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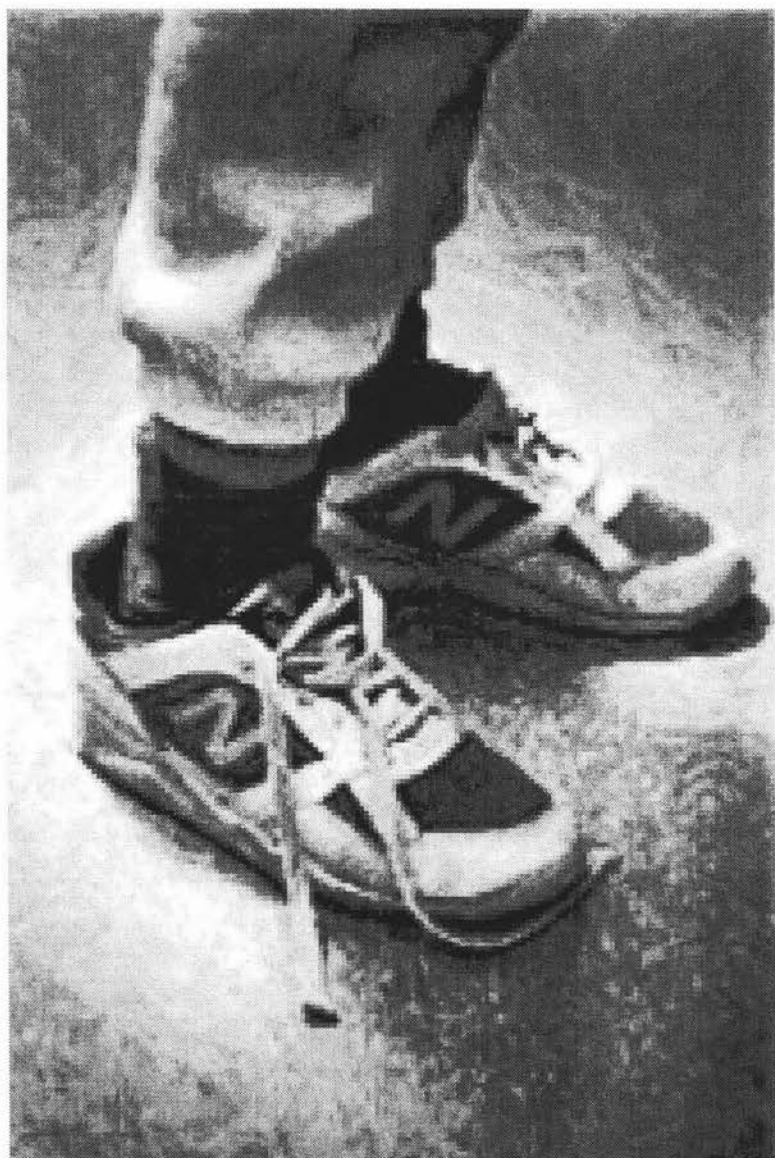
Bound to care: Eleven New Zealand women discuss raising their grandchildren

A Grounded Analysis of interviews

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of Arts in psychology at Massey University

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with identifying what happens in families where children removed from parental custody have been placed with their grandmothers. Because of statutory and policy changes, Child Youth and Family Services are placing more children removed from parental care into the extended family than ever before. However, there is a lack of information about the impact of this on families in Aotearoa. The focus of this investigation is the impact that permanent care of grandchildren has on the lives of grandmothers. Eleven Pakeha grandmothers with permanent custody of their grandchildren were interviewed about their experiences of custodial grandparenting. A Grounded Theory approach to the data analysis identified a core theme of family binding which is used to interpret data concerning the process by which the grandchildren entered their grandparent's custody, family relationships, social support and relationships with statutory authorities. The core category revealed that the women's commitment to raising their grandchildren enables them to gain high levels of fulfilment from their relationship with the children despite the many problems that arise when grandmothers become primary caregivers of their grandchildren in circumstances of family breakdown.

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