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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency in November this year released the inaugural findings from comprehensive gender data provided by Australian employers. This world-leading dataset paints the most comprehensive picture of gender equality in workplaces Australia has ever seen. This picture, however, indicates that there is yet so much more work to be done to achieve gender equality in workplaces. Overall, the Agency's dataset indicates employers are not taking a strategic approach to gender equality. Below is a summation of some of the key findings in all industries:

- The representation of women steadily declines when moving up the management levels, with women comprising only 26.1% of key management personnel (KMP) positions, and 17.3% of CEO positions.
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- One-third (33.5%) of employers have no KMPs who are women, and 31.3% of organisations have no 'other executives / general managers' who are women.
- Less than one in 10 (8.8%) organisations have set a target to lift the number of women around the boardroom table despite only 23.7% of directorships being held by women, and just 12.0% of chairs being women.
- 19.9% the gender pay gap – full-time base remuneration
- 24.7% the gender pay gap – full-time total remuneration
- Only 13.6% of employers have a strategy for flexible working and only 13.2% of employers have a strategy to support employees with family or caring responsibilities.
- Less than one in four employers have conducted a gender remuneration gap analysis to check for potential pay equity issues.
- Only 7.1% of employers have a standalone overall gender equality strategy.

The full report is at https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-14_summary_report_website.pdf

WGEA at www.wgea.gov.au has made available a number of avenues and resources to assist reporting organisations and organisational leaders improve gender equality in workplaces:

Reporting organisations can access their customised confidential benchmark reports via www.wgea.gov.au by logging into the online portal using their AUSkey, where they can choose up to 12 comparison groups with which to compare their organisation's performance.

- The Gender strategy toolkit provides a framework for achieving gender equality in workplaces, leveraging an organisation's benchmark report.
- The Guide to gender pay equity outlines six steps to improving pay equity in workplaces, and is accompanied by a gender pay gap calculator.
- The Gender target-setting toolkit which assists organisations to set targets.

2014 has also brought some other disappointments, as noted by Professor Gillian Triggs, President of the Australian Human Rights Commission in her speech honouring recipients of the 2014 Australian Human Rights Award:

"We continue to have over 5,500 asylum seekers in mandatory and indefinite detention, including over 730 children, and the claims of 31,000 asylum seekers to refugee status have yet to be assessed. The good news is that with the recent agreement to TPVs many of the children will finally be released over the coming weeks. In this very fortunate country we continue to struggle with poverty, (especially among our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders), disproportionately high indigenous imprisonment rates, especially among young aboriginals, prison detention for those with mental illness or disability who are unfit to plead to criminal charges and who often lack of access to justice, and of course the widespread consequences of domestic violence."

This edition features the powerful speech given by Julian Burnside upon receiving the Sydney Peace Prize with thought provoking reflections and insights about our direction as a nation: "Just as a person's character is judged by their conduct, so a country's character is judged by its conduct. Australia is now judged overseas by its behaviour as cruel and selfish. We treat frightened, innocent people as criminals. It is a profound injustice."

Also featured in this edition is the work of some extraordinary women leaders who continue to face significant challenges, but are persisting in navigating these challenges with innovation and courage. It also highlights the initiatives of women who are providing pathways to empower young girls and women.

Authored by Shyam Pokharel, Director, SASANE, the story of Pushpa and Ganga who both received paralegal training from SASANE, an organisation in Nepal, established by former female victims of human trafficking to increase women's access to justice and achieve systemic change within the legal system, is moving and inspirational. It portrays the extreme disadvantage girls and women face in Nepal and echoes consequences of the interaction between gender, poverty, power, subordination and exploitation.

SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE WINNER

JULIAN BURNSIDE AO QC



On Wednesday 5 November 2014, the Hon Professor Marie Bashir, former Governor of NSW, presented Julian Burnside AO QC with the 2014 Sydney Peace Prize, Australia's only international prize for peace.

Below is a transcript of the speech, "Without justice there will be not be peace" which Julian Burnside delivered.

It is reproduced with his permission.

SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE Speech by Julian Burnside AO QC

Without justice there will be not be peace.

[Bits in gray are bits I had written but either skipped or paraphrased on the night, in the interests of time]

Despite the wealth of this country there are many injustices – needless, pointless injustices. The point of my talk tonight – my plea to you all - is simple: do not tolerate injustice – speak against injustice – do not collaborate with those who inflict injustice.

It will not surprise anyone to know that I will focus tonight on injustice to refugees. It is one of the great, wilful injustices which runs like a poison in the Australian body politic. Not all refugees. Just a select group: the boat people.

But injustice to boat people is not the only available example. Most marginalised groups in Australian society will experience injustice in ways most of us are spared: the homeless, the elderly, those with a mental disability, the original inhabitants of this vast country.

The reason for injustices like these is not hard to find, but it is a paradox. Most Australians, if asked, would say that human rights are important. But we knew about the Stolen Generations for decades, and accepted the facts without protest.

We knew for years that two Australians, David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib, were being held in shocking conditions in Guantanamo Bay by our ally, the USA, without charge and without trial. For years very few Australians seemed concerned by this.

We know – or perhaps we choose not to know – that there are about 100,000 homeless people

in Australia. Most of us do not pause to wonder what that is like.

In early 2010 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced, peremptorily, that Australia would not have a Bill of Rights. This, notwithstanding that the Brennan enquiry had recommended that we should have one. Rudd's rejection of a Bill of Rights caused very little concern in the community. Not only is Australia the only Western democracy not to have coherent human rights protection, we are the only country in the world which has turned its mind to a Bill of Rights in the 21st century and decided not to have one.

We have known for years that people fleeing persecution, who risk their lives at sea to get here and ask for protection, are locked up for months or years despite the fact that they have committed no offence.

The low-point of our attitude to asylum seekers (so far, at least) was reached during the 2013 Federal election. Both major parties courted political favour by promising cruelty to boat people. It is a measure of our times that promising cruelty to a group of human beings could attract political support: it is a fair bet that promising cruelty to animals would not have worked in quite the same way.

All these things are impossible to square with a genuine belief that human rights matter. The truth, I suspect, is this: when most Australians say that human rights matter, what they really mean is that their human rights matter; that the human rights of their family and friends and neighbours matter. But when it comes to those seen as "other": those who are feared or despised or otherwise too different from us – their human rights do not matter in the same way.

Ultimately, our attitude to all these people – our ability to be indifferent to their plight – rests on a belief that their humanity is not of the same quality as our own. The ease with which this position is adopted is apt to conceal how profoundly wrong and dangerous it is.

What many Australians, and most of our politicians, apparently do not understand is that you do not have human rights because you are white or Christian or pleasant or rich, but because you are human. This inability to understand the true foundation of human rights probably explains Australia's incoherent response to human rights abuses.

It probably explains Australia's ambivalent attitude to the equal treatment of women. Until recently, women were an underclass: a group whose humanity was not quite equal to men's. It is a matter of living memory when married women could not hold jobs in some government instrumentalities and could not get a home loan. Things have improved since the 1960s but, despite the efforts of the feminists since then, women are still not accorded the equal status to which they are undoubtedly entitled. In July this year Joy McCann and Janet Wilson reported that:

- Across Australia, women are still significantly under-represented in parliament and executive government, comprising less than one-third of all parliamentarians and one-fifth of all ministers.
- Internationally, Australia's ranking for women in national government continues to decline when compared with other countries.

