



The Bluestocking Institute

for Global Peace and Justice

Annual Report 2012-2013

Purpose

The Bluestocking Institute fosters dialogue on issues of global importance including peace building, sustainable development and social movements. Its purpose is to inform and inspire people to become active and engaged citizens in their local communities and beyond. We work in four main areas: globalisation, social inclusion, knowledge and power, and peace and conflict. The Institute provides public education through workshops, discussion groups, publications and its website.

Report from the Management Committee

Over the past financial year (1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013), we've been focused on community education and scholarly engagement with contemporary debates. We've done this through monthly discussion groups held in Perth, teaching a community short course on globalisation at the Mature Adults Learning Association (MALA), beginning a book and film club, and continuing to compile a book on how people are changing the production, consumption and disposal of everyday items. We look forward to continuing the work of the Bluestocking Institute in the coming year.

- Sky Croeser, Shae Garwood, Michelle Hackett, Kelly Gerard, Lucy Roberts, Kate Riddell, Liza Beinart, and Christalla Yakinthou

Activities

Short Course

Bluestocking delivered a short course on globalisation at MALA (Mature Age Learning Association) in Aug-Sept 2012, with five weekly, 1.5-hour sessions. (This course was taught at UWA Extension in 2011). The course, *Globalisation: "Another world is possible"*, investigated globalisation's various faces: from the rise of terrorism and the role of the internet, to the infiltration of Coke and McDonalds to the four corners of the globe. MALA was chosen for this year's course location as a way for Bluestocking to extend its current reach to include mature age participants. The course participants gave very positive feedback, and MALA has requested that Bluestocking run similar courses in the future.

Discussion group

Our discussion series continued in 2012. Discussion topics followed current international news and events, and focused on issues of social and environmental concern. For each discussion, the topic was posted on the Bluestocking Blog and Facebook page, often with relevant articles attached for participants to read ahead of time, or for people to read who were unable to attend the discussion. Following the discussion, we posted a summary on the Bluestocking blog and opened up the discussion for comments. Topics included 'Uranium Mining and Fracking in Australia', 'Celebrating Bluestocking Week' and 'Cohousing and other innovative habitats'.

Book and film club

The Bluestocking Institute convened a book and film club during the financial year, which met for the first time on 21 April 2013. The group meets on a bi-monthly basis, and has thus far covered themes relating to the environment and climate change; feminism; and indigenous affairs. Each meeting produces a book review which is published on the Bluestocking Institute webpage and Facebook page. Membership of the bookclub is open to all members of the Institute and meetings are advertised in advance via the webpage and Facebook page. Members who have attended the meetings have reported it is a useful and interesting forum.

Publications

We are continuing our work on developing a book as part of the Lifecycles project, now called *Lessons for Social Change in the Global Economy: Voices from the Field*. The book provides a global perspective on different efforts to create social change: contributors ground their case studies in strong relationships with activists and advocates, while introductory and concluding chapters aid the reader in understanding the common themes which tie these case studies together. We are happy to announce that the book will be published by Lexington Books in January 2014.

Book synopsis:

In the face of globalization's massive social and economic transformations and dislocation and persistent inequality, activists, labour organisers and advocacy NGOs are seeking, and creating, change beyond the confines of formal state politics and across national borders. Given the breadth of local issues activists face, the ways they define the problem and seek redress vary widely. *Voices from the Field* provides a unique perspective on these efforts, gathering together into one volume concrete examples of the implementation of different strategies for social change that highlight the challenges involved. This provides useful lessons for those involved in social change, as well as for those studying it. Contributors to the volume are scholars and practitioners around the world, and draw on strong connections with people working in the field to improve working conditions and environmental standards of global production systems. This allows the reader to develop a more comprehensive and grounded understanding of strategies for social change.

The strength of the book is in the balance between breadth and specificity. It provides an overview of the themes of social change, which contextualises and draws common threads from the chapters grounded in specific geographic locations and political spaces of change. The chapters analyse environmental and social problems and varying degrees of success activists have had in regulating industries, containing environmental hazards, and/or harnessing aspects of an industry for positive social and economic change. Contributors draw upon different ways of creating change, which include corporate social responsibility schemes, fair trade regimes, and community radio. By providing an insight into the potential and limitations of actions taken at different levels, the book encourages a critical perspective on efforts for social change, grounded in an understanding of how conditions around the world can affect these activities.

Looking ahead

- We will continue the bi-monthly Book and Film Club held in Perth and on-line.
- The Lifecycles project will complete its second phase in January 2014, with the publication of the Lifecycles book.
- We plan to introduce a 'Featured Research' section on the Bluestocking webpage/s, in which one or more participants summarise their research, in non-specialist language. The aim of this project is to create more opportunities for researchers to communicate their findings to the general public.
- Bluestocking plans to set up a writing circle, for anyone working on an article, book, or essay who would like to share their work with others. Members of the group can provide support to each other during the writing process and provide constructive criticism when requested. The group may meet in person and/or online.

Membership and online activities

The Bluestocking website was revamped and transferred from doteasy.com to wix.com this year. The new website aims to be more user-friendly, attractive and professional.

As of 30 June 2013, the Bluestocking Institute had 63 members that signed up through the Bluestocking website and 110 people had joined the Bluestocking Institute via its Facebook page.

The Bluestocking blog site had approximately 3600 pageviews over the financial year.

Governance

The management committee is responsible for the governance of the Institute. For the financial year, the committee board consisted of Kelly Gerard (Chair), Sky Croeser (Vice-Chair), Shae Garwood (Treasurer), Michelle Hackett (Secretary), Lucy Roberts, Liza Beinart, Kate Riddell and Christalla Yakinthou.

Treasurer's Report:

The balance of the account as of 30 June 2013 was \$1067.03.