

NAWO @ WRC  
Ground Floor East  
33-41 Dallington Street  
London  
EC1V 0BB  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7324  
3045  
info@nawo.org.uk  
www.nawo.org.uk

Registered Charity:  
803701



E - BULLETIN

May, 2012

May ISSUE

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## Letter from NAWO's Chair, Annette Lawson

Dear Members and Friends,

### Congratulations to Mumtaz!

I am writing this while sitting in Syracuse, NY where the race for next president of the USA already seems to be underway. Meanwhile and much closer to home in local elections, we in NAWO are proud and delighted that our very own Mumtaz Rahim, our Hon. Secretary who joined us through the Hertfordshire Asian Women's Association and now represents the St Alban's Interfaith Group, was successful in being elected to the Council of St Albans! It was a tough seat for her to win and this success makes her the first Muslim woman to become a councillor there. We congratulate her and wish her every success with her policy plans for St Albans!

### CSW56 – no Agreed Conclusions

By now you probably have heard that for the second time only in its history since 1946, the Commission on the Status of Women failed to agree an Outcome Document. This is a very serious issue especially for rural women the world over whose cause, needs and concerns was the central theme of the session. It happened because there was a push from too many governments, supported by a number of NGOs, seeking to undermine language in existing and agreed text back to pre-

Beijing times especially on issues to do with women's reproductive health and services. The EU always stands its ground on this – no retrogressive language – hard often to hold the line but so far it has mainly been a successful strategy.

Now we are even more worried about next year – CSW57 - when the central topic is **Violence Against Women and Girls**. There is likely to be an even greater thrust from right wing and fundamentalist religious NGOs and governments rejecting progressive text.

### NAWO in the Steering Group for CSW56

NAWO has been a member of the CSW56 Steering Group established in response to a request from the GEO to liaise with them and with other NGOs pre, during and after CSW. That group will probably disband shortly after a meeting of some 8 or so representatives of the group with the Minister, Lynne Featherstone on May 10<sup>th</sup>. NAWO drafted the document which has been developed by members of the group that has now gone to the Minister making recommendations for next year. We will feed back to you what emerges from that meeting (Zarin Hainsworth, NAWO Trustee, is among those attending).

### **Think Global: Act Local – bring the UN home**

Now NAWO plans to hold a number of meetings around the country to help women know about and understand the importance of UN conventions, agreements and meetings and to prepare especially for CSW57. We hope to encourage ways in which women can use these instruments – European ones as well – to forward their own aims locally. Would you like to partner a meeting in your area? Let us know. Help us raise funding for these meetings too!

### **The European Women’s Lobby**

NAWO represents England on the UK Joint Committee of Women and, with the three other organisations – NIWEP from Northern Ireland, Engender, Scotland and the Women’s Equality Network, Wales (WENWales) - we bring EWL’s programme home to you and vice versa, seek to represent UK women on the Board of EWL. We have decided to keep Elizabeth Law from NIWEP, current Treasurer of EWL, in post for the UK for this session and to appoint Eleanor Davies from WENWales as her Alternate. If you receive the regular information on Europe from Janet Harris (NAWO’s past Hon. Secretary) you will have seen their regular news. [By the way, send an email to [Janet@j-dsolutions.co.uk](mailto:Janet@j-dsolutions.co.uk) if you would like her to add you to her mailing list.]

This is not a happy time for EWL and we are planning how best to help with their funding needs and the development of new statutes at the same time as continuing to seek our own sustainable future and probably change our constitution too.

### **Young Women**

We have been accrediting young women still at school (16-18) to CSW for the past two years where, together with some young men too, they have made impressive presentations on the issues. Furthermore they have brought these issues home and presented them again

– in front of the Minister for Women, Lynne Featherstone and at the House of Commons. We are strengthening our work with these young people – Zarin Hainsworth leads on this – and will be extending the group.

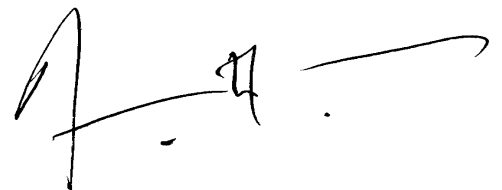
### **Older Women**

Of course this does not imply the importance of our work on older women’s rights and we have contributed to the CEDAW Shadow report through our member, Elizabeth Sclater, on this substantive topic about which there is almost nothing in the Government’s Report to CEDAW.