If the position were reversed, the cries of "injustice" would be deafening. But look at the make-up of the current Federal Cabinet, and note how it is defended against criticism. Before I turn to my major theme, let me make one thing clear: the views I express tonight are not – emphatically not – a reflection of political partisanship. I do not adhere to any political party (despite what some of my critics seem to think). While I hesitate to say it on the day of Gough Whitlam's memorial service, I did not vote for him. But I admired him, and my

admiration has grown over the years as the memory of his administrative shortcomings is overshadowed by the scope of his vision. I can say, without the burden of partisan connection, that Whitlam was a Colossus, but a survey of today's political landscape shows that we are led by midjets. "Led" may not be the right word. We have not seen a political leader in Australia for decades.

After Malcolm Fraser engineered the dismissal of the Whitlam government, he faced the problem of refugees fleeing Vietnam and Cambodia. He thought that, as Australia had been part of the problem which caused them to flee, it should be part of the solution. He wanted to bring them to Australia. But they were fleeing a Communist regime, and Whitlam was at first not inclined to agree: he was famously blunt on the question. After all, Labor was a party of the Left back then, and people fleeing Communism would not be inclined to support a party of the Left. But he eventually agreed on a bi-partisan response and Australia resettled about 100,000 Indo-Chinese boat people over the course of a few years. We benefitted; they benefitted; the sky did not fall in.

These days, there are three streams of refugees who come to Australia.

First, those who come in the off-shore resettlement programme. Each year we select people held in refugee camps in other countries and bring them to Australia. It is a fine and noble thing. Not every country does it. It is something we can be proud of.

Second, there are people who come here by aeroplane. To be a "plane person" you have to be able to get a passport from your own country and a visa to Australia. This is easier said than done. A stateless person can't get a passport at all, because no country recognizes them as its citizen. Persecuted minorities often can't get a passport: just another aspect of government persecution. But if you are lucky, if you can get a passport and a visa to Australia (for tourism, business or study etc.) then you will be able to board a plane. And when you clear passport control in Australia you can apply for protection. When your initial visa runs out, you will get a bridging visa to tide you over until your refugee claim is eventually decided.

But if you can't get a passport, or if you can't get a visa to come to Australia, then you have no means of escape except by getting on a people-smuggler's boat.

Australia's response to these groups is interesting – but also puzzling. Many people are unaware of our off-shore resettlement program. Most people are entirely untroubled by the aeroplane people – thousands of them – living quietly in the community on bridging visas. Most people seem deeply concerned about boat people. They have been induced to see boat people as a threat.

Australians have a deep concern about boat people: a concern which stands trembling at the frontier which paranoia shares with delusion. Boat people who manage to get to Australia are mistreated in every possible way.

It started in August 2001. John Howard was looking for an opportunity to take a stand against the arrival of boat people. By the middle of 2001, the arrival rate of boat people was about 4,000 people per year. This is a trivial number by any measure. Our migration intake is something like 200,000 people each year.

But Howard was aware that Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party was poaching Liberal supporters and he realized that a tough response to boat people could work politically.

On the 26th August, 2001 The Palapa (a small, dilapidated boat carrying Afghan Hazara asylum seekers) was heading across the Indian Ocean from Indonesia towards Christmas Island. The boat began to disintegrate. A Norwegian cargo vessel, the Tampa, was asked by Australia to go to the aid of the Palapa. It did. Captain Arne Rinnan thought that the boat might be carrying 40 or 50 people. In fact, 438 people clambered up the rope ladder from the disintegrating Palapa onto the steel deck of the Tampa.

A number of the people rescued by Tampa were in weakened states of health and the Tampa was licensed to carry just 50 people. It headed in the direction of Christmas Island so it could put the asylum seekers ashore.

The Howard Government ordered the Tampa not to enter Australian waters. The Captain of the Tampa defied the order and steamed into Australian territorial waters off Christmas Island, and into Australian history. The Howard Government sent out the SAS, who took command of the bridge at gunpoint. The "Tampa episode" had begun.

When John Howard went into the House of Representatives to give a speech explaining his stance on Tampa he was approached in the lobby by Jackie Kelly, the Liberal MP for Lindsay in Western Sydney. She explained to him that she was losing supporters to One Nation. Howard is reported to have waved his Tampa speech at her and said "Don't worry, this will fix it".

In the meantime, litigation had begun in the Federal Court of Australia to try and resolve the impasse. Here were 438 rescued Afghans being held hostage on the steel deck of a ship in the tropical sun. Litigation began on the evening of Friday, 30th August, 2001. Counsel for the Government asked that the trial of the action begin the next day. The trial started on Saturday and ran five days. Justice North reserved his decision on Wednesday 5 September. He delivered judgment at 2.15 pm (Melbourne time) on the 11th September, 2001. Just hours later, the attack on America happened and the world changed.

Suddenly there were no Muslims, just Muslim terrorists. Suddenly, there were not boat people but Muslim boat people; suddenly, there were not terrified Hazaras fleeing the Taliban but suspected Muslim terrorists.

This raises a question about the unintended consequences of some of our anti-terror legislation. In short, is the price worth the cost? Talk of terrorism is now always talk of Islamic terrorism. The careless public, worried by ambiguous government messages, inflamed by talkback radio hosts, think all terrorists are Muslims therefore all Muslims are terrorists. The premise is wrong – remember Northern Ireland; remember the Red Brigade in Germany, remember Gujarat Province in India, remember the Gunpowder Plot.

The message is profoundly foolish and it is profoundly dangerous. Almost all Muslims deplore terrorism, nevertheless the threat of terrorism – statistically minimal though it is – has been used by Governments here and overseas to justify dramatic restrictions of basic democratic freedoms.

What the public overlook is that most refugees are fleeing the same extremists we fear. But the politicians recognise that you can gain political support by making the public think you are protecting them from a great threat. The fear of terrorism can be a vote-winner; exaggerating the risk of terrorism generates political advantage.

In response to Tampa and September 11, the Howard Government PR machine started describing boat people as "illegals" and "queue-jumpers". Later that year, the false suggestion was put forward that one group of boat people had thrown their children overboard.

Australia had entered a new stage of demonising boat people. In the wake of the Tampa episode, Australia reached an arrangement with the Government of Nauru to warehouse boat people there, with the promise that they would "never be settled in Australia". The history of the Pacific Solution is well-known. By the time Kevin Rudd's Labor Party

was elected to office in late 2007, there were virtually no refugee boats arriving in Australia. While it is true that the Rudd Government introduced sweeping reforms to the treatment of asylum seekers in July 2008, in retrospect it is difficult not to see it as a cynical nod to that group of Australians who thought that mistreating asylum seekers was a bad idea: at the time of the Rudd reforms, in which he promised to treat boat people decently, the fact is that there were no boat people coming. The promise amounted to nothing more than saying that “as long as you aren’t coming here we’ll promise to treat you decently”.

Some time later, Tony Abbott took over leadership of the Coalition, and started criticising the Rudd government for the fact that refugee boats were reaching Australia. Rudd changed his stance and launched a ferocious attack on people smugglers. He seems to have forgotten that his moral hero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, was also a people smuggler (albeit a goodhearted one). It is true that refugee boats had started arriving again; it is true that boat people arrived during the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Prime Ministership. It is a quite separate question whether we should be concerned about the arrival of boat people: more than 90% of them turn out, on assessment by us, to be refugees legally entitled to protection.

It is not hard to make the argument that we are improved as a country if we treat people decently who have the courage and the initiative to risk their lives escaping persecution. It is very difficult to make the argument that we are improved as a country if we are deliberately cruel to innocent people.

