



IFUW Young Members

Unity in our diversity

December, 2010

Newsletter of the IFUW Young Members Network

Dear young-members,

This is the first time I write you as IFUW Young Members Newsletter Editor. My name is Romy Boerleider, I am 27 years old and a member of the Dutch affiliation of the IFUW, VVAO. I am honored to have communicated with quite a number of young members at the 30th IFUW Triennial Conference in Mexico City from 5-9 August 2010. It was a very challenging time for me during which I made many friends throughout the world who will sustain in the future. Mexico was great!! The experience of meeting women from many countries with very different experiences was stimulating and it broadened my awareness and understanding of the major problems facing women and girls in our world today. I would like to thank the Jo Kolk foundation, Netherlands, who sponsored my registration to attend such a relevant and interesting international conference with a poignant focus on "Education, Empowerment and Development".

I hope all of you enjoyed the workshops and the cultural activities such as the Mexican Evening. I added many pictures from the conference and related activities. Hopefully these will bring back the good memories.





In the last newsletter Yvonne Hendrix announced the Young Members workshop “The Challenges to Women’s Emancipation in the 21st Century”. This workshop was attended by many young members and we herein report the outcomes of it. Nicole Nelson, Martine Cashell Smith and Angela Clark have also contributed to this newsletter. Many thanks to all of you.

Needless to say, I will be counting on your input and participation over the coming months and years. Feel free to share your thoughts with other young members through the IFUW newsletter. Thanks in advance!

The year 2011 is around the corner and I wish you all a Happy New Year. All the best to you and your family!

Romy Boerleider
Young Members Newsletters Editor

In this Issue

Young Members Workshop by Yvonne Hendrix

Experiences of a United States Young Member at the Conference by Nicole Nelson

**Women, Lifestyle and Climate Change: Compromise for Planetary Survival by
Martine Cashell-Smith and Siân Halcrow**

PhD research in Biological Anthropology by Angela Clark

Young Members Workshop

Yvonne Hendrix

The topic of the Young Member's Workshop at this year's IFUW conference in Mexico was "**The Challenges to Women's Emancipation in the 21st Century**". Initially we managed to breakdown this vast subject by prioritizing what we thought could represent the top 10 challenges. We then gauged this with a number of you to come up a definitive list. Then as you may recall we asked all the Young Members to rate to what extent each of these challenges were of concern in their country (1 being a minor issue and 10 being major).

We then created an Empowerment Perception Barometer which we used as a tool to visually reflect your responses per country and IFUW region. When we summarized the results it became evident that 2 issues stood out right across the board. As highlighted in the diagram below:

1. Women's views of themselves and others
2. Women's representation in world politics

As these topics were seen as the main challenges among Young Members in the IFUW regions we decided to make these the subject of our discussions during the workshop. With each topic we first looked at the current situation in our own countries and then tried come up with some actions and solutions to improve the existing state women find themselves in.

Women's image of themselves and that of other women

We found that women are often still stereotyped as dependent on men, child carers, or sexual objects, particularly in the media and socio-cultural groups.

Also women tend to be more critical of themselves and each other than they are of men. This is possibly due to a lack of self-confidence and a frequent perception of other women as "competition".

Overall the participants felt that women should receive more support either from each other or from their family and friends. Also, both boys and girls should be educated in gender, so next generations are more likely to view men and women as equals.

For example, generally men could become more willing to support women by taking up household tasks. With regard to the media, there should be an advocacy to change the way women are portrayed. There needs to be a way of giving feedback on radio and TV programmes as well as on written (books, magazines, newspapers) plus electronic sources (internet, social media) in order to make others aware of the biased portrayal of women.

In addition it would be helpful if more women friendly traditions are stimulated and spread via the media. Finally, women should learn to accept themselves the way they are and stop judging themselves and other women in terms of their character and looks.

Women's representation in world politics

All participants agreed that there are currently not enough women representing other women in politics. Although this varies greatly across the IFUW regions,

women are often still seen as weaker politicians who end up working on “women’s issues” or “lighter” portfolios as emancipation and cultural affairs.

