Guest editorial: Dr Robyn Longhurst reflects on 20 years of teaching ‘gender geography’

The other day I received an invitation from the Mayor of Hamilton to join a number of other women for ‘high tea’ to celebrate 120 years of women’s suffrage. The invitation prompted me to pause for a moment to reflect on more than 20 years of teaching women’s and gender issues at the University of Waikato. I teach gender as part of the human geography curriculum. Even today this still comes as a surprise to some who imagine geography as just being about maps, flags and capital cities but in the late 1970s questions (from men and women) began to arise about the discipline focusing too narrowly on ‘Man (literally!) and his environment’. Women’s experiences of space and place needed to be included.

When I first joined Waikato University in 1992 gender was already part of the geography curriculum. In fact, this is what attracted me to Waikato. It was different from other geography departments. Its specific history of radical scholarship (including in the area of Māori studies) enabled feminist academics in a variety of disciplines including geography to have a stronger voice than in other universities. Waikato was also the only geography department that did not have far more men than women on staff. In the early 1990s the focus was on ‘women’s issues’ and most of the students who enrolled in the classes on ‘gender geography’ were women. These were optimistic times as we (staff and students) imagined the possibilities for radical social change that would bring about equality.

Over the next decade, however, universities, including Waikato, began to increasingly embrace neoliberal agendas and vocationally driven courses began to prosper often at the expense of other
subjects such as music, languages, and gender studies. In the early 2000s the women’s and gender studies department at Waikato was downgraded to a programme and we knew we needed to keep student numbers up in the ‘gender geography’ courses. One way to do this was to attract more men. We figured that largely ‘women only’ spaces had their benefits but surely men needed to understand gender relations too (arguably even more so that women). We were also mindful of criticisms from Māori, lesbians, people with disabilities and people occupying lower socio-economic positions that gender should not always be the overriding analytical category in teaching and researching gender. Ethnicity, sexuality, disability, class and so on are also important factors to consider.

Bearing all of the above in mind we renamed the second year course ‘Women in Australasia: Gender Space’ to ‘Contemporary Cultural Geographies’. The number of men enrolled grew significantly and we began to teach about ‘difference’, not just gendered difference but about all sorts of embodied difference. We knew it was vital for the long-term ‘health’ of ‘gender geography’ at Waikato that the courses be as relevant and inspiring as possible to ensure that we were able to educate as wide a range of students as possible.

So, in September 2013 as we celebrate 120 years of women’s suffrage in New Zealand I am reminded that it is important to keep fighting for the rights of women. Even in 2013 there are some colleagues and students who continue to resist seeing value in gender and feminist perspectives even though there is overwhelming empirical evidence to suggest that women are still not treated equally in many arenas. Today we have excellent numbers of female and male students enrolled in the ‘gender geography’ courses offered at Waikato and we teach about respecting difference and about social justice. We pay attention to various aspects of identity such as ethnicity, age, sexuality, class, disability and body size but we are always mindful of how these complexly weave with gender. Engaging successfully in politics requires figuring out which differences matter when, and creating alliances among differently situated individuals and groups to work towards meaningful change. I’m looking forward to the women’s suffrage high tea to talk with other women about their experiences over the past 20 years and also their visions for the future.

Guest editorial kindly provided by Dr Robyn Longhurst, Professor of Geography, University of Waikato. She has served as Editor-in-Chief of Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography and Chair of the International Geographical Union Commission on Gender and Geography. Robyn is author of Bodies: Exploring Fluid Boundaries (2001), Maternities: Gender, Bodies and Spaces (2008) and co-author of Pleasure Zones: Bodies, Cities, Spaces (2001) and Space, Place, and Sex: Geographies of Sexualities (2010).

NZFGW Charitable Trust
Awards are open for 2013 as advertised on our website

Applications for all awards should be posted to: P.O. Box 1713, Palmerston North 4440.

The NZFGW Charitable Trust Secretary and Awards Convenor Dr Rowena Taylor can be contacted on awardsconvenor@nzfgw.org.nz
Landmark legal decision on pay equity

The Employment Court recently gave its decision on a case taken by the Service and Food Workers Union on behalf of their member, Kristine Bartlett, who works as a caregiver in a rest home for the elderly. She has 20 years’ experience and is paid $14.32 an hour. The aged care sector has some 33,000 workers, 92% of whom are women. Caregiver rates range from $13.75 to $15 per hour. There are 104 women and 4 men employed at the rest home where Ms Bartlett works and the men are on the same rates as the women.