“Stop the boats” has become the mantra by which our government would be judged. Of course, the boats have not stopped setting out, so “stop the boats” came to mean “stop the boats arriving”. Morrison and Abbott are thrilled to be able to tell us that they have stopped the boats. But even if it is gratifying to say that you have achieved a three word slogan, it is not self-evident that the endeavour should be hailed a success.

Stopping refugee boats arriving is not a self-evident good. It might stop people drowning inconveniently in view of Australians at Christmas Island. But if they do not get on a boat and are, instead, killed by the Taliban, they are just as dead as if they drowned. The real difference is that our conscience is not troubled by their un-noted death somewhere else. It is worth remembering that boat people are, by definition, people with enough initiative to take steps to escape persecution, and enough courage to risk their lives at sea. And they are fleeing the same extremists we are fighting in the Middle East. So what’s not to like about them? Stopping the boats prevents our society from receiving people who are brave and determined.

The largest number of boat people ever to arrive in Australia in modern times came in 2012, when a total of just over 24,000 people arrived on our shores seeking asylum. No matter how you look at it, it’s hard to see this as a big number. Our average annual intake of permanent new migrants is about 200,000 a year; the average number of people who arrive in Australia carrying passports and visas is between four and five million per year – mostly for tourism, business or study.

These comparisons are important. Initially, the politicians spoke of boat people as a problem of “border control”. If five million people come into Australia each year with visas, the arrival of 24,000 people without visas represents a “failure” of border control of less than one-half of 1%.

When I was at school, a score of 99.5% was quite a good result. But the Coalition repeatedly criticised it as a “failure of border control”.

The Coalition persisted in calling boat people “illegals” and “queue-jumpers”. When it won office in September 2013, the Department was renamed the “Department of Immigration and Border Protection”. The obvious dog-whistle message was that these people are criminals

from whom we need to be protected.

Labor never denounced these things as false: neither in opposition nor in government has Labor stated authoritatively that boat people are not “illegal”; that they commit no offence by coming here the way they do to seek protection for persecution; that they are not a danger to us; that they are escaping the same extremists we are fighting in the Middle-East and that there is no queue.

It is perhaps the greatest failure of democracy in Australian history that Labor has never contradicted the Coalition’s dishonest message about asylum seekers.

The Coalition call them illegal: it is a lie.

The Coalition call them queue-jumpers: it is a lie.

The Coalition suggest that we need to be protected from them: it is a lie.

When he became Minister for Immigration, Scott Morrison ordered the Department to refer to Irregular Maritime Arrivals as “Illegal Maritime Arrivals”. It is a lie.

I was recently given a copy of a letter signed by Tony Abbott, written to a voter in his constituency. It referred to boat people as “illegal” no fewer than 6 times in one page. Six lies.

The most depressing thing is that the Coalition’s lies have seduced more than half the country to see boat people as criminals we need to be protected from, and Labor has collaborated in the lies: it has never stepped forward publicly and contradicted the Coalition’s lies about boat people.

When boat people arrive at Christmas Island, they have typically spent eight or 10 days on a rickety boat. They have typically come from landlocked countries and have typically never spent time on the ocean. Typically, they have had not enough to eat and not enough to drink. Typically, they have had no opportunity to wash or to change their clothes. Typically, they arrive distressed, frightened and wearing clothes caked in their own excrement. They are not allowed to shower or to change their clothes before they are interviewed by a member of the Immigration Department. It is difficult to think of any decent justification for subjecting them to that humiliation.

When they arrive, any medical appliances they have will be confiscated and not returned: spectacles, hearing aids, false teeth, prosthetic limbs, are all confiscated. If they have any medications with them, those medications are confiscated and not returned. According to doctors on Christmas Island, one person has a fulltime job of sitting in front of a bin popping pills out of blister packs for later destruction.

If they have any medical documentation with them, it is confiscated and not returned. The result of all of this is that people with chronic health problems find themselves denied any effective treatment. The results can be very distressing. For example: a doctor who worked on Christmas Island told me of a woman who had been detained there for some weeks and who was generally regarded as psychotic. Her behaviour was highly erratic for reasons that no-one understood. The consultation with this woman was very difficult because, although the doctor and the patient were sitting across a table from each other, the interpreter joined them by telephone from Sydney. Eventually, the doctor worked out that the problem was that the woman was incontinent of urine. She could not leave her cabin without urine running down her leg. It was driving her mad. When the doctor worked out that this was the cause of the problem, she asked the Department to provide incontinence pads. The Department’s initial response was “we don’t do those”. The doctor insisted. The Department relented and provided four incontinence pads per day: not enough, so that the woman needs to queue for more but the incontinence pads made a profound difference to her mood and behaviour. In February 2014 Reza Barati was killed on Manus Island. Initially, Australia said that he had escaped from the detention centre and was killed outside the detention centre. Soon it

became clear that he was killed inside the detention centre. It took nearly five months before anyone was charged with the murder of Reza Barati. Nobody has yet been brought to court. Just a couple of weeks after Reza Barati was killed, I received a sworn statement from an eyewitness. The statement included the following:

“J ... is a local who worked for the Salvation Army. ... He was holding a large wooden stick. It was about a metre and a half long ... it had two nails in the wood. The nails were sticking out ...
When Reza came up the stairs, J ... was at the top of the stairs waiting for him. J ... said ‘fuck you motherfucker’ J ... then swung back behind his shoulder with the stick and took a big swing at Raisa, hitting him on top of the head.
J ... screamed again at Reza and hit him again on the head. Reza then fell on the floor ...

I could see a lot of blood coming out of his head, on his forehead, running down his face. His blood is still there on the ground. He was still alive at this stage. About 10 or 15 guards from G4S came up the stairs. Two of them were Australians. The rest were PNG locals. I know who they are. I can identify them by their face. They started kicking Reza in his head and stomach with their boots. Reza was on the ground trying to defend himself. He put his arms up to cover his head but they were still kicking.

There was one local ... I recognized him ... he picked up a big rock ... he lifted the rock above his head and threw it down hard on top of Reza’s head. At this time, Reza passed away.
One of the locals came and hit him in his leg very hard ... but Reza did not feel it. This is how I know he was dead.

After that, as the guards came past him, they kicked his dead body on the ground ...”
It is difficult to understand why nobody has yet faced a court and been convicted of the murder of Reza Barati. I understand that various witnesses to the killing have been offered the opportunity of being removed from Manus and brought to Australia, on conditions that they withdraw any witness statements they have made.

Just as a person’s character is judged by their conduct, so a country’s character is judged by its conduct. Australia is now judged overseas by its behaviour as cruel and selfish. We treat frightened, innocent people as criminals. It is a profound injustice.

We are a nation struggling with its fears, and we will not find peace until we see past the lies of politicians and see the truth:
boat people are not illegal; they are not criminals;
we do not need to be protected from them;
we need to recognise that our politicians have persuaded us to tolerate – even to reward – cruelty which is utterly alien to our character: they have persuaded us to betray the true character of the country.

Another, related, tranche of injustice currently disfigures our country. Politicians have set out to make us anxious about National Security. They have had generous assistance from the Press.

In the wake of the September 11 attack on America, Australia introduced some of the most draconian laws ever seen, supported by the idea that the laws would make us safer. Whether we are safer or not is difficult to judge. Since the laws were introduced substantially for their preventive effect, we can only speculate about what might have happened if the laws were not in place.

