

Hamish In Auckland

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2012

Child Brides & Woman's Suffrage Day NZ

19th September 1893 an important day in our history. Kate Sheppard led the suffrage movement. Female Labour MP's in NZ have a campaign going asking what would Kate think now.



To be honest I have no idea what she would think and nor do the MP's. She might well object to the politicisation of her image in a partisan campaign.



Kate Sheppard

"The Governor, Lord Glasgow, signed a new Electoral Act into law. As a result of this landmark legislation, New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world to grant all women the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

*The passing of the Electoral Act was the culmination of years of agitation by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and other organisations. As part of this campaign, a series of **massive petitions** – including one earlier in 1893 signed by almost*

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one in four adult women in New Zealand – were presented to Parliament.

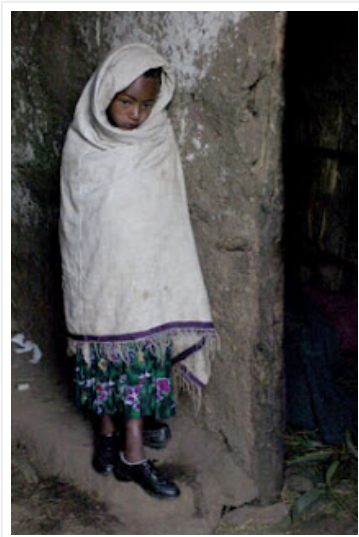
In most other democracies – notably Britain and the United States – women did not win the right to vote until after the First World War. New Zealand's world leadership in women's suffrage became a central part of our image as a trailblazing 'social laboratory'."

NZ History

However I am prepared to bet that she would be appalled to know that 119 years later that the world exploitation of females continues unabashed.

[From Reuters](#)

Key facts on child marriage around the world.



Tihun Nebiyu, 7, a girl from central Ethiopia, waits to be presented to her 17-year-old husband on her wedding day.

Photo Chicago Tribune

** Every three seconds, a girl under the age of 18 is married somewhere in the world, mostly in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.*

** The practice affects a third of girls -- and some boys -- in developing countries, according to UNICEF, which describes child marriage as "perhaps the most prevalent form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls."*

** The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child says 18 years should be the minimum age for marriage.*

** Child rights activists say marriage at a young age violates a child's basic human rights because they are too young to be able to give "free and full consent" -- a right enshrined in Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

** Child marriage is most common in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.*

** In many developing countries the practice is illegal but the law is often not enforced or it operates alongside customary and religious laws.*

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** Girls younger than 15 are five times more likely to die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth than women in their 20s. If they are 15-19, they are twice as likely to die.*

** Girls under the age of 18 are more likely to develop obstetric fistula, which causes severe incontinence. This condition occurs during childbirth when a hole develops between the vagina and bladder or rectum.*

** Girl brides are more likely to be infected with the HIV virus by their older husbands. A study in Kenya and Zambia by University of Chicago researchers found that among 15- to 19-year-old girls who are sexually active, being married increased their chances of having HIV by more than 75 percent.*

** A girl bride is more likely to be beaten or raped by her husband and experience abusive relationships with her in-laws.*

** The babies of child brides are 60 percent more likely to die before the age of one than children of women older than 19.*

** Child brides are rarely allowed to go to school. Many are expected to bear and raise children and carry out domestic work for their in-laws.*

** Girls from poor families are nearly twice as likely to marry before 18 than girls from wealthier families.*

** The number of child marriages often increases during conflicts or natural disasters.*

** Some families use marriage to build and strengthen alliances, to seal property deals, settle disputes or pay off debts.*

We still have a long way to go Kate

Posted by [H Stewart](#) at 7:59 PM 

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[H Stewart](#)

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