices of self-management and identity construction."[79] Community health encouraged forms of self-management that would, it was hoped, reduce dependence on the state: indeed, when he announced the first women's refuge funding in 1975, Health Minister Doug Everingham claimed that refuges "offer the opportunity to start a new life . . . so that women could be helped to develop greater personal resources ultimately enabling them to become self-sufficient."[80] The NSW (Liberal) premier, Sir Eric Willis, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* in early 1976 that he had been impressed by Elsie Women's Refuge's "program of self-help."[81] Self-sufficiency and independence for refuge residents was an important goal of feminist refuges; refuges argued that they required state support in order to achieve this outcome.

Not long after the first commonwealth funding for refuges was secured, in 1976 the new Fraser government moved the administration of refuges to the states, and received a reduction in earmarked commonwealth funding, as noted earlier.[82] While the number of refuges funded increased from eleven in 1975 to forty in 1977, total funds did not increase, which reduced funding for each refuge.[83] Refuges responded to these changes with public advocacy, and arguments that emphasized women's vulnerability continued to find purchase. Former femocrat Sara Dowse recalled that Liberal prime

minister Fraser had a kind of noblesse oblige "that made him responsive to the needs of the unfortunate . . . that gave us something to go on."[84] Refuges themselves stressed the ways they helped women and children in need. In a letter to the prime minister, Elsie stressed that "[we are] constantly full, and we turn away women and children daily. All refuges in Sydney are in this situation. . . . Many . . . receive little or no federal funding. We feel that refuges are a vital community need and that all women's refuges should be given federal assistance."[85] Bonnie Women's Refuge told the prime minister that their intake of residents had increased by 25 percent in the past year, largely due to government referrals, but that their funding still covered only one full-time and one part-time worker. They argued that it was "obvious that the Federal government has a direct responsibility to fund all existing women's refuges."[86] The funding shortfall, however, suggested that the responsibility was far from "obvious" to the government.

Expectations to cover the federal funding shortfall fell on the states, and while not all states did, in NSW the refuge program had bipartisan support. The new Labor premier, Neville Wran, had promised to make up the federal funding shortfall for refuges, which he honored after his election in May 1976.[87] By the 1977–1978 state budget, the state government had increased funding for refuges by 100 percent on the previous year.[88] However, the growth of refuges in NSW outstripped funding at both state and federal levels: funding increased, but the number of refuges grew much faster, including many not run on feminist principles. This also led to the gradual undercutting of pay and conditions for refuge workers.[89] Nonetheless, in 1979 the home affairs minister highlighted the government's record on refuges at the International Women's Decade Conference in Copenhagen.[90] The demand for refuge services and their emphasis on "self-help" clearly offered the sector some protection in a climate of increasing budget austerity.

Neoliberalism Emerges: 1980–1984

By 1980 further reductions to commonwealth funding for refuges occurred, and in 1981–1982, direct commonwealth funding was removed entirely, with decisions about funding for services delegated to the states. Discourses of the value of volunteering and self-help, initially used by feminists to support their arguments for refuge funding, could also be used to justify removing funding to the sector. The framing (and funding) of feminist services as "welfare"—and the uneasy relationship the refuge movement had with this characterization—left them exposed in the face of the emerging neoliberal orthodoxy of "small government," which critiqued and undermined welfare provision and community services. As Sawer has suggested, attacks on the welfare state had more adverse implications for women, not just as users of welfare services but as employees and citizens.[91] The minister for women's affairs had privately argued against funding cuts in 1980 because refuges supported women and children "who lack resources of their own" but also because they "provide a range of services at little cost to the Government because they promote self-help and encourage voluntary effort."[92] Advocates used this

rhetoric of efficiency and value to support refuges. Yet there was little acknowledgment that this "value" was increasingly extracted from female refuge workers' low-paid and unpaid labor, as discussed below.

Feminists undertook sustained activism in response to these federal funding changes: they staged sit-ins and protests, lobbied politicians, and courted media attention.[93] In 1979 organizers of a national day of mobilization for feminist refuges demanded the recognition of refuges as a commonwealth-funding responsibility; they wanted adequate funding to end the exploitation of "voluntary and underpaid workers"; and they wanted recognition that feminist refuges were "the only refuges which provide viable alternatives for oppressed women and children." Finally, they argued that funding should go to feminist refuges and not to "conservative welfare-oriented hostels."[94] Activists also staged volatile protests in the lead-up to the 1981 and 1982 budgets, sit-ins at Parliament House in Canberra, and a "continuous shouting of abuse" during the parliamentary sitting.[95] A 1981 delegation to the prime minister argued refuges needed federal funding to fulfill the "self-determination of women in Australia. . . . We believe that we should be funded in the same way as other 'at risk' and 'disadvantaged' sections of the community e.g., Ethnic affairs, Aboriginal affairs, veterans affairs, children's services . . . and so on."[96] The refuge activists argued that women had "special needs" that only the state could meet.