Our response to the threat of terrorism has been little short of hysterical. Injury or death in Australia as a result of a terrorist act is incredibly rare. The uprising at the Eureka Stockade in 1854 resulted in 27 deaths. By any standards, it was an act of terrorism. In the 160 years since Eureka, there have been just a handful of deaths from terrorist acts in Australia: nothing like 27. Nevertheless, we have passed a series of increasingly draconian laws for the avowed purpose of preventing terrorism. A person in Australia is more likely to die by falling off a ladder or being struck by lightning than by a terrorist act.

In broadest outline, the new laws gave extensive new powers to ASIO to limit people's rights by reference to Australia's national security interests, and allows for control orders and preventive detention.

ASIO has power to perform security assessments. An adverse security assessment from ASIO can result in a person's passport being cancelled, or their job application being refused, or (for non-citizens) a visa being refused or cancelled. In those circumstances, getting access to the material which provided the foundation for ASIO's assessment may prove difficult or impossible.

Cancellation of a passport following an adverse ASIO security assessment may be challenged in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). The AAT Act contains provisions enabling the Attorney-General to grant a certificate which, in substance, creates the conditions for serious injustice.

An Australian citizen discovered that his passport had been cancelled. The reason was that ASIO had assessed him adversely. He applied to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a review of the decision to adversely assess him. The Tribunal made the usual orders for ASIO to produce all documents relevant to their decision. Some of the documents were provided, but were heavily redacted: there were some headings and lots of black lines and blank space. Other relevant documents were not provided at all. The Applicant received a certificate from the then Attorney-General. Here is the text of the certificate:

I, ... hereby certify ... that disclosure of the contents of the documents ... would be contrary to the public interest because the disclosure would prejudice security.
I further certify ... that evidence proposed to be adduced and submissions proposed to be made ... on behalf of the Director-General of Security concerning the documents ... are of such a nature that the disclosure of the evidence or submissions would be contrary to the public interest because it would prejudice security.
As the responsible Minister ... I do not consent to a person representing the applicant being present when evidence [for ASIO] is adduced and such submissions are made ..."

The practical effect of that certificate was that the Applicant was not allowed to know the case against him. My junior and I went to the AAT to represent him, but we spent most of our time sitting outside the hearing room, wondering what was going on. When the AAT finally decided the matter, they delivered reasons in two parts. The open reasons said that there was nothing in the material available to the Applicant to justify the adverse assessment. However they upheld the assessment on the basis of their secret reasons, which we are not allowed to see.

If a refugee is adversely assessed, they will be refused a visa. They do not have access to the AAT, but they can go to the Federal Court to challenge the decision to adversely assess. In one such case, the refugee swore that he had never done or said anything that would bring him within the reach of the (very wide) provisions of the ASIO legislation. That evidence was not challenged or contradicted. Instead, ASIO's argument was that, because the Court did not know what ASIO had taken into account in making its decision, the Court could not say they were wrong.

The Judge agreed.

As it happens, that refugee was accepted by Sweden as a permanent resident, after a one-hour interview. Whatever ASIO thought of him did not apparently trouble the Swedish authorities. He has lived peacefully in Sweden for the past 7 years.

Some refugees are not so lucky. At present in Australia there are about 50 refugees in immigration detention because, although they have been accepted as refugees, they have been adversely assessed by ASIO. They cannot be sent back to the country they have fled, because the central obligation under the Refugees Convention is not to "refoule" a person: that is, not to send them back to a place of persecution. The fact that they are a refugee makes it impossible to return them to their country of origin, but the ASIO assessment means that they are refused a visa. The Migration Act says that they must remain in detention until they get a visa or they are removed from Australia. Both doors are shut to them.

A High Court decision from 2004 means that a refugee can be held in detention for the rest of their life, without having committed any offence. If the reason for refusing a visa is an adverse assessment by ASIO, the refugee will not be allowed to know reason for the adverse assessment, so they will face the prospect of detention for years (or possibly for life) without being told why.

It is close to unbelievable that, in Australia today, an innocent person can be detained for life without being allowed to know why, and without any practical ability to challenge the basis for the detention. They have a legal right to challenge the adverse assessment, but it is very hard to win because the refugee does not know what case they have to meet.

It is a chilling thought that, in Australia in 2014, a person who is legally entitled to remain in the country can be jailed forever, without being allowed to know why, and with no practical means of legal challenge. This is truly the stuff of a Kafka nightmare.

Of course, we need ASIO. Of course ASIO needs to be able to perform most of its functions under a cloak of secrecy. But ASIO's role is to protect Australia's security interests. With that in mind, it is worth looking for the matters which ASIO is able to take into account when determining to adversely assess a person. It is not easy to work out what ASIO takes into account, because the regulations setting them out are secret: we are not allowed to know them. While theoretically the person who has been adversely assessed has a right to challenge the assessment, in practice it is a hollow right. The Applicant is not allowed to know the legal test which is relevant, nor are they allowed to know the facts which have been applied against that legal test.

Let's make no mistake about this: people are being jailed without charge and without trial, and they face the prospect of a much longer time in jail than if they had actually broken the law and had been convicted.

The problem is exemplified by the case of Ranjini. Shortly before Mothers' Day 2012, Ranjini and her two children, aged 6 and 9 years, were removed from the community and placed in detention at Villawood. Villawood is in Sydney; Ranjini's husband lives and works in Melbourne. We know that Ranjini was assessed as a refugee because her first husband had been a driver for the Tamil Tigers. He was killed by the Rajapaksa government. She would be at risk of persecution if she returned to Sri Lanka. So far as we can tell, Ranjini was adversely assessed by ASIO because she might be a risk to the security of Sri Lanka if she returned there – something she emphatically does not want to do. In short, the same facts which entitle her to protection also condemn her to a life in detention. She and her children have now been in detention for more than two years. They remain in detention to this day. In another case, a refugee arrived in Australia. He was assessed as a refugee, but remained in detention while ASIO assessed him. They assessed him adversely. As best we can work out, the reason for the adverse assessment is that, at the time he arrived, his father was being held

in Indonesia suspected of involvement in people smuggling. He is 18 years old. If he was convicted of people smuggling, he would be jailed for 5 years. But because his father is thought to be involved in people smuggling, he faces spending the rest of his life in detention. He is already suicidal, and has made several very serious attempts to kill himself.

It is hard to think that this sort of treatment of an innocent person can make any of us safer. All these things happen within the protections of the Rule of Law. The Rule of Law requires diligent oversight of the executive by an independent judiciary; it requires that the law govern the rights of all people, regardless of their position in Society.

We are lucky in Australia to have an honest, independent judiciary. But a strong tradition of the Rule of Law creates problems when Parliament passes laws which are harsh or unjust or an expression of vindictiveness towards a particular group. The courts have a duty to uphold valid laws, no matter how unjust. That is the position we have reached in Australia now. I believe that the Rule of Law is profoundly important: the alternative is corrupt cronyism or mob rule. But we should watch carefully what Parliament does in our name. When Parliament abandons generally shared standards of decency, the country is degraded and our values are betrayed.

In December 2004 the House of Lords decided a case concerning UK anti-terrorist laws which allow terror suspects to be held without trial for up to 12 months. By a majority of 8 to 1 they held that the law impermissibly breached the democratic right to liberty. The essential point was covered by an exception in the UK Human Rights Act, which allows human rights to be infringed in order to avoid a "threat to the life of the nation".

Lord Hoffman said:

" ... The real threat to the life of the nation, in the sense of a people living in accordance with its traditional laws and political values, comes not from terrorism but from laws such as these. That is the true measure of what terrorism may achieve. It is for Parliament to decide whether to give the terrorists such a victory."