The Court found that there was gender discrimination in Ms Barlett’s pay and said that it has jurisdiction to inquire into current, historic, structural and cultural gender discrimination and state general principles for pay.

This case concerns the Equal Pay Act 1972, the stated purpose of which is the removal and prevention of discrimination in rates of remuneration based on gender. Gender discrimination can occur in mixed work or predominantly female work. The Court accepted that care work is predominantly done by women, is seen as women’s work and has traditionally been unpaid work, and that it is undervalued.

The employer argued that the comparator should only come from within the same workplace as the female employees on whose behalf the claim is brought. The Court however “firmly denounced” this approach, stating that it would be illogical to use males who are also paid an artificially depressed rate of pay because they are performing “women’s work” as comparators. The Court stated that a narrow interpretation would perpetuate “current, historic and structural gender discrimination”.

Interveners, in support of the employer, argued that the cost of adopting a broader approach to pay was unaffordable. The Court dismissed this point, saying: “History is redolent with examples of strongly voiced concerns about the implementation of anti-discrimination initiatives on the basis that they will spell financial and social ruin, but which prove to be misplaced or have been acceptable as the price of the longer term social good. The abolition of slavery is an old example”.

What next and what are the implications?

An appeal by the employers is likely, so we will have to wait and see if the decision is upheld or modified. Once the final outcome is known after any appeal process, the SFWU is likely to ask for a determination on caregivers pay. It will also be open to other people in female-dominated occupations to take cases.

Because much care-giving work is funded through government contracts, if the decision is upheld and further cases are taken, there will be significant implications for the government’s budget and they will need to make provision for higher pay levels. This is likely to be a major political issue. While the initial case concerned low paid work, it is important to remember that gender discrimination and the gender pay gap affects a wide range of occupations, so there is scope to pursue these.

This is a landmark decision for all women workers, and the Court has decided that it wishes to state its decision about gender pay discrimination in the strongest possible terms, for the avoidance of doubt. There was a view that the Equal Pay Act 1972 lacked teeth and that it would be very difficult to take a successful case – clearly this is now not the case.
From the President’s Desk

MID-TERM COUNCIL – Saturday 2 November 2013 (11am-12noon)

According to the constitution we are required to hold a council meeting immediately before the biennial conference (which we will do as part of the 2014 NZFGW conference) and on at least one other occasion between successive biennial Conferences as determined by the National Executive.

With the shift to a two yearly conference cycle, our mid-term council becomes, in effect, an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Provision is made in the NZFGW Constitution for voting through either face-to-face or electronic meetings, which suggests that this meeting could be done through audio-conferencing.

National Executive will be holding its next face-to-face meeting on Saturday 2 November, and we have agreed to hold a one-hour meeting of Council members as part of this, by means of a teleconference call (from 11am to 12 noon). Each Branch is entitled to one representative, and the quorum is 2/3rds of the Branches. Of course for Council members who live close by, or who happen to be in Wellington on that day, you are very welcome to attend in person. Nevertheless, this will be a trial to see if we can in fact do AGM business in our non-conference year via a teleconference call, and save on travel funds.

A letter will be going out to all Branch Presidents to advise of this plan in the next few days - but we also thought it would be of interest to members generally to alert them to this proposal, and to seek agenda items for the AGM. Documentation requiring voting (such as the annual accounts, and some tidy-up constitutional changes – see below) will be sent out with that letter.

**Agenda Items:** Please send any agenda items/remits via Branch Presidents to Secretary Elizabeth Eppel elizabeth.eppel@xtra.co.nz. Could Independent Members please send their agenda items to Martine Cashel-Smith (Membership Convenor) and to Elizabeth.

One agenda item we do need to discuss is building membership. In this respect we would like to encourage branches to start a conversation – both with their members and those who are not members. Why are some women members and why are other women not members? How do you keep the balance between the ‘ladies who lunch’ and the core business of NZFGW – changing the world by degrees?

One of our new members had this to say: **I know for myself – the groups I enjoy spending time with are those where we have a common interest and spend time pursuing that interest in a social atmosphere. No boring business meetings. The other thing I like about the groups I belong to is the diversity of members – we have some very interesting conversations totally unrelated to [the ostensible purpose of the meeting] fibre art, quilting or bridge.**

If this applies to our meetings – what are we doing to facilitate this kind of interaction?