Although there are some notable exceptions to this. For example Sheikh Hasina Wazed in Bangladesh, Angela Merkel in Germany, Christina de Kirchner in Argentina, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in Liberia, Hillary Clinton in the United States, and Julia Gillard in Australia, to just name a few powerful and leading ladies across the IFUW regions and these women should be more visible as role models.

Generally it was felt that despite some of the negative implications a quota should be introduced along with legal sanctions in order to punish organisations who do not live up to the quota. In addition through mentoring programmes and the support of their family, friends and other women in their organisation or region, women should be encouraged to take up leading positions. Finally, there need to be laws that ensure the development of work/family-life friendly policies which will make it easier for women to participate actively in politics and or working-life in general.

Therefore, although we still have a long way to go, we can start simply by supporting other women instead of seeing them as a threat and educating our children so that they perceive gender differently. Additionally, we should commence changing the way we feel about ourselves. Plus, despite criticism, fight for what we want, as this is the only way we can achieve things!

We have presented the Emancipation Perception Barometer as a measurement tool to the new President of the IFUW board Marianne Haslegrave. It is our

intention to refine the Barometer and to continue to gauge the perceptions of our Young Members on an ongoing basis. Needless to say we will be counting on your input and participation over the coming months and years.

In case you have any questions or comments, please contact us via youngmembersreply@hotmail.com.



Young members who attended the workshop “The Challenges to Women’s Emancipation in the 21st Century”.

Empowerment Perception Barometer Results - July 2010								
Colour code: Minor			Average			Major		
#	The Challenges to Women's Empowerment in the 21st Century	Africa	Americas	Europe	Middle East	Pacific		
1	Equal Rights							
2	Women's access to and choice of adequate healthcare							
3	Education							
4	Financial independence							
5	Women's image of themselves and other women							
6	Religion (fanaticism) versus secularism							
7	The push for diversity versus gender							
8	Women's representation in world politics							
9	Environmental issues (climate change)							
10	The economic crisis							

Empowerment Perception Barometer

Conference video ONLINE!
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acRd_BO6iUY

For articles towards next edition,
Contact: *Young Members Newsletter Editor*
Romilda (Romy)Boerleider
Romilda.Boerleider@gmail.com

What materials are used in the newsletter?

Any material is acceptable. Feel free to share your thoughts with other young members.

Experiences of a United States Young Member at the Conference – Nicole Nelson

“The IFUW conference in Mexico City was the first that I have ever attended. When I first arrived...I have to be honest and say that it was quite intimidating. There are so many accomplished women in this organization and I felt very young and overwhelmed. However, after taking some time to meet with many of the members this feeling quickly subsided. The young members meetings were also incredibly helpful. It made meeting people very easy and I felt that I had a place at the conference. In attending many workshops I found the conference to be very eye-opening. There was so much that I learned from different NFAs.



“Additionally, it was pretty fascinating to see that many of the countries face similar issues. The new member workshop was especially interesting in that the presenters had compiled information as to what members around the world felt were the most important issues facing girls and women. Many of the new members, including myself felt that we had lots to contribute. From

(what I heard) it sounds like there is a big push for young members to join and stay in IFUW. That was refreshing to hear for me and the other young members as we began planning projects and activities for upcoming year. Overall, it was a very memorable experience and I hope that I will be able to participate in the next conference in Turkey in 2013.”

Nicole Nelson (Minneapolis) is a first year member of WG-USA and participated in the Young Members Programme, the Pre-Conference Workshop and presented one of the three WG-USA workshops.

Women, Lifestyle and Climate Change: Compromise for Planetary Survival

IFUW Conference Mexico 2010

By Martine Cashell-Smith and Siân Halcrow, Otago (New Zealand) Young Members

Co-ordinating a workshop at an IFUW Conference is a very rewarding way to participate. After running a workshop on Work-Life Balance (complete with a one month old baby in my arms) at the 2004 Perth IFUW Conference and really enjoying the experience, I couldn't resist the temptation when the call for workshops proposals was made last year for the 2010 Mexico IFUW Conference. Together with Siân Halcrow (a fellow Otago, New Zealand Branch member) and Jessica North (an independent IFUW member presently based in Sydney), we decided to follow a mutual interest in how women can improve their sustainable living. Jessica was already challenging her lifestyle by making major changes such as selling the family car and relying solely on walking and public transport, while Siân and I were interested in change but were still at a more initial stage (using reusable bags, reducing consumption, composting and such).