Nevertheless, in these debates feminist refuges found it difficult to distinguish themselves from older and concurrent forms of welfare such as church-run refuges. Advocates argued that the state had a responsibility to fund refuges as a holistic feminist service. Lismore Women's Refuge argued that "women's refuges don't fit into the normal welfare mold," yet this was a difficult claim to sustain for refuges funded by health and welfare departments (rather than as specialist women's services, for example).[97] It was also difficult when many refuges did not run on feminist principles. Some nonfeminist refuges were run by male management committees, reportedly on "outmoded authoritarian lines, which allow the residents no part in managing their own lives." For example, a statement from the 1982 refuges conference reported that one refuge evicted women if they returned home after nine o'clock at night. Feminist refuge advocates argued that this was "inappropriate for women who need to regain confidence, self-esteem and the ability to make decisions about their future."[98]

Refuges also advocated for better funding to pay their staff, many of whom effectively worked without pay. The movement had shifted from valuing volunteerism as an enactment of feminist principles to regarding unpaid work as symptomatic of feminized exploitation. Feminists were beginning to regard the predominance of women in volunteering work as symptomatic of patriarchy's insistence that women's primary responsibility was in the private sphere.[99] Women's volunteer labor was also a hallmark of faith-based refuge services—precisely the kind of service feminist refuges sought to distinguish themselves from. In one of their earliest funding submissions to the NSW Health Commission in 1974, Elsie requested money for staff but also stressed that "voluntary workers will always be an integral part of Elsie as the philosophy of the

refuge includes involving as many women as possible with many different skills and approaches."[100] However, the movement's reliance on volunteers became a liability. Feminist magazine *Scarlet Woman* noted that, in the increasingly neoliberal budget environment of the early 1980s, women's services were reclassified as "welfare," which made them more vulnerable to cuts, and that the state deployed services that relied on volunteers to do government work—they were, in effect, "forced to become an extra arm of government."[101] One refuge worker commented: "We admire the work volunteers do. We think there's a role for them, but not until refuges have fully paid up staff. You can't run a high level crisis service on volunteers. We dug our own grave right from the start. We took the attitude of a high level of commitment. The Government has exploited that, and the community has exploited that."[102]

After one refuge had their funding halved in 1981, a worker noted wryly that "[NSW Premier] Mr Wran suggests that we rely more on volunteers. He would not suggest this to transport workers, nor would he suggest that lawyers be committed enough to do worker's compensation cases for free."[103] As the women's movement debated the value of women's unpaid domestic labor, a feminist service that relied on volunteers was difficult to justify, especially when nonfeminist refuges typically ran on volunteer labor.[104]

As a service rooted in the women's liberation movement and committed to avoiding older welfare modes of charity or social work, establishing and implementing appropriate pay rates for refuge workers was challenging. There was initially no standard pay rate for refuge work, but many were still not receiving the Australian social welfare union award rate by the early 1980s.[105] Tight finances placed enormous pressure on workers to forgo award wages: the National Women's Refuge Conference heard in 1983 that "all workers suffer first rather than cutting back on services provided."[106] Refuge workers were expected to work constantly: "The award is only for a 9–5, 5 day a week job, No penalty rates for evening or weekend work. Refuge work is a 24 hour job."[107] The Richmond Women's Emergency Centre complained that refuge worker's pay was very low given that workers were required to "perform an extraordinary wide range of tasks. . . . This work is constant, demanding and carries with it heavy responsibility."[108] These descriptions of refuge work were remarkably similar to the ways that women in the 1970s articulated the relentless work of motherhood.[109] It was also clear that the sector depended on volunteers: one refuge worker claimed that her refuge was able to stay open due to the more than 100,000 hours of voluntary work by staff members during the year.[110] Unpaid labor in the private sphere had long defined women's citizenship; the gendered expectation that women would, and could, perform many roles unpaid, or for low wages, framed ideas about refuge workers and their pay. Women's long history of unpaid domestic work meant that governments found it easy to resist the refuge movement's claims that this work—which was in many cases analogous to women's care work—should be adequately remunerated.

