

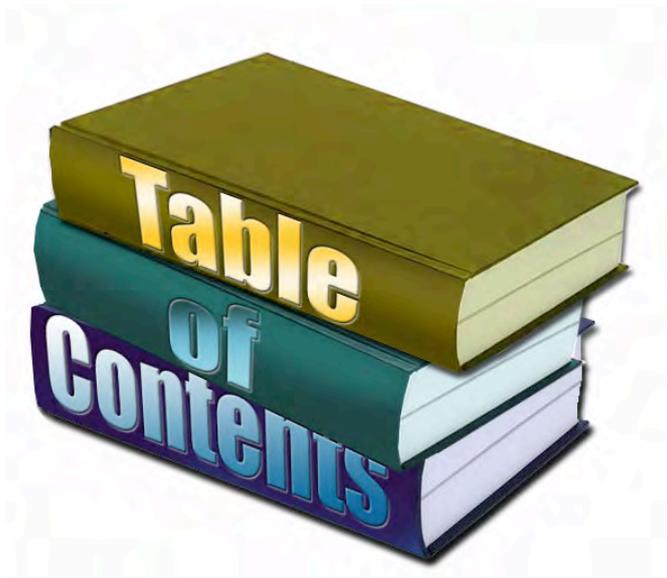
UNITARIAN WOMEN'S GROUP



NEWSLETTER

December 2009





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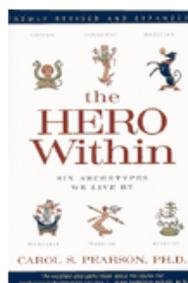
HOW TO BE A HEROINE

UWG WEEKEND AT GREAT HUCKLOW - 30th OCTOBER- 1st NOVEMBER 2009
(contributed by Anne Bodman, Margaret Pyle, Sonya Richards and Chris Thompson)

Twenty four women gathered for the weekend and twenty two of them enjoyed a happy half hour with a glass of wine whilst Anne Bodman, our administrator and computer expert, and Chris Thompson wrestled with the Powerpoint projector.

After a buffet supper followed by housekeeping announcements (don't bang doors after 10pm etc.) the first part of the AGM took place, the Minutes of which are in this newsletter. At its start, we lit a candle in remembrance of Patricia Walker Hesson and sang one of her favourites, Spirit of Life.

After the business matters, Chris introduced the theme of the weekend. The evening ended after a short epilogue from Sonya Richardson and Margaret Pyle in which they introduced everyday heroines. People then dispersed to chat in the lounge, go to bed or visit the Queen Anne.



Next morning Chris explained, with an excellent power point presentation, the six archetypes we live by, with reference to the book "The Hero Within" by Carol S. Pearson. These archetypes gave us a tool for classifying heroines. They are:



the Innocent



the Orphan



the Wanderer



the Warrior



the Altruist



the Magician

Before the small group activities, the three organisers gave a talk about their personal heroines.

Margaret spoke about Lady Eve Balfour:



Sonya about Dame Ethel Smyth:



and Chris about Marie Curie:



The small group activities generated plenty of interesting discussions, full of insightful comments, and revealed a split between those who believe that we all have the potential for heroism and those who think that heroines are too distant from most of us and prefer the term 'role model'.

After lunch there was an afternoon of free time for walks, outings or chatting.

When we reassembled there was an opportunity for people to talk about their own personal heroines. These ranged from well known and famous women to unsung heroines.

Afterwards, one member said that as she looked round the ring of women and thought about their lives, full of challenges and difficulties, yet always lived with courage and hope, she realised that the women present formed a circle of heroines.



After another well deserved happy half hour and dinner, we gathered in the Peach Room for a drama activity. This was great fun, displaying people's thespian talents to great advantage. Margaret Robinson closed the evening with an excellent epilogue.

Sunday morning, we concluded the AGM. David Shaw, as always, conducted a very interesting Service in the Chapel on the theme of self confidence. Many of the readings and hymns he had chosen were written by women.

At our closing ceremony before lunch, we remembered Kath Mayor by lighting a candle and reading one of her poems, before singing Flying Free, her favourite hymn.

The weekend of fun and loving friendship, reflection and discussion was enjoyed by everybody and voted a success.

Books used in preparation for UWG weekend 2009

Main source:

- Pearson, Carol S, *The Hero Within: six archetypes we live by* (3rd edition), 1998 Harper One USA
- Brander, Muchael, *Eve Balfour: the founder of the Soil Association and voice of the organic movement*, The Gleneil Press 2003
- Legget, Jane, *Local Heroines: a women's history gazetteer to England, Scotland and Wales*, Pandora 1988
- Curie, Eve, *Madam Curie*, 1938 Gallimard

Others perused:

- Montefiore, Simon Sebag, *101 World Heroes: Great men and women for an unheroic age*, 2007 Quercus , London (Only 13 heroines! CT)
- Jaffé, Deborah, *Ingenious Women*, 2003 Sutton publishing UK
- Ruston, Jessica, *Heroines: the bold, the bad and the beautiful*, Long Barn Books

The rest of the information came off the internet

In response to requests this newsletter includes:

- *a list of the books used to prepare the weekend*
- *the reading from a book by Lynne Truss which suggests an explanation for the absence of heroic women in fairy tales, mythology and history*
- *the poem by Kath Mayor read at the closing ceremony*
- *a quote from Judi Dench on the subject of heroines*

“Few people come under the title of heroines, to my mind. How would I define a heroine? As somebody who inspires you to do better things? To reach for higher things? Not to emulate, but to set your sights higher. They certainly don’t need to be perfect - who’s perfect anyway? My father’s hero was Napoleon.”