### **Funding**

We made an appeal in our December e-bulletin and also have spent important time developing a new strategic plan. Two wonderful individual women have made most generous donations and others have also sent smaller and valuable contributions. This has led us to understand we need to develop an individual donor list as well as continuing to seek funds from more traditional sources. We are delighted to welcome Janaki Allen who has volunteered to help with fund raising and we are looking forward to her plans.

You, our members, are as always central to any developments. Let us know what your current passions and concerns are and help us with fund raising if you can!



Annette Lawson, Chair

## NAWO supports Welsh Women's Aid in pursuit of strong sentences for Twitter rape apologists and hate mongers

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, Sheffield United and Wales striker Ched Evans was sentenced to 5 years in prison at Caernarfon Crown Court for the rape of a 19 year old woman. Immediately following the conviction a social media storm erupted, as men and women alike took to Twitter in order to show their support for the footballer; primarily through abusing the victim.

With the hash tag #justiceforched doing the rounds, and vicious statements like "This girl is a liar [sic] and a slag and has wrecked someone's life ched is innocent #justiceforched" the matter was made much worse when Sky News accidentally released the victim's name when reporting on the abuse. Photographs were discovered and the victim's trauma was compounded by the personal abuse of thousands anonymous individuals.

In response to this outrageous display of abuse, Welsh Women's Aid wrote a letter addressed to the North Wales Police, the Senior Crown Prosecutor for CPS Wales and Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve QC, Attorney General. NAWO, alongside other women's organisations signed the letter in support.

They praised both Judge Merfyn Hughes QC for acknowledging that the victim was unable to consent due to high levels of intoxication and Nita Dowel of the Crown Prosecution Service in Wales, who stated 'being vulnerable through drink and drugs does not imply consent'. Their very public support and praise for the 19 year old victim sent a strong, positive message that the judicial system understood, and would support, other women who have been assaulted under similar circumstances. With a 6.5 per cent conviction rate for rape, and an estimated 11 per cent of victims actually making a formal complaint to the police, this type of exposure encourages women to come forward and get the help they are entitled to.

However, all of that work was immediately undone by the casual malice of people joining what are considered safe and anonymous bandwagons on social media sites, then conflated by the incompetence of a respected news broadcaster. Encouraged by the promise of North Wales Police that they would take action in defence of the victim, they stated **"We are writing to urge you to take the strongest possible action against those who have breached the victim's anonymity and abused her online"**.

The reaction of North Wales Police, lead by Detective Sergeant Bob Halford, has been extremely encouraging. So far 13 arrests have been made, with 9 other people being bailed pending further inquiries. Most are under suspicion of making malicious communication under Section 5 of the Sexual Offences Amendments Acts, with further arrests expected.

Yet the controversy is set to rumble on. As well as Ched Evans' intention to appeal his sentence, an online petition has been set up by secondary school teacher Leo Hardt contesting the player's inclusion in the Professional Footballer's Association (PFA) Honours List. Despite their defence, stating how "That was a football judgment by his fellow professionals, it was not a moral judgment and in no way does the PFA condone the offence for which he was convicted" many other, like Hardt, feel it sends out a "very troubling message". At the moment the petition stands at roughly 20,000 names, and you can add yours to it by clicking [here](#). Show your support for Welsh Women's Aid, and the victim, by standing up against abuse.

Click [here](#) to read the statement made by Welsh Women's Aid.

## Women's library under threat!

The award winning Women's Library located at the London Metropolitan University has been threatened with running either a skeletal service, or a change of premises as part of a budgetary overhaul. The Vice Chancellor of the university, Malcolm Gillies, said in a statement that the university recognised the library as "an absolutely crucial national and international collection" but because many of the visitors came from mainly outside the university and given the "squeeze on spending everywhere" the university had to prioritise services for its students. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) Library Collections are also under threat.

The Women's Library is considered an integral resource, documenting the struggle for women's suffrage from the very beginning. Alongside first editions of seminal feminist texts, like *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft, there is a collection of documents that were selected to represent the outstanding heritage of the United Kingdom, on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register. Of particular interest is the 1866 petition which enabled John Stuart Mill to be the first person in Parliament to call for women's suffrage, as well as a congratulatory letter from the Prime Minister to the leader of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and founder of the Women's Library-Millicent Fawcett, on the success of the *Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act of 1928* which finally granted women the vote. If the library is forced to run at its complete minimum, access to infinitely fascinating and important documents like these will be rendered extremely difficult.

Since the announcement from London Metropolitan University, there has been a very public outcry. A [Facebook](#)

[group](#), a [Twitter](#) account and an [online petition](#) that has already garnered nearly 10,000 signatures, have all taken off. Exposure from The Guardian newspaper and the BBC is testament to its significance. Within its award winning walls is the history of women's struggle for equality. The collection includes books, papers, banners and even more fascinating materials, such as the return train ticket purchased by Emily Davison, suggesting she may not have intended to die beneath the King's horse at the Epsom Derby in 1913.