However, refuges occasionally defended their "cheap" services in a way that slipped into the neoliberal language of efficiency. A western Sydney community refuge

explained to their local member of Parliament that their working conditions were exploitative, including being "'on call' at our own home[s] 24 hour per day, 365 days per year." They nonetheless argued that "we save the government money by 1) keeping families together; 2) keeping children off the streets and out of children's home; 3) keeping women off the streets and out of hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, prisons and mortuaries; 4) we increase the skills of the women in coping with their children and with their own homemaking and financial situations."[111]

A 1981 refuge delegation to government emphasized that autonomous women's services were more likely to be cost-efficient: "the programs and services which have been established are extremely cost-effective, and coming from the grass roots level, are meeting very real needs which is not always the case . . . when programs are set-up and administered by State Government Bureaucracies."[112] A member of the Elsie collective made a similar argument, although far more wryly: "We have now become experts in high finance and after learning how to stretch the dollar further than history ever decree'd [sic], it should be that we all qualify for jobs in the Treasurer's dept."[113]

As these funding contests intensified, Christian groups and conservatives directly contested feminist claims about refuges. According to McFerran, after intense lobbying, the state government allowed religious organizations to apply for commonwealth refuge funding in 1977, with the result that, of the sixteen new refuges funded by the commonwealth in NSW that year, only two identified as feminist.[114] Religious groups, with a long-established Christian model of refuge, were competing with feminist refuges for funds. In 1980 the Salvation Army suggested that they had been "caring for women and children in need" in refuges for more than thirty years: "the Army was the first to do this work and is still doing it without all the fuss and ballyhoo made by others associated with this work."[115] A representative of Penrith Community Aid, established in the late 1970s, said their refuge was run by "pro-life Christian women" and argued that many feminist refuges advocated "lesbianism and an intense hatred of men."[116] The 1980 religious Right conference "Women for Family and Society" resolved that they "supported the concept of refuges for women and families fleeing from wife-beating in the home" but demanded greater scrutiny and regulation of refuges to prevent "their misuse for recruiting victimized women into man-hating or lesbian lifestyles."[117] These conservative critiques were intended to discredit feminist refuges and undermine their claims on the state, part of broader antifeminist campaigns to undermine women's access to policymaking in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[118]

Conclusion

The 1983 federal election returned the Labor party to power for the first time since 1975. Labor had first funded women's refuges, and they had committed to establishing a national women's services program to fund refuges.[119] At an 1984 federal conference intended to produce a proposal for national funding for women's services, delegates reiterated that they wanted a program that reflected the broad and comprehensive

nature of women's experience.[120] Yet the federal government rejected this, and what the sector got instead, in 1985, was SAAP, the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. SAAP grouped women's refuges together with other emergency accommodation services like youth refuges and hostels for homeless people, and it depended on fifty-fifty matched funding from the states. While there were disputes within the refuge movement over joining the program because some advocates felt that refuges risked being seen as only an accommodation service, the incentives of relatively generous and secure five-year funding agreements encouraged the sector to sign up. The SAAP Act also acknowledged the distinctive characteristics of women's refuges and the role that refuges played in broader society.[121] Social policy academic Roselyn Melville also noted that the SAAP Act enshrined in legislation the entitlements of a group of services to state support, a departure from the Australian state conferring benefits upon individuals.[122] Many regarded this as an achievement after years of protest. In 1987 a review of SAAP concluded that the refuge program was both a successful and cost-effective means of providing support to women and children in need.[123]

Since the early 1970s refuges had been the face of the feminist movement's response to domestic violence. Refuges' need for funding pushed them into a closer relationship with the state. By any measure, this engagement was successful: more refuges received funding, and refuges became accepted as a crucial and legitimate response to domestic violence. Sociologist Gisela Kaplan described Australia's women's refuges as one of the "undoubted success stories of feminist infrastructure and culture building across the western world."[124] Australian refuge advocates produced changes in governmental power and practice through their campaigns for refuges. They adapted and changed their campaigns in response to a rapidly changing political and economic context. As Halley and colleagues remind us, governance feminism has benefits and pitfalls. While achieving a measure of funding stability to maintain refuges was critical, refuge advocates often found it difficult to disentangle their claims for a new feminist service from existing discourses of charity and women's vulnerability. Prevailing norms of gendered citizenship meant that the movement found it extremely difficult to mount arguments for valuing refuge work as a distinctive feminist service, and the refuge movement's foundational, radical critique of the nuclear family was subsumed within the nongendered framework of homelessness. It was a necessary strategy but also a costly one.