When you leave tonight, remember: your government is inflicting cruelty and injustice on innocent people. Ask yourself: Is this the way Australia should be? If the answer is No, then use your vote to punish any party which supports it.

As a nation, we are not at peace with ourselves.

Fear and selfishness struggle with our sense of decency, and politicians who prefer power to honesty have led us into very dark places. Our conscience is stained, and so long as politicians mislead us into tolerating wilful cruelty and grave injustices, we will never find peace.

AT THE COALFACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

By Jenny Paradiso



Jenny Paradiso started her business career doing odd jobs around the family greengrocer business, begging to work with customers from an early age. She became a professional librarian with exposure to both public and private sectors before forming Suntrix with her husband, David Hille, in 2009. The business was last year named Telstra's South Australian Business of the Year, received a national industry award for excellence, and this year was named Australia's 51st fastest-growing company in the BRW Fast 100. Jenny has been named a national finalist in this year's Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards.

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our generation. While the rate of change may be a matter of argument, we should all be extremely concerned that we are already seeing the human impact – environmental refugees.

This has been one of the core topics discussed around our kitchen table for many years. Fittingly, that same kitchen table also saw the beginning of our renewable energy business, Suntrix, more than five years ago. And as a woman running a \$20 million business in a male-dominated industry, my challenge today is to spend more time with my family around that same table.

Suntrix was formed from a mixture of frustration and passion. My husband and I wanted to invest in a solar system for our home because we believed renewable energy was the smartest long-term method of reducing our environmental impact.

But when we spoke to those supplying solar systems, we received a mixture of misinformation, sales pitches and poor service. So we did it ourselves. We sourced reliable panels from overseas, installed them, and built a product to monitor the system to ensure we were making the most from our investment.

We were passionate about what we had achieved and that passion must have transferred – we soon received requests from family and friends to, first, clearly explain the industry and the shape of likely investment and benefits, and, secondly, develop tailored systems for them.

In our first year of true business, we turned over around \$250,000 installing home-based systems. Last year, we turned over more than \$20 million selling and installing systems for households and businesses. We have also acquired the Australian rights for large-scale solar islands, and have recently begun expanding interstate.

Staying true to our underlying approach of providing professional solutions that are tailored to each client has not been difficult. It is the approach that has helped build the company, so it is essential to everything we do.

But the state of the industry has rapidly shifted and continues to do so. State and Federal governments have almost constantly changed the level of subsidies, reacting to the massive influx of companies entering the sector. Many were motivated by quick and easy cash – an approach that sparked a number of high-profile collapses that impugned the industry and created distrust among those who were previously motivated by the same concerns we have.

The changes to subsidies also changed the economic balance of the sector, and so Suntrix looked to innovation. In conjunction with third party providers, we developed financing packages, and also continued to develop new products in-house. This ongoing focus has helped develop Suntrix as a strong leader in the sector.

The Federal Government's review of the Renewable Energy Target is the next challenge, and one we are still digesting for its potential implications.

Australia's renewable energy sector is now markedly different from the one Suntrix entered in 2009, but we still have a big part to play in how it evolves.

While the global scale of climate change is one of the drivers of the business, more human-scale issues have also evolved with the company.

When Suntrix began, I was a librarian with a 9-year career in public libraries and another seven years working with a library software company. I worked with people, predominantly women, with excellent strategic minds, guiding organisations that never lost their customer focus.

Yet as we were establishing Suntrix, we were also raising our two young daughters, managing time between home and the office, trying to build a business that would ultimately provide for us all. It was a tough balancing act – I love being a mother, and love spending time with my amazing children. But I also love my work. I am becoming more confident about finding the right balance, but I will continue to question that balance.

Confidence in the business sector also takes time.

In my experience, men are often given the benefit of the doubt in business circles. It is naturally assumed that they have the background and experience to back their proposals or opinions – although that assumption can be shaken based on what eventuates, of course.

The same is not always true for females in the business world. I have found you need to prove yourself first, earning that respect over time based on achievements. That approach can easily impact a business woman's view of her own capacity, potentially holding back true value and innovation from companies looking for fresh ideas.

Suntrix is now five years old, is expanding nationally and is cultivating its reputation for innovative, customer-focused service. We haven't solved climate change yet – but we will certainly plan the next step when we return to the kitchen table as a family tonight.

PUSHPA AND GANGA

By Shyam Pokharel, Director, SASANE



Samrakshak Samuha Nepal (SASANE) is a non-profit organization in Nepal aiming at ending physical exploitation and undesired exploitation of women and children in their workplace by their employers and customers that enter the workplace with intent to sexual exploitation in the pretence of providing them employment.

SASANE was established in 2008 by former female victims of human trafficking on the principle that survivors can create social change to eradicate human trafficking and reintegrate human trafficking survivors into society as respected members of the community and to increase women's access to justice and achieve systemic change within the legal system.

Every year SASANE has been providing paralegal training to the female survivors of human trafficking. This training includes 1 month theory class and 6 months practical course in the police stations in the Kathmandu valley and Pokhara. Below is the story of Pushpa and Ganga and how they were assisted by SASANE <http://www.sasane.org.np/>

Pushpa came to SASANE in September 2010, with the help of the SASANE's Kakarvitta border monitoring paralegal. When she first entered SASANE, she was 20 years old and was traumatized by her experience in a brothel. She has intermediate education. She was trafficked by her boyfriend in Silguri, Bengal, India. She spent 3 months in a Silguri brothel and she lost everything there.

SASANE started counselling Pushpa. In that process, our paralegal & president Indira worked with Pushpa. Slowly, she began to recover and SASANE sent a letter to Pushpa's parents in Khotang, Diktel, Nepal. SASANE wanted to send her to her parents' home. Within 7 days, her mother came to Kathamndu and met with Pushpa.

According to Puspa, she loved a person named Jayent and he proposed to Pushpa to travel in Darjeeling, India. Pushpa was afraid of her parents because her parents did not like Jayent, and if they knew about Pushpa's relationship with him, they might kill her. After regular forcing, Pushpa ran away from home and they went via Kakarvitta to Darjeeling. When Pushpa reached Silguri at 10 AM, Jayent introduced her to a Nepali woman who was waiting for them. She was 50 years old and she had lived in Silguri for 10 years. After introductions, they went to a hotel. After one hour, Jayent told Pushpa he had urgent work and he wanted to go quickly. He told her to go with the woman to her home and he would meet her back there. Pushpa was innocent and she followed Jayent's orders. She went with the woman, but Jayent didn't come back for Pushpa.

The woman was kind for three days, but starting on the fourth day, the woman sent her to do sex trade inside a brothel. She has done sexual intercourse for six months without any rights. One day on September 5, 2010, Pushpa left the woman's house to buy a tooth brush, but on the way she decided she wanted to run away. She caught a bus to Kakarvitta. When she came to Kakarvitta, a SASANE paralegal met with her.

Pushpa finished Paralegal training in 2011. Now she holds a paralegal certificate. She had worked in the Kalimati police station Kathmandu, Nepal and she has helped in the women police cell. She has filed 6 FIRs on human trafficking cases against traffickers. Now her ex-boyfriend Jayent (trafficker) is in Kathmandu Jail. Her case is not finalized, but it is running in court. She is presently working as a coordinator in Child Care Home, Kathmandu.

This has been the story which motivates other girls as well to be independent and socially accepted. This has been the proud thing even for SASANE and is very much privileged to help such hard working and self determined girls.