Siân introduced us to the concept of the World Café conversational process. This method was ideal for an international, interactive workshop such as ours. The World Café



conversational process is described *as an innovative yet simple methodology for hosting conversations about questions that matter. These conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into the questions or issues that are most important in their life, work, or community. As a process, the World Café can evoke and make*

visible the collective intelligence of any group, thus increasing people's capacity for effective action in pursuit of common aims (<http://www.theworldcafe.com/>). Using this structure, our ideas flowed freely and we came up with a plan for our workshop, which we were all happy with.

A few months after our workshop was accepted we received the wonderful news that Jessica was pregnant. However, her due date meant that she would be unable to travel to Mexico for the workshop. Not one to let such things stand in her path, Jessica offered to present a keynote speech for the workshop via video. This had the added benefit of

illustrating how people can still be involved in international conferences without clocking up carbon miles.

Upon arriving at the IFUW Conference and receiving our conference programmes, we



had some initial trepidation about the news that our workshop was to be translated live into Spanish. We didn't know how that would work for such an interactive, group orientated workshop.

However, yet again, what initially seemed a hiccup turned into one of the highlights of our workshop! The translators were brilliant. They provided our Spanish speakers with headsets through which they translated immediately what was being said. When we moved into groups for discussion the Spanish speakers handed over their headsets to the English speaking group members so that we could hear a translation of



what the Spanish speakers were telling us. This opportunity to hear more from the women from our host country was invaluable and everyone felt the connection as we discovered that we had issues in common.

Upon arrival, participants were told to put away their notepaper. This was to be a paper-free workshop! We provided cotton bags, table cloths and fabric pens for writing down ideas and thoughts.

After our introduction and Jessica's keynote speech (via video) we moved over to the tables for our group discussion. Each table had a facilitator who encouraged contribution from all participants at their table. As the participants moved around the tables they stayed with the same group of women and built on the last group's ideas. The room was buzzing as women shared ideas for eco-changes and associated challenges for themselves, their Branches and their NFAs. A woman from India shared with her group how the poor in India collect dead flowers from temples which they turn into compost and sell enabling further flowers to be grown. A later group coming to this table included a Mexican woman who picked up on this idea and plans to implement it at her local church. Some of the Mexican women spoke about water shortages in their country and the lengths they went to in conserving water. Consequently, those of us visiting from overseas ensured that we kept our showers short while in Mexico (a reminder to be a sustainable tourist). Ideas for eco-change at Branch and NFA level were shared with some participants planning to investigate email newsletters (to reduce paper usage) and composting of tea bags among other ideas.

We came together at the end to share our ideas. These thoughts have been recorded on tablecloths. Our next step is the distribution of the ideas generated via the IFUW Environmental network. We would like to apologize about the delay in this happening but one of the tablecloths went on voyages of its own!

The table cloths and bags drew a lot of attention over the next few days. Consequently, we would like to think that the messages discussed about eco-change have gone further than just the participants in our workshop.

The experience of running this workshop was amazing! We certainly made a lot of new friends and we feel excited about the ideas which were generated within it. We strongly urge Young Members to consider running a workshop at the IFUW 2013 Conference in Turkey.

We would like to thank:

- the Otago Branch for the funding which enabled us to attend the IFUW Conference and to purchase the cotton bags, tablecloths and fabric pens for the workshop.
- Angela Clark and Michelle Imison for helping as table facilitators.
- all our participants for their interest and enthusiasm!

Martine Cashell-Smith and Siân Halcrow

Angela Clark is one of our Young members who recently received an award for her Ph.D research. She was asked to share her knowledge on this topic with us.