**Proposed Changes to By-Laws**

Note that Clause 17 states that “Except where the Constitution otherwise provides the By-laws may be amended at any Conference or any Council meeting by a majority vote provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been sent at least two calendar months in advance to the Branches.”

**Alignment of dues payments dates:**

IFUW states on its website that “Annual dues are payable [to IFUW] on 1 January and are calculated on the basis of the number of members of the national federation or association at the
date of the closure of its financial year immediately preceding the beginning of the financial year of IFUW”. (The financial year of IFUW is 1 January to 31 December).

The financial year of NZFGW is 1 July to 30 June (cl 48 of the NZFGW constitution). This means we need to pay our dues to IFUW by the end of December, on the basis of the number of members we have as at 30 June each year. However, currently By-law 10 requires Branches to pay annual dues to NZFGW National Executive by 31 May – although calculated on the number of subscriptions received during the financial year ended 30 June.

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<td>10 (a) All dues as outlined in Clauses 46 and 47 shall be paid by 31 May each year.</td>
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<td>10 (d) The financial Graduate Membership of a Branch for the purpose of Clauses 3 (c) and 16 (b)(iii) shall be the latest number of individual Graduate Members from whom subscriptions have been received by the Branch and dues paid thereon as required by this By-law. The financial Graduate Membership shall be based on the number of subscriptions received and dues paid by 31 May.</td>
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**Capitation payments – correction**

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**Capitation payments – clarification**

By-Law 10 (b) states that “... Branches shall pay full NZFGW dues for any member who is not, in accordance with the rules of the Branch, liable to pay a subscription.” It is the view of National Executive that this By-Law was created to cover Members Emeritae.

Some former National Executives, however, have paid a subscription for Honorary Fellows (i.e. those who have received a Fellowship). It is the view of the current National Executive that as the status is honorary, is held only for the year in which the award is held, and the Honorary Fellow does not have voting rights (unless they are a full graduate Member), they, like Student Members, should not be included in the membership figures, and dues will not be paid on their behalf to IFUW.

A resolution to this effect will be put at the Council meeting.

**2013 IFUW CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

**BUSINESS SESSIONS:**

New President: Catherine Bell from South Africa was voted in with great enthusiasm and acclaim. Catherine has been Treasurer for IFUW since 2007 and has a very good grasp of the IFUW financial situation. She’s a Computer Systems and Training Consultant, accustomed to managing training projects for large computer system implementations.
No election was required for the Vice-Presidents, as only four stood for the position. They are: Jennifer Strauss (Australia); Ayden Birerdinc (Turkey); Susan Russell (Canada); and Margaret Tait (Britain).

The new Treasurer is, I think, the Swiss (former Deputy Treasurer) Sheila Buemi-Moore.

The new convenor of the Status of Women Committee is our own former NZFGW President, Rae Duff. This was also a very popular choice.

Joy Dunsheath has been re-appointed onto the Hegg Hoffet Fund committee and was in her element working hard to raise a substantial sum from the sale table. Lorraine Isaacs provided very able advice on the Rules of Procedure. Young member Christine Tay was a timekeeper, and Martine Cashal-Smith worked on collecting voting numbers and the quorum count. Bev Turner chaired the PGNet meeting. Delegates were (in addition to myself), IFUW Council representative CIR Dorothy Meyer, Rae Duff and Sian Halcrow, and alternates Pushpa Wood, Christine Tay, Margaret Ellett and Mitra Etemaddar.

In the expectation that the IFUW website would have information on all the new committees, I ditched most of my papers in order to keep the weight of my suitcase within permitted limits. So much for expectations – I can’t now tell you who is on the other committees. However, the IFUW website will carry this information in due course.

**Resolutions**

**Emergency resolution: Proposals 1 & 2**

I am also pleased to be able to report that Proposal 1 (put forward by Catherine Bell and Executive Director, Danièle Castle), which was supported by NZFGW’s branches, was resoundingly supported by the required two-thirds majority of the Board and National Federations and Associations (NFAs). The Proposal 1 programme focuses on using the existing staff from the Geneva Office (rather than outsourcing administration as in proposal 2) to work on activities such as:

- building membership by for example, introducing new categories such as a non-voting corporate membership which may include companies, institutions of higher learning etc; and using the services of an advisory board made up of members from top companies that are willing to participate financially and provide expertise
- strengthening IFUW’s visibility by doing more advocacy work at CSW, CEDAW and ECOSOC levels on the four pillars (education for empowering women and girls; freedom from violence, financial independence and entrepreneurship and sustainable futures), and working more closely with the media
- fund raising (to reduce dependence on dues), through for example opening the conference to non-members, running training-courses
- new projects

**Dues**

There will be no dues increase in the triennium 2014-16, in the expectation that the Action Plan 2014-16 will successfully raise needed income. The Action Plan will utilise IFUW’s reserves to grow membership and raise income from activities with non-members as noted above.