Notes

[1]Elsie Women's Refuge, "To the residents of Westmoreland Street," in "First Ten Years of Sydney Women's Liberation Collection," MS MLMSS 9782, Box 34, Folder 5, "Elsie Women's Refuge," State Library of New South Wales (hereafter, SLNSW), Sydney, Australia.

[2]Joyce Stevens, "Elsie: A Women's Shelter," *Tribune*, March 26, 1974, 7; and Geoffrey Griffith, "Sydney's Desperate Women", *Daily Mirror*, undated clipping in Elsie Women's Refuge Records, ML MSS 9661, Box 7X, SLNSW.

[3]Anne Summers, *Ducks on the Pond: An Autobiography 1945–1976* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1999), 331.

[4]Anne Summers, "Elsie Women's Refuge," *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*, May 1974, 3.

[5]"Somewhere to Go to Get Away from the Beat the Wife Games," *Digger*, no. 28, March 1974, 7.

[6]Marilyn Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism* (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1999), 12.

[7]Christina Gibbeson, May 23, 1975, in *Royal Commission on Human Relationships: Official Transcript of Proceedings, 1974–76* (Sydney: Commonwealth Reporting Service, 1975), 1:452.

[8]Ludo McFerran, "The First Ten Years: 1974–1984: Women's Refuges in NSW and Australia," unpublished paper, part 2 (2008), 1.

[9]Janet Ramsay, "Policy Activism on a 'Wicked Issue': The Building of Australian Feminist Policy on Domestic Violence in the 1970s," *Australian Feminist Studies* 22, no. 53 (July 2007): 250, 247–264; and Jacqui Theobald, "Women's Refuges and the State in Victoria, Australia: a campaign for secrecy of address," *Women's History Review,* 23 no. 1 (2014): 62, 60–81. On the discovery of violence through refuges, see Ramsay, "Policy Activism on a 'Wicked Issue,'" 250.

[10]Suellen Murray, "Breaking the Silence: Nardine Women's Refuge and the Politicisation of Domestic Violence in Western Australia during the 1980s," *Women Against Violence* 7 (December 1999): 6.

[11]Marian Sawer, "Gender, Metaphor and the State," *Feminist Review* 52 (Spring 1996): 118–134.

[12]Jacqui Theobald and Suellen Murray with Judith Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream: The Domestic Violence Services Movement in Victoria, Australia, 1974–2016* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2017), 2.

[13]See, for example, on the United States: Ann Fleck-Henderson, "From Movement to Mainstream: A Battered Women's Shelter Evolves (1976–2017)," *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 32, no. 4 (2017): 476–490; and Gretchen Arnold and Jami Ake, "Reframing the Narrative of the Battered Women's Movement," *Violence Against Women* 19, no 5 (2013): 557–578. For the United Kingdom, see Gill Hague, *Histories and Memories of the Domestic Violence Movement* (Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press and Policy Press, 2021); and R. Emerson Dobash and Russell P. Dobash, *Women, Violence and Social Change* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[14]Janet Halley, Prabha Kotiswaran, Rachel Rebouché, and Hila Shamir, *Governance Feminism: Notes from the Field* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), xi.

[15]Janet Halley, *Governance Feminism: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), ix, x.

[16]Michelle Arrow, "Making Family Violence Public in the Royal Commission on Human Relationships," *Australian Feminist Studies* 33, no. 95 (2018): 81–96.

[17]Michelle Arrow, Barbara Baird, Leigh Boucher, and Robert Reynolds, "Gender and Sexual Politics: Changing Citizenship in Australia since 1969," Australian Research Council Discovery Project, DP170100502, https://sexualcitizenship.org/.

[18]Marilyn Lake, "A Revolution in the Family: The Challenge and Contradictions of Maternal Citizenship in Australia," in *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States*, ed. Seth Koven and Sonya Michel (New York: Routledge, 1993), 378–430. See also Shurlee Swain, Patricia Grimshaw, and Ellen Warne, "Whiteness, Maternal Feminism and the Working Mother, 1900–1960," in *Creating White Australia*, ed. Jane Carey and Clare McLisky (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2009), 214–229.

