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PARADOXES IN WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION PRACTICES

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Philosophy
in Nursing Studies at Massey University

SUBMITTED BY : AROHA EVELYN PAGE

YEAR : 1987

**DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY
OF THE ANZACS
AND ALL FOR THOSE NURSES WHO DARE TO CARE**

ABSTRACT

The study explored the basis of the relatively low uptake of cervical screening and practice of breast self-examination among New Zealand women. Consistent with an interpretative approach to social phenomena it was anticipated that part of the explanation would lie in the meanings which women attach to health in general and to these specific health-protection practices.

Theoretical sampling was effected by semi-structured interviews with 45 women. Transcripts of these interviews provided the substantive data which were then analysed by the process of constant comparative analysis and other grounded theory strategies for analysis.

The concept of a health-protection paradox centred around the core-variable 'vigilance-harmonizing' which was generated to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies within, and between, individual women and their health protection practices. This conceptualization was developed from the substantive data in order to provide a model designed to increase the effectiveness of nursing interventions for this area. The model, by illuminating processes from the client's perspective then can indicate those processes most suitable for incorporation in effective health education measures designed to promote the uptake of cervical screening and breast self-examination by women.

As an adjunct to the study, a breast cancer case history is presented which shows the theory-in-use. The use of this case-history lies in the fact that it shares the substantive area of inquiry which serves to accentuate the viability, relevance and applicability of the grounded theory.

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