Ganga was a twenty-two year old girl who worked in the field of paralegal service in Balaju Police Station, Kathmandu. She has been working in the police station for four years. She had a strong skill in the Nepali law system, legal procedure and various Acts related to women of Nepal as well as international laws and conventions. She is using these skills continuously in the police station as well as in court for other victims, especially for women and children. Now she feels proud of her work and satisfied to see the maximum women getting justice through her.

When she finished the paralegal training from SASANE 4 years ago, she used to receive little money from SASANE, but after she finished her internship she started earning some money through her paralegal skill and that money was sufficient for her. She has been studying a Bachelor Degree in education and she has one good rented room. She is staying happily with my grandmother in the Balaju area.

She does not have the paralegal certificate because she doesn't have Nepali citizenship. Without citizenship, she has no right to sit on the paralegal examination. But she has a deep knowledge and she wrote FIRs and complaints as well as helps others in the police station. She doesn't have a scarcity of money because she has been able to earn for her through paralegal skill. So she feels proud to be a SASANE worker.

Her father belonged to a high caste family and mother from a low caste. When she was 2 years old, her parents were not in a good relationship due to caste inequality. Her mom took her and left the father's home and after one year she got married to another man. Her stepfather did not take care of mom and her. Mom had no alternative so she stayed with him quietly, but she saw domestic violence and discrimination several times from father towards her mom as well as towards her. When she was hungry, she started to cry for food, but her stepfather used to pull her hair and used to slap her on the cold floor and pulled her out of the door and then shut the door. Mom did not have the power to defend against the stepfather. Ganga used to cry the whole night outside without food and love. She spent her life in tears in her mom's home.

When she reached 12 years of age, she went to her grandmothers in Kathmandu. Her poor and sick grandmother was a beggar in street. Ganga started working as a domestic servant in Kathmandu. Everyone has an idea about the pain of domestic work. Hardly, she spent 7 years of that life and she passed school leaving from government school. One day Ganga met her old friend Sunita and Sunita told her about SASANE organization. She came to the SASANE office and shared everything about her past life there.

After 2 months, SASANE started its paralegal training. There were 30 girls in the training. When she completed one month of theory class, SASANE placed her in the Balaju Police Station, Kathmandu for internship courses. All her paralegal friends have citizenship, but she doesn't because she had two

fathers and none were interested in getting her citizenship. Without citizenship, she cannot do anything in Nepal as well as in other countries. She thinks how will it be possible? She started to read citizenship law and discussed with the police as well as government officers. She went to the public administration office, Nuwakot, and explained her background and current job with the officer. They called both her fathers in the office. Her fathers recognized and accepted but they didn't want her to get citizenship. Finally, the government officer was able to take a signature from both her fathers and without any extra money and without more struggle. Finally she received citizenship from the name of her first father. Now she had a Nepali citizen and she is able to do everything with the help of the law. This year she will sit a paralegal examination and hope she will pass. She is honestly saying it was all possible from legal knowledge and with the help of SASANE.

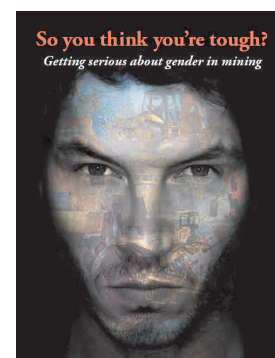
YOU GOTTA BE TOUGH TO EXPLORE GENDER IN MINING

By Dr Dean Laplonge



Dr Dean Laplonge is the Director of Factive (www.factive.com.au), a cultural research consultancy based in Australia and Canada. Dean has completed extensive research and work in the fields of safety communications and gender in male-dominated industries. He has worked for many large resource organisations, including INPEX, Rio Tinto, BHP Billiton Iron Ore, Worsley Alumina, Fortescue Metals, and The Department of Mines and Petroleum (Western Australia).

Dean's book, [So you think you're tough: Getting serious about gender in mining](#) (2014), offers challenging criticism of the existing approach to gender in the mining industry, and provides practical tools for how to explore gender beyond the "women in mining" debate. His research on safety communications has resulted in the development of MySafe—the world's first program to improve the impacts of safety communications on safety in the workplace. Dean is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and a committee member for MiHR's gender sector study in Canada. Dean currently lives in Canada.



DEAN LAPLONGE

Debate about gender in mining has been going on for more than two decades. Yet little has changed. The mining industry has utterly failed to investigate its relationship to gender.

In the many repetitive reports that still get issued today to advise mining companies on gender, we read over and over about how women need support to make it in mining. They need mentors, women-only networks, and targeted marketing materials that speak their language. Women continue to be constructed as separate and with distinct needs from men. And it's only ever women who have gender.

When we promote the idea that women need more help, we maintain the belief they are naturally weak. We also maintain the belief that men are successful because of their natural strength and natural abilities. We fail to investigate what it is about the culture of a workplace or an industry which might make it easier for men than women to make it.

When I present my work about gender in mining at academic conferences, the response is inevitably one of disbelief. How can professionals in mining still believe that dealing with gender is about helping women to make it? How can they still understand "gender" as the biological state of being a man or a woman? Why is the work on gender in mining not engaging with the vast body of knowledge about gender that has been developed over the past four decades in a wide range of disciplines?

It's partly lack of skills which prevents the mining industry from addressing gender in more complex and effective ways. As I explain in my book, I risk offending people who work as diversity officers or leaders of women networks in mining. But knowledge of gender and education in gender studies are extremely low among this cohort. The mining industry would never dream of seeking to tackle engineering issues without engaging qualified engineers who have been trained in engineering techniques. So why does it believe that gender issues can be addressed by those who have never formally studied gender?

I wrote this book because I believe that instead of focusing on numbers of women, mining companies need to investigate how gender impacts their workplace cultures and their business practices. In the book, I introduce a new understanding of gender for the mining industry; and then provide practical ways of applying this understanding so that leaders and senior professionals in the industry can start to explore the relationship between gender and mining.

Mining and gender have a historical relationship. The mining industry emerged as a distinct industry at around the same time as we started to develop stricter definitions of masculinity and femininity, and stricter separation of the man's role from the woman's. The production methods and technologies of the mining industry are already therefore gendered. As others have also explored, people who deliver training to mining industry employees often use masculinity as a way of connecting with the trainees. And senior female professionals in the industry often seek to silence all references to femininity when discussing their own successes.

This preference for the masculine over the feminine doesn't automatically exclude women from mining. Women can do masculinity. Indeed, many women in the mining industry do masculinity extremely well; and they like the culture of mining as it is. But in the wider culture it is men more so than women who are encouraged to be masculine. And so statistically speaking it is men more so than women who are likely to find the mining industry an appealing place and one in which they can thrive.

The mining industry prefers masculinity which can be easily distinguished from femininity, and one which has no hint of softness. This industry is therefore unable to recognise diversity in ways of working which could be potentially useful and profitable. And it actually encourages risk-taking among its employees who need to display the tough kind of masculinity that the culture of this industry demands.

I have met many men working in mining who talk about the changes they have gone through to fit into the industry. I have talked with many men who weep as they tell me about the devastating impacts the culture of mining has had on their personalities and lives. I recall a few years ago speaking to a father who was concerned about how much his young son had changed since starting work on a mine site. The boy had become more aggressive and rude and defiant. The father's interpretation of this was that his son was turning "bad". I suggested to him that "bad" was the wrong word to use to describe what was happening. To the contrary, his son was acting out what on the mine site was considered to be "good" masculinity. In order to fit in, the boy had to do swearing and aggression and defiance.

My book draws on my experiences of having worked as a consultant in resource industries and my formal education in gender studies spanning more than 20 years. But I know it will take a really tough mining company, and some senior managers who are really keen to expand their knowledge of gender, before we will start to see any real changes in the gender culture of the mining industry and greater gender diversity impacting on the entire business of mining.