I am a bioarchaeologist. I study human bones from past and prehistoric contexts to determine how these people and populations lived, their quality of life and gain some insight into the biological and socio-cultural development of our species. I aspired to work with human remains from a young age, and I have been fulfilling my vocation for a while now. After completing a Master of Science in Human Osteology and Paleopathology –

human remains and ancient diseases – I travelled across the globe gaining many personal and professional experiences. From my travels, I ended up moving to New Zealand in June 2009 to embark on a PhD. My research focuses on prehistoric human remains from an archaeological site in Thailand during the period of the intensification of rice agriculture. We have recovered nearly 700 skeletons from Ban Non Wat, in Northeast Thailand, from the Neolithic period (1750 – 1050 B.C), the Bronze Age (1050 – 420 B.C) and the Iron Age (420 B.C – A.D 500).

I specifically examine the adult skeletons, looking at the differences in size and shapes between the males and females. This, level of sexual dimorphism, in a population, has particularly been a great interest of mine in bioarchaeology, and has not yet been intensively studied in prehistoric Southeast Asia. My overall research aim is to assess how the level of sexual dimorphism in height relates to the health status of the prehistoric people from Ban Non Wat.

Our lives leave traces on the skeleton that bioarchaeologists can interpret thousands of years later. To determine what kind of childhood these adults lived through, I look at the teeth. When our adult teeth are forming during childhood, the enamel is formed in layers, like the rings of a tree. If our bodies become severely stressed from malnutrition, lack of certain nutrients, ill health such as a severe infection or disease, and even from psychological or emotional damage, our enamel stops forming properly. These different types of stresses result in an enamel defect; the most common form of defect is a linear enamel hypoplasia, which is a visible groove or line. Once teeth are formed the enamel does not regenerate itself, like bone can, so this defect is visible throughout life and thousands of years after death, it tells bioarchaeologists a story of their life. I also look at the height of the individual, which we can estimate using the length of the long bone in the thigh. Stature, or height, is another way in which we interpret the health and quality

of life during childhood, as your maximum height is a result, not only of your genetic potential but also of the environment in which you grew up. By assessing the changes of enamel defects and stature over a long time period, of nearly two thousand years, from one archaeological population, I can interpret a changing socio-cultural environment associated with the intensification of rice agriculture. I would like to understand how the females of the population were treated compared to males, if they had equal access to nutritional resources, if their sex impacted the way society treated them, and if the treatment of females changed over time.

I answered some of these questions based on my initial results from a pilot study during a presentation at the 18th European Palaeopathology Association Conference, in Vienna, Austria in late August this year, where over three hundred people attended. My podium presentation was entitled “*Testing the Relationship between Sexual Dimorphism and Health Status in Early Prehistoric Southeast Asia*”. My presentation questioned standardised hypotheses regarding sexual dimorphism and the intensification of agriculture, as most research is conducted based on populations from the Americas and Europe, some of the theories do not apply to what we are seeing in Southeast Asia. I found that the females are getting taller through time, whereas, male stature is not changing. The people were not severely stressed in the Bronze Age compared to the Neolithic, but males had a less stressful childhood than females in both periods. I suggest that this evidence, combined with other work conducted by my research group at the University of Otago, that females are treated more equally to males in the Bronze Age compared to the earlier Neolithic. However, another reason could be that there was a migration of females to the site who grew up somewhere else and these women may have been genetically taller or had better environmental conditions for growth and development. The main aspect which I love about my research, is that life is not always black and white, we do so many things in our own lifetimes that impact our skeleton and I rise to the challenge of figuring these out.

I was fortunate enough to receive the Eve Cockburn Student Award for Outstanding Podium Presentation during this conference. It gave me great pleasure to receive this award and have the opportunity to share my thoughts and research with the wider academic community, as well as put my research group at the University of Otago in New Zealand more firmly on the map. Fifteen podium presentations were entered in the Cockburn Student Award competition, and it was the first time the award was presented at a European meeting. My supervisors, Dr. Nancy Tayles and Dr. Siân Halcrow deserve a special mention for their support and encouragement in my research project. I am sincerely grateful for my local Otago Branch of the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women and the Department of Anatomy & Structural Biology, University of Otago for providing me with the financial support to attend the conference in Vienna.

*Submitted by Angela Clark [angela.clark@anatomy.otago.ac.nz]
PhD Student in Biological Anthropology, Department of Anatomy & Structural Biology
University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Angela is also the Branch Secretary for the
local Otago Branch of the NZFGW, and of course, a Young Member.*