**Key Resolutions**

All 12 resolutions were passed. NZFGW CIR (Dorothy Meyer) spoke in support of Resolution 5 (on Trafficking).
In line with Branch wishes we supported 11 of the 12 resolutions, and did not support the first part of Resolution 10. This Resolution resolved that NFAs urge their respective governments to enact legislation to prohibit the purchasing of sexual services wherever it occurs (including print media, internet and other technological tools); and impose criminal sanctions on the purchasers of sexual services (but not on the person providing the service).

New Zealand made a statement to explain why we were voting against the first part of this resolution (see box below), and our stance was supported by several other NFAs including Turkey. Nevertheless, both parts of the resolution were passed.

New Zealand is voting against the first part of Resolution 10 because we have legalised the sale of sexual services. Regulated prostitution protects and safeguards those who work in this industry.

What have New Zealand’s laws achieved?

- It is illegal to purchase girls or women for prostitution- they can’t be forced to be prostitutes.
- Women who choose to be prostitutes must be 18 years or older.
- Their human rights are safeguarded and they’re protected from exploitation.
- They have a strong union voice.
- Health officers visit the women in their workplaces to ensure their working conditions are safe and hygienic, and they are not exploited or subject to violence
- The police and judiciary enforce the law, so that if customers threaten the women, such customers are removed and prosecuted.
- Owners of sex premises must hold a current certificate.
- Immigrants (on temporary entry class visas) lose their visa rights if they provide sexual services or operate sex service premises.
- Legalisation of prostitution removes the financial rewards of sex trafficking.

THEME DAYS

NZFGW members were highly active in making the programme a great success. In particular Rae Duff is to be congratulated for the huge amount of work she put into organising the seminars, which resulted in an outstanding and really interesting collection of papers. (NB abstracts of all papers are on the IFUW website – see the members section under conference documentation).

The papers were particularly worthwhile in providing background stories that illustrated the necessity of the Resolutions.

Seminars were complimented by practical workshops which looked at action that can be taken to deal with the issues raised in the seminars. Here again members of the NZFGW delegation were active. Dr Pushpa Wood from Graduate Women Wellington ran several workshops (Women in Leadership, Financial Literacy); and with Christine Tay also from GWW, a workshop which explored the importance of providing quality education that empowers women as a Return on Investment (costing the economic loss of not educating women). Mitra Etemaddar, Louise Croot, and Shirley Gillett from Otago Branch ran a workshop on women and governance (on using domestic skills in the public sphere).
NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF GRADUATE WOMEN
30th CONFERENCE

will be held at the
Rydges Hotel, 75 Featherston Street, Pipitea,
WELLINGTON

on
26 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2014

WOMEN EMPOWERING WOMEN AS LEADERS

Diary this Date Now

NZFGW National Conference 26 – 28 September 2014
‘Women Empowering Women as Leaders’

The 30th NZFGW National Conference will be held in Wellington at Rydges Hotel Conference Centre, 75 Featherston Street, Pipitea, Wellington from 26 – 28 September 2014. An exciting programme is being planned and more information will be posted on the NZFGW website soon.

It is recommended that you arrange flights and accommodation early as this conference takes place during the time of WOW – The World of Wearable Arts - an annual non-stop spectacular where Artists and designers from New Zealand and all around the world enter garments that are presented in a unique two hour show.

MID-TERM REPORT: LYDIA CAVE

Most farming operations in New Zealand are based on a perennial ryegrass, white clover herbage mix. However, during summer perennial ryegrass loses quality, yields are reduced and poor livestock performance is often reported. In recent years an apparent increase in the frequency of summer droughts has been observed. Therefore the reliance of New Zealand livestock farming on a perennial ryegrass based herbage mix should be questioned.