COUNTRY TO CANBERRA

By Hannah Wandel



Hannah Wandel is a gender equality advocate and at 24, founded Country to Canberra. Since 2014, Hannah has worked as a Graduate at the Department of Defence. From 2011-2013 she was a journalist and newsreader at SAFM and Triple M in Adelaide. Hannah has also spent time working in the private sector in the US and as a reporter in Europe. She has a double degree in Law (Honours) and Media from the University of Adelaide. Hannah grew up on a farm in rural South Australia and now lives in Canberra.

Imagine you are a smart sixteen-year-old girl. Now imagine most of the industries in your region are dominated by men. Your political representatives are male and your school principal answers to 'Sir.' If you want to attend university you will need to undertake a lonesome, thousand-kilometre journey. To amplify the pain, this requires permanently farewelling your family, friends and a significant sum of cash. Suddenly, life at sixteen starts looking excruciatingly complex.

Regrettably, I've seen real situations like this negatively impact scores of young women in rural Australia. In some cases a girl's enthusiasm to pursue a leadership role wanes. In others, her confidence to chase a local job or to enrol in university disappears. These scenarios are heartbreaking and avoidable, and subsequently inspired the birth of a new organisation called Country to Canberra.

Launched in July 2014 and funded by a YWCA Canberra Great Ydeas grant, Country to Canberra is a national initiative that empowers rural girls to reach their leadership potential. To facilitate this Country

to Canberra ran an essay competition asking Year 11 rural females to analyse gender equality in their community. Three winners were selected and will receive a trip to Canberra to meet powerful female politicians and executives at a breakfast event in December 2014. They will also win a tour of Parliament House and a lunch with Senators. This experience will expose the girls to government, provide mentorship opportunities, and hopefully, inspire them to become leaders in their local communities.

When Country to Canberra launched I did numerous media interviews, yet one sticks out in my mind. The journalist scoffed, 'Women have come a long way. Is Country to Canberra really necessary?' My answer was an unequivocal 'yes.' The gender pay gap recently rose to a shocking 18.2 per cent while just 30.5 per cent of our federal politicians are female. Now consider the additional challenges faced by rural women who are often isolated from educational opportunities due to distance, time and funds (the Australian Bureau of Statistics also found that country students have worse university enrolment rates than their urban peers). It is clear that rural girls face both gender and geographical barriers to success.

To combat these obstacles, Country to Canberra supports young women and nurtures their leadership qualities. We want to bolster confidence by showcasing writing talents and provide opportunities to engage with policymakers. Importantly, we offer tangible leadership inspiration by connecting girls with role models. Research shows same-sex mentoring greatly benefits youth, as they often model behaviours on high-ranking leaders. Yet with more men occupying executive-level positions, there are not enough senior women to satisfy mentee demand. Therefore, Country to Canberra has engaged women, including the ACT Chief Minister, to inspire the winners at our breakfast event.

Personally, my passion to launch an initiative that supports rural girls surfaced just before my sixteenth birthday. I had moved from my family farm in South Australia to boarding school in Adelaide. Here I noticed that city students often had greater access to resources due to natural proximity. Frustrated, I wanted to counteract this unnecessary imbalance.

Almost a decade later, I see a bright future for Country to Canberra. In the short-term, the goal is to reach more schools and provide increased opportunities for students. In the long-term, I want to generate lasting gender equality discourse in rural communities. By encouraging girls to write about female empowerment, a future generation of trailblazers will be better informed about issues, like pay inequity, that have traditionally held women back. Hopefully, this will inspire girls to battle historical inequalities and empower them to reach above and beyond the glass ceiling.

WOMEN IN PRISON ADVOCACY NETWORK (WIPAN)

By Kat Armstrong



Women in Prison Advocacy Network (WIPAN) is a mentoring program for women leaving prison. On average, 42.8% of women in NSW who have been convicted of a crime and imprisoned will re-offend. In stark contrast, 82% of women who have taken part in WIPAN's mentoring program for one year or more, have not re-offended or returned to prison.

Having spent time in prison herself, Kat knows just how challenging it is to turn your life around after incarceration. On her release, she was mentored by two people, which had a huge impact on her life. Through their support, she completed her law degree and found employment. Keen to bridge the gap in services for other women affected by the criminal justice system, Kat co-founded WIPAN in 2007. Below is Kat Armstrong's story about how she started WIPAN and the challenges she has overcome.



Kat Armstrong, 3rd from right, at the Commonwealth Study Conferences Leaders program in New Delhi. September 2014.

In 2003 I was released from prison, having served almost 10 years on and off, for offenses related to my drug addiction. I was released with just \$213 in which to survive for the next two weeks. I struggled but was most fortunate to be mentored by two very caring women, and since then went on to mentor, empower, and assist other women and female youth affected by the criminal justice system. Having

seen and experienced the enormous gap in the decreasing resources and support networks for women in prison and upon their release, in 2008 I co-founded the organisation, Women In Prison Advocacy Network (WIPAN) in NSW.

WIPAN is a community charity managed and directed by a group of professional women, including reformed ex-prisoners, dedicated to advancing the well being and prospects of women affected by the criminal justice system. Founded in 2007, the following year a voluntary management committee (board) and a membership base were established. The board and membership began lobbying government, private foundations and trusts for funds to put into practice two models of service: First a mentoring program for women exiting prison and second, an advocacy program for women affected by the criminal justice system.

In May 2010, the WIPAN mentoring program was up and running. Since then we have recruited, interviewed and trained women volunteers from the community to mentor women affected by the criminal justice system. Treating women without judgment and providing practical and emotional support, the mentoring program is built on a gender-responsive framework that works to women's strengths. It encourages mentees' autonomy, supports them to reintegrate back into the community and advocate on their own behalf, and ultimately turn their life around.

I believe that every woman deserves the opportunity to build herself a better future and not be discriminated against. However the criminal justice system fails women in this regard - it does little to address the criminogenic or social needs of women prisoners, and women continue to enter the system at an ever-increasing rate, far surpassing that of men. In prison, women have significantly more complex needs than male prisoners, and those exiting the system are in dire need of support. That is the critical gap that WIPAN aims to fill.

Yet, even with the evidence to back up our programs, WIPAN continually faces funding shortages. Before July this year, we were facing closure. With the change of Government, previously secured federal funding was no longer available. It was at this point that the relationships that WIPAN and the board had built with community and government organisations were crucial in raising our profile and fighting for our continued survival.



Volunteer mentor meeting. October 2010.

Fortunately, a grant from the NSW Department of Attorney General & Justice has meant that our mentoring program can continue for the next 18 months. With this funding WIPAN was able to hire a

mentoring coordinator full-time to rebuild our program, and recruit an additional 50 mentees and volunteer mentors to walk beside them and offer much needed support. Without reoccurring funding, WIPAN continues to apply for grants from government and non-government organisations. We are looking to expand the mentoring program to western Sydney, where many women ex-prisoners live and need support. The issues women face leaving prison are complex – increasingly we are seeing women facing homelessness, as women's refuges are facing the same funding cuts that WIPAN was earlier this year. Our mentoring program goes a long way to support women at the most critical time, however there needs to be a real commitment by government and a paradigm shift in the criminal justice system's approach to women to achieve wide spread change.

Supporters of WIPAN and the work we do are encouraged to become members, and make reoccurring donations if possible. We are also continually looking for women to become trained volunteer mentors to offer the social and practical support that is critical to women leaving prison.