[19]Jo Aitken, "'The Horrors of Matrimony among the Masses': Feminist Representations of Wife Beating in England and Australia, 1870–1914." *Women's History Review* 19, no. 4 (2007): 107–131.

[20]Lake, *Getting Equal*, 56.

[21]Anne Genovese, "The Politics of Naming: '70s Feminisms, Genealogy and 'Domestic Violence,'" in *Anatomies of Violence: An Interdisciplinary Investigation*, ed. Ruth Walker, Kylie Brass, and John Byron (University of Sydney: Postgrad Arts Research Centre, 2000): 115–129, 118–119.

[22]Pat O'Shane, "Report on Aboriginal Women and Domestic Violence," Appendix 2, in *Report of NSW Task Force on Domestic Violence* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1981), 122.

[23]Adele Murdolo, "Safe Homes for Immigrant and Refugee Women: Narrating Alternative Histories of the Women's Refuge Movement in Australia," *Frontiers* 35, no. 3 (2014): 126–153.

[24]Hester Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators: Australian Femocrats and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996). Also see Lake, *Getting Equal*, chap. 11.

[25]Lake, *Getting Equal*, 254.

[26]Sophie Watson, ed., *Playing the State: Australian Feminist Interventions* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 10.

[27]Anna Yeatman, "Women and the State," in *Contemporary Australian Feminism*, ed. Kate Pritchard Hughes, (Melbourne: Longman Australia, 1994), 177–197, 182.

[28]Yeatman, "Women and the State," 183.

[29]Theobald, Murray, and Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*.

[30]Histories of the Australian women's refuge movement include Suellen Murray, *More Than Refuge: Changing Responses to Domestic Violence* (Crawley: University of Western Australia Press, 2002); and Theobald, Murray, and Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*. Ludo McFerran's "The First Ten Years: 1974–1984: Women's Refuges in NSW and Australia" is perhaps the closest to a history of NSW refuges, but it is unpublished. On policy, see Suellen Murray and Anastasia Powell, *Domestic Violence: Australian Public Policy* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2011).

[31]Ludo McFerran, "Interpretation of a Frontline State: Australian Women's Refuges and the State," in *Playing the State: Australian Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 191–205.

[32]See Murray, *More Than Refuge*; and Theobald, "Women's Refuges and the State in Victoria."

[33]Theobald, Murray, and Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, 6.

[34]Heather Saville, "Refuges: A New Beginning to the Struggle," in *Family Violence in Australia*, ed. Carol O'Donnell and Jan Craney (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1982), 95–109, 96.

[35]Melanie Oppenheimer, *Volunteering: Why We can't Survive without It* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008), 123–133.

[36]Andrew Hopkins and Heather McGregor, *The Movement against Domestic Violence*, (North Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1991), 11; and Theobald, Murray, and Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, 6–7.

[37]There is very little documentation for the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party, but the current peak body for domestic violence services in NSW, Domestic Violence NSW, has a brief timeline of the organizational history of refuges in the state on its website: DVNSW, "Timeline: Our History," DVNSW https://www.dvnsw.org.au/about-us/our-history, accessed 20 October 2023.

[38]Bee Jay, "Elsie Women's Refuge," *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*, June 1974.

[39]"National Day of Mobilisation," in "First Ten Years of Sydney Women's Liberation Collection," MS MLMSS 9782, Box 34, Folder 5, "Elsie Women's Refuge," SLNSW.

[40]Janet Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy by the Australian Commonwealth Government and the Government of the State of NSW between 1975 and 1985: An Analytical Narrative of Feminist Policy Activism" (PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2004), 110.

[41]Theobald, Murray, and Smart, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, 43.

[42]Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy," 110.

[43]Roselyn Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," *Women Against Violence* 5 (December 1998): 15–33, 20.

[44]Murray, *More Than Refuge*, 138–139.

[45]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 20.

[46]Minister for Home Affairs (Robert Ellicott) to Prime Minister Fraser, May 3, 1978, Series A10756/2, LC 1486 Part 1, Crisis Accommodation Program, National Archives of Australia, Canberra (hereafter, NAA).

[47]McFerran, "The First Ten Years," part 2, 6.

[48]Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy," 177–178.

[49]Sawer, "Gender, Metaphor and the State," 119. On the idea that refuges promoted family breakdown, see Michelle Arrow, "'How Much Longer Will We Allow This Country's Affairs to Be Run by Radical Feminists?' Anti-Feminist Activism in Late 1970s Australia," *Australian Historical Studies* 52, no. 3 (2021): 331–347, 344.