The statement on their [website](#) makes perfectly clear the urgency. By December 2012, "they will be seeking a new home, custodian or sponsor" otherwise The Women's Library will only be allowed to open one day a week, for a three year period, thus compromising all of their other outreach activities. In 2006 The Women's Library won the Archive's Landmark Award for their work with East London schools, employing the archives as a way to explore and understand female lines and their place in history. If access is limited in the way being proposed, the opportunity to engage with an exciting and integral aspect of British, and Women's History, will be lost.

By Hayley Marshall

## 'Think Global, Act Local'

### NAWO's youth caucus brings the UN home

Earlier this year NAWO accredited members, including some very young women – girls aged 16-18, to attend the 56th session of CSW in New York. This is the second successive year in which NAWO with the help of Trustee, Zarin Faddei Hainsworth has accredited young men and women who have together carried out the relevant research (different themes in each year), produced extraordinary material for their presentations and put on side-events that have succeeded in making the older women watching gasp with amazement at the quality of each presentation and the expertise with which they presented.

This year's side event titled '**Funding the Rural Future**' held in the Baha'i International Offices included these young women with **Rachel Steen** presenting original research highlighting a key area for funding; **Kit Powell** reflecting on the importance of working with girls for a sustainable future and **Martha Saunders** addressing the need for gender sensitive budgeting and analysis. The interactive panel integrated speakers from Iraq, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Columbia as well as from the UK. Partnered by ADVANCE; Chipua (Tanzania); International Council of Jewish Women; Mothers Union; Naserian (Tanzania); Voice of a Woman; Widows Rights International; the Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq; and World YWCA, it was a most successful and well attended event.

Since CSW, this side event has been performed twice again in the UK as we firmly believe that it is not enough to go to the annual event and put on side events there – however impressive. We must bring the work back. We must disseminate the work. We must inform women and spread the word about how this can be used locally to change people's lives and improve them. Women can use these events to make decisions in their own interests.

These young women were joined by Holly Smith who shared her thoughts on how we need to reassess development and Iqan Fadaei who spoke about how reconceptualising power assists in re-shaping perception. This group of presentations were carried out at the Baha'i Centre in London in front of the Minister for Equalities with a special interest in gender, Lynne Featherstone, MP, and at the House of Commons under the auspices of Tom Brake, MP who works with Lynne Featherstone. They too, were immensely impressed.

The speakers, young as they are, have not only showed themselves unafraid to question UK government policy but also to attempt theoretical and difficult philosophical and sociological arguments about the nature of development and of power.

NAWO is immensely proud to have these wonderful young men and women as leading members of our Youth Caucus which we are rapidly developing. Young people – both girls and boys, young men and young women - feel barely acknowledged as a force with ideas of their own to be listened to and heeded in government policy or in local developments. They need to be an instrumental part of the Big Society and we need their voices in the continuing debate on women's access to their human rights and on gender equality which, alas, is far from a reality still, a fact to which they testify in moving ways.

**NAWO is currently in the process of developing our youth caucus, and organising a series of events to follow up our 'Think Global, Act Local' events on CSW. Watch this space!**

To read and comment on Martha and Kit's blog on CSW click here <http://commission-on-the-status-of-women.blogspot.com>

## 'A Women's Place is in Europe' NAWO's International Women's Day event



On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March more than 100 people gathered at Europe House for NAWO's international women's day event to mark its 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary.

Chair, Shirin Wheeler, presenter for the BBC, was joined by **Emma Reynolds**, MP, Shadow Europe Minister, **Mary Honeyball**, MEP (London, Lab), **Marina Yannakoudakis**, MEP (London, Cons) and **Heather McGregor**, Director of Taylor Bennett to consider 'A Women's Place is in Europe'. The panel discussed the EU contribution on women's equality on equal pay, the use of quotas as well as the way in which the economic crisis has effected expectations for women's equality.

All agreed that we are in a difficult economic situation which has disproportionately affected women. All noted that women are still not equal and all voiced that we have a long way to go in achieving this. Mary Honeyball and Emma Reynolds both advocated the use of quotas in enabling equal representation in the boardroom. This was met by a hostile response from both Marina Yannakoudakis and Heather McGregor who both argued that there is progress being made with women's representation in business but it is important to maintain a board room based on ability and not tokenism. When asked what alternative measures could be used, Heather McGregor, Founder of the 30 percent Club (for female representation on Boards), spoke of wanting not just Independent Directors on the Board but more CEOs who are women. This means continuing to increase the number of appointments at senior management levels which will, she argued, lead us to an increase of women in the top levels of business in future years.