ARE YOU A ROLE MODEL?

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS?

EconomicSecurity4Women

Economic Security4Women is seeking women from STEM and non-traditional occupations and industries to be highly visible role models on a stand alone website to be launched in 2015. eS4W is seeking male and female employers of women in non-traditional occupations and industries to be role models or champions of change for this website.

Apply at www.security4women.org.au/rolemodels

The Role Models website will inform young women of non-traditional occupation pathways and will also have links to existing activities that encourage young women to explore these occupations and industries.

eS4W will primarily promote the webpage to schools through State and Territory Departments of Education, member organisations and external stakeholders.

eS4W wants expanded opportunities for the participation of women in the workforce and the increased participation of women in high-income, in-demand Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers.

Why?

Young Australian women consistently out-perform their male peers in many of the key achievement indicators in secondary schools.

Despite this, young women are significantly less likely than young men to enter employment in the high-income, in-demand fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) or in employment-based training opportunities in non-traditional industries.

This reflects broader, gender-segregated patterns in Australia's workforce, where in the construction, mining and utilities industries women account for around 12 per cent, 15 per cent and 23 per cent of employees respectively.

Under-representation of women in these industries not only undermines gender equality and the economic future of individual women, it impacts negatively on Australia's economy.

Who will benefit

Employment options for young women are limited by factors that range from persistent stereotyping to

negative perceptions about and experiences of young women in non- traditional occupations. Intervention in the career choices of young Australian women is crucial to achieving better employment outcomes and long-term financial security for individual women, as well as increased rates of women's workforce participation, especially in the non-traditional occupations and industries and improved gender equity in Australian workplaces.

More information: <http://www.security4women.org.au/rolemodels/>

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS HONOUR QUIET AUSTRALIAN HEROES



A Sydney high school principal, Dorothy Hoddinott AO, has won the 2014 Human Rights Medal in recognition of her lifelong passion for and commitment to education, particularly for disadvantaged and refugee students, many of whom have experienced unimaginable trauma.

Ms Hoddinott received the prestigious Human Rights Medal at an awards ceremony hosted by the Australian Human Rights Commission to mark International Human Rights Day.

Ms Hoddinott is the principal of Holroyd High School, in Greystanes, Western Sydney.

“I am a teacher. For the greater part of my career, I have taught in schools on the other side of the tracks, working with disadvantaged students, particularly students from immigrant and refugee communities.

“Almost sixty per cent of our students are of recent refugee background, many with interrupted or no schooling before they come to us, and most with experience of trauma that would be unimaginable in the mainstream Australian community.

“I have learned a lot on my almost fifty year journey in teaching: that birth, social class, wealth, ethnicity and gender should not define or limit your future; that all children can learn; that all children, regardless of their background and family circumstances, deserve a sound education that respects them and provides them with the firm foundation they need for the rest of their lives as active participants in society.”

The Human Rights Commission president, Professor Gillian Triggs, described Ms Hoddinott's contributions to the well-being of her students as life-changing.

“Dorothy’s focus on helping disempowered and previously illiterate students enjoy success in their schooling is inspiring,” Professor Triggs said.

“Dorothy’s success at Holroyd High provides a very practical model for teachers and schools across the country as they work with students from refugee and disadvantaged backgrounds.

“Dorothy has shown us how to help these students, how we can give them hope, give them education opportunities, and help refugee and disadvantaged students become hard-working, motivated and resilient Australian citizens.”

Professor Triggs paid tribute to all of the winners and finalists for the 2014 Human Rights Awards, presented on December 10 at a self-funded awards ceremony at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney. Read Professor Triggs' speech.

The Young People’s Human Rights Medal went to Daniel Haile-Michael and Maki Issa, who were the lead applicants in a historic Federal Court case that successfully challenged racism and racial profiling within the Victorian police force.

The Human Rights Law Award went to Darren Fittler from Gilbert + Tobin, in recognition of his commitment to and support for the charity, philanthropic and not-for-profit sectors. Mr Fittler leads the Third Sector Advisory Group at Gilbert + Tobin and is a member of the Disability Advisory Council for the NSW Department of Justice.

Other 2014 Human Rights Awards winners are as follows:

- Television Award: Four Corners’ The Manus solution, produced by Geoff Thompson, Karen Michelmore, Anne Worthington, Patricia Drum and Connie Agius.
- Tony Fitzgerald Memorial Community Individual Award: Damian Griffis, who is the chief executive of the First Peoples Disability Network in Australia and a leading advocate for the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.
- Community Organisation Award: Transgender Victoria for its dedication to achieving justice, equity and quality health and community services for transgender people, their partners, families and friends.
- Business Award: awarded jointly to KPMG, in recognition of its Reconciliation Action Plan; and to Grace Papers for its work empowering women to address pregnancy discrimination.
- Print and Online Media Award: Nick Olle, Sam Wallman, Pat Grant, Pat Armstrong, Sam Bungey, Mark Finger, and Lauren Martin for At Work Inside our Detention Centres: A Guard's Story. Published in The Global Mail.
- Radio Award: Another Stolen Generation by Carol Dowling from Noongar Radio in Perth.
- Literature Award: Jayne Newling for Missing Christopher: A Mother's story of Tragedy, Grief and Love.

Source: Australian Human Rights Commission (<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/>)

MY WORLD SURVEY

Over 7 million people from 194 countries will have participated in MY World: the United Nations survey for a better world. The vast majority of MY World Votes (over five million) were collected offline via paper ballots. Approximately 1 in every 1,000 people around the world has had the opportunity to say what matters most to them and their answers continue to be shared with policy makers at all levels. The overwhelming majority of participants are young people under 30 from low to medium HDI (Human Development Index) countries. There is almost equal participation between men and women.

At the Launch of the MY World Survey, Jan Eliasson, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General commented, “The MDGs have proven to be a powerful tool in embodying a shared global vision and development framework addressing poverty and hunger and advance human development – however the MDGs did not adequately address many other issues such as productive employment, social protection, inequalities, social exclusion, peace and security, governance, the rule of law and human rights. The Post-2015 development agenda aims to be the “most inclusive development agenda the world has ever seen” according to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. It aims to bring humanity together under a common aspiration: the wellbeing of present and future generations; an agenda for people and planet. Today we are celebrating 7 million people voices that had been gathered through the MY World Survey, including the voices of the most marginalised groups.”

MY World was developed with one clear goal in mind —to reach out to people all over the world— and ask them: “What would make your life better?”

Taking advantage of grass roots partnerships and technology unavailable when the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were set in 2000, the intention is to play a part in making the new Sustainable Development Agenda inclusive, relevant and popular —because what the MDGs have taught us is that we work better together.

MY World, an important part of a larger UN ‘global conversation’ initiative, has taken the discussion from the halls of power and policy rooms to the people of the world and asked them: “Are we talking about the right things?”

Using a combination of off-line, on-line and mobile phone technologies, the survey has reached some of the most marginalized members of our society and helped them play their part in our shared future. They have been asked to pick six out of 16 priorities for a better life —and their answers have helped build a dataset like none other. Now we can see the priorities of men versus women, old versus young, more education versus less education, rich versus poor, real time and in a way never been seen before. Not only does it paint a clear picture of the world people want —education, health, jobs— but it shows that this holds true whoever you are or wherever you live. In this, it seems, we are truly united.

The overwhelming majority of the respondents prioritize “A good education”. This is the case across all age groups, genders, education levels and HDI rankings.

To View the MY World Survey Report see:
<https://myworld2015.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/wethepeoples.pdf>