[50]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 19.

[51]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 26.

[52]Arrow, "Making Family Violence Public," 81–96.

[53]Murray, *More Than Refuge*, 98–99.

[54]"Eileen Writes," *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter,* June 1975, 2.

[55]Kay Shumack, "Elsie's Herstory," *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*, August 1977, 4.

[56]"On the Run from Violence, with Four Children," *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1976, 8.

[57]Graham Williams, "Meg's Flight to Misery: Plight of the Destitute Grows Worse," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 21, 1978.

[58]McFerran, "Interpretation of a Frontline State," 193.

[59]Zora Simic, "From Battered Wives to Domestic Violence: The Transnational Circulation of Chiswick Women's Aid and Erin Pizzey's *Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear* (1974)," *Australian Historical Studies* 51, no. 2 (2020): 107–126, 124.

[60]McFerran, "Interpretation of a Frontline State," 193.

[61]Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy," 221.

[62]Murdolo, "Safe Homes for Immigrant and Refugee Women," 129–130.

[63]Jo Perry, *An Evaluation of Thirty-Six Women's Refuges in NSW and Canberra* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1982), 1.

[64]Perry, *An Evaluation of Thirty-Six Women's Refuges*, 2.

[65]Anne Summers to Minister for Labor and Immigration, July 13, 1974, Series A463, 1978/2510, "Elsie Women's Refuge: General Representations," NAA.

[66]Perry, *An Evaluation of Thirty-Six Women's Refuges*, 1.

[67]"Elsie Women's Refuge," undated document ca. 1979, in First 10 Years of Sydney Women's Liberation Collection, MS MLMSS 9782, Box 34, Folder 5, "Elsie Women's Refuge," SLNSW.

[68]Perry, *An Evaluation of Thirty-Six Women's Refuges*, 178.

[69]Anne Summers to Minister for Urban and Regional Development, April 17, 1974; and Anne Summers to Minister for Social Security, April 29, 1974, both in Series A463, 1978/2510, "Elsie Women's Refuge: General Representations," NAA.

[70]Summers to Minister for Labour and Immigration, July 13, 1974, Series A463, 1978/2510, "Elsie Women's Refuge: General Representations," NAA.

[71]Ludo McFerran, "The First Ten Years 1974–1984: Women's Refuges in NSW and Australia," unpublished paper, Part 1 (2008), 8.

[72]Summers, *Ducks on the Pond*, 358–9.

[73]"Elsie—A Home Away from Home," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 8, 1975.

[74]"Nun Leaves the Sheltered Life to Help out over Christmas at Women's Refuge," *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 29, 1975, 2.

[75]"What 1975 Meant for Women," *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 6, 1976, 10.

[76]McFerran, "The First Ten Years," Part 1, 8.

[77]Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy," 101.

[78]Anne O'Brien, *Philanthropy and Settler Colonialism* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), 181.

[79]Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 176.

[80]"Australian Government Plan to Support women's Refuges," Press Release by Minister for Health, Doug Everingham, June 1975, Series A463, 1978/2510, "Elsie Women's Refuge general representations," NAA.

[81]"What Do the Major Parties Offer for Women?," *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 22, 1976, 12.

[82]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of women's Refuge Funding," 24.

[83]Ramsay, "The Making of Domestic Violence Policy," 126–127.

[84]Sara Dowse, "A Femocrats Story, 1970s Style," *Griffith Review*, May 3, 2010, https://www.griffithreview.com/articles/a-femocrats-story-1970s-style/.

[85]Kay Shumack for the Elsie Collective to Hon JM Fraser, May 13, 1977, in Series A463, 1978/2510 "Elsie Women's Refuge: General representations," NAA.

[86]Bonnie Women's Refuge to PM Malcolm Fraser, May 18, 1977, in Beryl Henderson papers, MS 9360, Box 1, Folder 1, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

[87]"Wran Offers New Deal in Family Care," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 29, 1976, 2.

[88]Ian Frykberg, "Women's Crisis Centres to Get a Boost," *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 10, 1977, 3.

[89]Dowse, "The Bureaucrat as Usurer," 158.

[90]R. J. Ellicott, "Australian Statement to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women," *Copenhagen and Beyond: Perspectives on the World Conference and Nongovernment Organisations Forum for the United Nations Decade for Women Copenhagen Denmark July 1980* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service 1981), app. 4, p. 69.