My PhD set about investigating the potential of a herb and clover sward mix as an alternative long-term pasture option. The herb and clover mix contains; chicory, plantain, red clover and white clover. My research involved a two year grazing experiment, an intensive mowing experiment and a series of glasshouse experiments. I investigated the yield potential of the herb and clover mix, its
persistence under grazing, how it compared to ryegrass, and how chicory and plantain cope and recover under drought conditions. I also observed sheep grazing behaviour.

I found the herb and clover mix persists well under both hard and lax grazing (degree to which plants are grazed down to). It yielded more than the perennial ryegrass, white clover pasture and it maintained a high nutritive value across all seasons and sheep happily grazed all four species within the mix. Under drought conditions in the glasshouse both chicory and plantain recovered very quickly from moisture stress and showed great recovery growth. Overall, my research shows the herb and clover mix has great potential to be used as a long-term forage option, especially in the drier regions of New Zealand.

In September 2013 I will present one of my glasshouse drought experiments at the International Grasslands Congress in Sydney, Australia. I plan on publishing more of my results later in the year and in early 2014. I am confident that my research will result in positive financial implications for both New Zealand and international farming operations. After completing my PhD in March 2014 I intend on working within New Zealand as a research agronomist.

Harriette Jenkins Award – 2013

At the 1970 Conference of NZFGW, Nelson Branch initiated a fund for short-term grants and suggested that other Branches make donations to maintain the fund. When Harriette Jenkins, a life member of the Nelson Branch, died later that year the Fund was named after this gracious and generous lady.

Harriette Jenkins was deeply interested in, and willing to help, women keen to enhance their learning. Since graduation from Victoria University in 1912 she worked consistently for the advancement of women’s training and education.

A Harriette Jenkins Award may be for you if you are:

- a member of NZFGW of 6 months or more standing
- completing a piece of research or furthering studies at a university or other tertiary institution
- resident in New Zealand while undertaking the work, though it could be through an overseas institution
- requiring financial help with incidental expenses such as books, equipment, child care, travel within New Zealand, up to a maximum of $3,000

For more details and application forms please see:

ANGOA Next Roundtable, Wellington, Thursday 12 September, 10am - midday

NOTE THE VENUE: Level 16, 171 Featherston St, Wellington
Kia ora koutou katoa, ngā mihi nui ki a koutou – Greetings - All are Welcome to attend.

ANGOA disseminates this information as part of its work to strengthen civil society in Aotearoa New Zealand. For any enquiries, to be added to the ANGOA mail list or to unsubscribe, please contact the dave.henderson@angoa.org.nz

Please arrive on time! Tea/Coffee available before 10am
From the Angoa Society Newsletter: Incorporated Societies Act:

Geoff McLay, Law Commissioner: Review of the Incorporated Societies Act 1908

The Law Commission on 21 August published its final Report on the Review of the Incorporated Societies Act 1908. The Report, *A New Act for Incorporated Societies* (NZLC R129, 2013) recommends that Parliament enact a modern statute for incorporated societies to replace the current statute, which is more than 100 years old. Geoff McLay was leading Commissioner for the project. The Report, along with a summary of recommendations, is available [here](#).

“The Incorporated Societies Act 1908 has played a critical role in community life by enabling organisations to incorporate. There are over 23,000 incorporated societies, covering a huge range of purposes, and these societies play a vital role in the social fabric and economic success of New Zealand. Because of that, it is important that societies are supported by clear, modern legislation that assists them and their members to attain their goals” said the Commission in a statement following tabling of the report in Parliament.

The Government will now consider the recommendations in the Law Commission’s Report, and must respond within 120 days. After that, in a process expected to take at least 2 years:

- It is expected MBIE will be given the task of turning the report’s recommendations into a draft Bill and a set of regulations, a process which includes consultation with all other affected government agencies, and production of a Regulatory Impact Statement, or RIS;

- The Bill and regulations will then have to be scheduled for their first reading in Parliament;

- At that point it will hopefully be referred to Select Committee, with 4 months for public submissions;

- ANGOA expects to organise a series of consultative seminars in several cities before producing our submission.

- The Select Committee will hear oral submissions from all interested parties, and then report back to Parliament;

- Parliament will schedule a debate, and the Bill will become law.

- There will need to be an education process, assisting incorporated societies throughout the country to understand the new law and make any necessary changes to their constitution, which they will have a further 5 years to do.

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We look forward to receiving items from Branches for the September edition of NE News by 24 September – please email to the editor gaila@waikato.ac.nz.

*Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this newsletter, neither the Editor nor NZFGW accept liability for any errors of fact or opinion.*