Advocating using the term 'positive temporary measures' instead of quotas, Emma Reynolds noted that this kind of progress at the moment is too slow and positive discrimination is needed to ensure



This progress is made. The issue of choice was also discussed in which Mary Honeyball noted that it is 'important to remember that choice is not the same for women on lower incomes'

After a fruitful discussion, the floor was opened to the audience. A number of women noted that quotas need not be forever and it was a useful tool in increasing women's visibility at the top echelons of the business world. Annette Lawson (Chair of NAWO) discussed the importance of the women's movement in aiding this work and the continuing need for pressure from a vibrant women's sector, especially after the abolition of

the WNC. Others noted that the discussion should not just be focused on business but other areas of work such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, in which the majority of CEO's are women.

NAWO would like to thank Gergely Polner, Elisabeth Sweeny and Paola Buonadonna and all at Europe House for hosting the event and inviting us to partner them. Thanks to Shirin Wheeler, Emma Reynolds MP, Mary Honeyball MEP, Marina Yannakoudakis MEP and Heather McGregor for their insightful discussion at the event. We would also like to thank media partner, Women's Views on News. Thank you all for making the event such a great success. Next year will we have 30 percent or more representation of women in decision making??

### Welcome Julie, Zarin and Janaki!!!

NAWO is pleased to announce new additions to our board, **Julie Bindel** and **Zarin Hainsworth!**

**Julie** is a freelance journalist and political activist who's work regularly appears in the Guardian. She is the co-founder of the group Justice For Women, which opposes violence against women from a feminist viewpoint.

**Zarin** has been an activist on issues regarding women and girls for many years, has attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women since 2000, has been President of UNIFEM UK (now UN Women UK) and Chair of NAWO. She is currently trustee of Widows Rights International, Advance, Naserian and UN Permanent Rep to the UN on behalf of Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq. She runs her family business, Serene Communications which creates and delivers learning opportunities for personal and professional development.

We are also pleased to welcome **Janaki Allen**, who will be working with us as a fundraising consultant.

We also welcome our new media and communications inter **Hayley Marshall** who going to be working for us two days a week for the next couple of months!!

## Dates for your diary

### **Serene Communications Parliamentary Training** **Friday 18th May, 2012 9am-5:30pm** **London**

This is a special session organised for members of WRC in basic parliamentary lobbying skills. The course runs for a full day with light refreshments and lunch. A manual/tool kit is also provided as part of the course.

Cost for the day to cover costs = £25

Places are limited so book early to avoid disappointment

For more information please email: [angharad@serenecommunications.com](mailto:angharad@serenecommunications.com)

### **An Introduction to Social Investment: New Philanthropy Capital (NPC)** **Wednesday 23 May, 2012 -9.30am - 12.3-pm** **London**

An introduction to social investment, its uses and the main products. This is an opportunity to assess to what extent social investment might be appropriate to your charity.

**Cost:** £150

**For more information visit the website:** [http://www.philanthropycapital.org/how\\_we\\_help/training\\_and\\_events/social\\_investment.aspx?](http://www.philanthropycapital.org/how_we_help/training_and_events/social_investment.aspx?)

### **Run for Congo Women** **Sunday 3rd June, 2012** **Regents Park, London**

Be part of our 2012 Run for Congo Women team! Raise awareness and vital funds for women rebuilding their lives after the atrocities of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

100% of the money you raise will go directly to Women for Women International's programmes in DRC.

For more information of how to participate:

**Email:** [runforcongo.uk@womenforwomen.org](mailto:runforcongo.uk@womenforwomen.org)

**Phone:** 0207 922 7767

**Website:** <http://www.womenforwomen.org.uk/help-women/run-for-congo-women-london.php>



## Dates for your diary

### 1 Day Training

**Working with young people to address violence in teenage relationships**

**Thursday 21 June, 2012, 9:45 AM - 4:00 PM**

**London**

This very practical day will equip participants with a clear understanding of the key issues of abuse and violence in relationships and practically examine how drama techniques can be used to engage young people in these issues.

This training will:

- Give participants a theoretical understanding of issues such as different types of abuse, the excuses perpetrators give and the pressures on victims to stay in abusive relationships through our gendered model
- Practically explore exercises that can be used to engage young people
- Explore how the activities can be applied in a variety of youth settings, and learn effective techniques for engaging and encouraging young people to participate
- Trouble shoot particular barriers participants have encountered when carrying out this kind of violence prevention work

The day is aimed at professionals working directly with young people. Participants do not need to have previous experience of drama or theatre to take part in the day.