[91]Marian Sawer, "Reclaiming Social Liberalism: The Women's Movement and the State," *Journal of Australian Studies* 17, no. 37 (1993): 1–21, 20.

[92]Robert Ellicott to Prime Minister, June 23, 1980, Series A 1209/33, 1979/851 Part 1, "Women's Refuges—Policy," NAA.

[93]Ramsay, "Policy Activism on a 'Wicked Issue,'" 259.

[94]"Feminist Refuges National Day of Mobilisation," undated flyer, First 10 Years of Sydney Women's Liberation Collection, MS 9782, Box 34, Folder 5, "Elsie Women's Refuge," SLNSW.

[95]Jack Waterford, "Kings Hall Invaded by Women," *Canberra Times*, May 27, 1981, 1.

[96]Robin Batterham, Administrator, Canberra Women's Refuge to Prime Minister, May 28, 1981, National Women's Advisory Council "Women's Refuges," A463/70, 1980/2263, part 2, NAA.

[97]Pamela Ashton (on behalf of Lismore Women's Refuge) to Beryl Beaurepaire, June 15 1982, in A1209 1979/851 'Part 2 Women's Refuges-Policy', NAA, Canberra.

[98]Margaret Crawford, "National Women's Refuge Conference Report, Melbourne, 17–19 November 1982," Office of the Status of Women, January 1983, A463/70, 1980/2089, Office of Women's Affairs—Refuges, 9, NAA.

[99]Cora Baldock, "Feminist Discourses of Unwaged Work: The Case of Volunteerism," *Australian Feminist Studies* 13, no. 27 (1998): 19–34, 28.

[100]Elsie Women's Refuge Submission to the Health Commission, 41N012AA, Series A463, 1978/2510, "Elsie Women's Refuge: General Representations," NAA.

[101]Carmel Flaskas and Betty Hounslow, "Government Intervention and Right Wing Attacks on Feminist Services," *Scarlet Woman* 11 (1980): 13–14.

[102]Anne Roberts, "Refuges Face a Flood of Women as Funds Dry Up," *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 29, 1982, 7.

[103]Ludo McFerran for the Young Women's Refuge Collective, March 17, 1982, circular letter, A 463/76, 1981/2341, Part 3, NAA.

[104]Baldock, "Feminist Discourses of Unwaged Work," 29.

[105]Crawford, "National Women's Refuge Conference Report," 6.

[106]Crawford, "National Women's Refuge conference Report," 6.

[107]Crawford, "National Women's Refuge Conference Report," 6.

[108]Richmond Women's Emergency Centre (Pamela Ashton) to Ian Wilson, August 20, 1981, A463/76, 1981/2341, Part 2, NAA.

[109]Michelle Arrow, "'Everyone Needs a Holiday from Work, Why Not Mothers?' Motherhood, Feminism and Citizenship in the Australian Royal Commission on Human Relationships, 1974–1977," *Women's History Review* 25, no. 2 (2015): 320–336.

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[111]Betty Harding, for Blacktown Community Cottage, to John Armitage, July 1, 1981, in MJR Mackellar to Ian Wilson, September 4, 1981, A463/76, 1981/2341, Part 2, NAA.

[112]Robin Batterham, Administrator, Canberra Women's Refuge to Prime Minister, May 28, 1981, National Women's Advisory Council, "Women's Refuges," A463/70, 1980/2263, Part 2, NAA.

[113]Bobbie, "Funding," *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*, August 1977, 13.

[114]McFerran, "The First Ten Years," Part 2, 7.

[115]Lilian Judd, "Women's Refuges," letter to editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 24, 1980, 6.

[116]Mrs. B. Hargreaves, "Women's Refuges," letter to editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 15, 1980, 6.

[117]Lesley Hicks, "Women's Refuges," letter to editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 28 1980, 6.

[118]Arrow, "'How Much Longer."

[119]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 26.

[120]Ludo McFerran, "In the Beginning," *Parity*, 22, no. 10 (2009): 15–16, 15.

[121]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 27.

[122]Melville, "The Slippery Slide of Women's Refuge Funding," 28.

[123]Cited in Gisela Kaplan, *The Meagre Harvest: The Australian Women's Movement 1950s–1990s* (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin 1996), 72.

[124]Kaplan, *The Meagre Harvest*,71.