To request a booking form or some more information please contact **Jake Tily** on **0207 431 7278** or email [jake@tender.org.uk](mailto:jake@tender.org.uk)

### Household Food Security in the Global North: Challenges and Responsibilities

**Friday 6th July, 2012**

**Humanities Building, University of Warwick**

The one day conference will include formal presentations, panel and group discussions, and lunch

For further information, registration and, for those wishing to offer brief contributions, submission of a 200 word maximum abstract, **please register online at:** [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross\\_fac/gpp/foodsecurity/publicevents/householdfoodsecurity/registration](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/gpp/foodsecurity/publicevents/householdfoodsecurity/registration)

For enquiries please e-mail: [c.Barratt@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:c.Barratt@warwick.ac.uk)

# Call for Papers

## Feminism in Academia: An Age of Austerity?

Friday 28th September, 2012

The University of Nottingham

The current age of austerity is posing significant challenges to feminist scholarship within academia. Recent government funding cuts to higher education are jeopardising the future of research in the arts and humanities more broadly, but the decline of centres, institutes and courses devoted to gender and women's studies has the potential to threaten the future of feminism in the academy. The increasingly competitive environment of employment in higher education is generating divisions and inequalities which put pressure upon the networks of support, co-operation and community which have been integral to feminist research, teaching and practice.

This collaborative event between the FWSA and CWWA aims to provide a multi-disciplinary forum to address such issues:

- In what ways are these changes affecting our work and lives? What potential is there to resist these narratives of decline?
- How might feminist teaching, research, theory and activism engage with and combat such challenges?

Featuring a selection of keynote speakers, round table discussions and early career workshops, **'Feminism in Academia: An Age of Austerity'** invites papers which examine 'austerity' in the broadest sense of the term. Topics for papers might include, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- The impact of the age of austerity upon women's and feminist writing, art and performance
- Theoretical perspectives and discourses on austerity in feminism, past and present
- Teaching/researching feminism and women's writing in the age of austerity
- Resistance to narratives of decline in the age of austerity
- The challenges posed to 'sisterhood' in the current academic environment
- Bridging the gap between postgraduate/early career feminist researchers and established scholars.
- Postcolonial, queer, and/or differently abled responses to the age of austerity in feminist research.
- Historical, political and sociological responses to the age of austerity in feminist research.
- Exploring alternative futures for feminism in the academy.
- Strategies of resistance to the marginalisation of feminist research.
- Feminist activism, education and the age of austerity.
- Encouraging the next generation of feminist scholars; challenges and prospects for postgraduate research

Please send **300 word abstracts** for **twenty-minute papers** to the event organisers **Claire O'Callaghan** and **Helen Davies** at [feminismandausterityconference@gmail.com](mailto:feminismandausterityconference@gmail.com) by **11th May 2012**.

Further information on this event can be found at: <http://feminismandausterity.com>

# Vacancies

## **The Judith Trust Volunteer Interviewer**

The Judith Trust vision is that all people with learning disabilities and mental ill-health will be emotionally, socially and physically included into their communities in particular and society in general. The Inclusion Campaign works with synagogues and other Jewish organisations to develop inclusion of people with learning disabilities and/or mental ill-health, and their families and carers, in Jewish community life.

We are carrying out an independent evaluation of the first year of the Inclusion Campaign.

### **The Role:**

We are looking for a volunteer to carry out and record approximately 10 interviews with people who have been involved in the project. Most of these would be done on the phone.

We estimate this will take up to 20 hours and would need to be done by 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

### **You will:**

- Meet with the Inclusion Campaign Project Officer before starting and at the end of the project period
- Contact the interviewees to arrange mutually convenient time to interview them by phone
- Arrange face-to-face interviews with 1 or 2 people with learning disabilities; they will be supported by carers
- Carry out the interviews, following the questionnaire but also using your initiative to elicit a greater depth of response
- Make a written record of the interview responses

### **The Judith Trust will:**

- Meet with you to explain the project and the purpose of the interviews
- Provide you with an interview questionnaire
- Provide you with a list of people who have agreed to be interviewed
- Provide support as needed during the interview period
- Pay for your travel expenses where you need to attend meetings or do face-to-face interviews

For more information please contact [sharondaniels@judithtrust.org.uk](mailto:sharondaniels@judithtrust.org.uk), or call 07716 723 460