- Judi Dench



SWEDEN'S PROSTITUTION SOLUTION:

Why Hasn't Anyone Tried This Before?

In a centuries deep sea of clichés despairing that 'prostitution will always be with us', one country's success stands out as a solitary beacon lighting the way. In just five years Sweden has dramatically reduced the number of its women in prostitution. In the capital city of Stockholm the number of women in street prostitution has been reduced by two thirds, and the number of johns has been reduced by 80%. There are other major Swedish cities where street prostitution has all but disappeared. Gone too, for the most part, are the renowned Swedish brothels and massage parlors which proliferated during the last three decades of the twentieth century when prostitution in Sweden was legal.

In addition, the number of foreign women now being trafficked into Sweden for sex is nil. The Swedish government estimates that in the last few years only 200 to 400 women and girls have been annually sex trafficked into Sweden, a figure that's negligible compared to the 15,000 to 17,000 females yearly sex trafficked into neighboring Finland. No other country, nor any other social experiment, has come anywhere near Sweden's promising results.

By what complex formula has Sweden managed this feat? Amazingly, Sweden's strategy isn't complex at all. It's tenets, in fact, seem so simple and so firmly anchored in common sense as to immediately spark the question, "Why hasn't anyone tried this before?"

Sweden's Groundbreaking 1999 Legislation

In 1999, after years of research and study, Sweden passed legislation that a) criminalizes the buying of sex, and b) decriminalizes the selling of sex. The novel rationale behind this legislation is clearly stated in the government's literature on the law:

"In Sweden prostitution is regarded as an aspect of male violence against women and children. It is officially acknowledged as a form of exploitation of women and children and constitutes a significant social problem... gender equality will remain unattainable so long as men buy, sell and exploit women and children by prostituting them."

In addition to the two pronged legal strategy, a third and essential element of Sweden's prostitution legislation provides for ample and comprehensive social service funds aimed at helping any prostitute who wants to get out, and additional funds to educate the public. As such, Sweden's unique strategy treats prostitution as a form of violence against women in which the men who exploit by buying sex are criminalized, the mostly female prostitutes are treated as victims who need help, and the public is educated in order to counteract the historical male bias that has long stultified thinking on prostitution. To securely anchor their view in firm legal ground, Sweden's prostitution legislation was passed as part and parcel of the country's 1999 omnibus violence against women legislation.

An Early Obstacle in the Path

Interestingly, despite the country's extensive planning prior to passing the legislation, the first couple years into this novel project nothing much happened at all. Police made very few arrests of johns and prostitution in Sweden, which had previously been legalized, went on pretty much as it had gone on before. Naysayers the world over responded to the much publicized failure with raucous heckling, "See? Prostitution always has been, and it always will be."

But eminently secure in the thinking behind their plan, the Swedes paid no heed. They quickly identified, then solved the problem. The hang-up, the place where their best efforts had snagged, was that law enforcement wasn't doing it's part. The police themselves, it was determined, needed in-depth training and orientation to what the Swedish public and legislature already understood profoundly. Prostitution is a form of male violence against women. The exploiter/buyers need to be punished, and the victim/prostitutes need to be helped. The Swedish government put up extensive funds and the country's police and prosecutors, from the top ranks down to the officer on the beat, were given intensive training and a clear message that the country meant business. It was then that the country quickly began to see the unequalled results.

Today, not only do the Swedish people continue to overwhelming support their country's approach to prostitution (80% of people in favor according to national opinion polls), but the country's police and prosecutors have also come around to be among the legislation's staunchest supporters. Sweden's law enforcement has found that the prostitution legislation benefits them in dealing with all sex crimes, particularly in enabling them to virtually wipe out the organized crime element that plagues other countries where prostitution has been legalized or regulated.

The Failure of Legalization and/or Regulation Strategies

This Swedish experiment is the single, solitary example in a significant sized population of a prostitution policy that works. In 2003, the Scottish government in looking to revamp its own approach to prostitution enlisted the University of London to do a comprehensive analysis of outcomes of prostitution policies in other countries. In addition to reviewing Sweden's program, the researchers chose Australia, Ireland, and the Netherlands to represent various strategies of legalizing and/or regulating prostitution. The researchers did not review the situation where prostitution is criminalized across the board as it is in the US. The outcome of that approach is already well known. The failures and futility of the revolving door of arresting and rearresting prostitutes is all too familiar the world over.

But the outcomes, as revealed in the Univ. of London study, in the states under review that had legalized or regulated prostitution were found to be just as discouraging or even more discouraging than the traditional all round criminalization. In each case the results were dramatic in the negative.

Legalization and/or regulation of prostitution, according to the study, led to:

- A dramatic increase in all facets of the sex industry,
- A dramatic increase in the involvement of organized crime in the sex industry,
- A dramatic increase in child prostitution,
- An explosion in the number of foreign women and girls trafficked into the region, and
- Indications of an increase in violence against women.

In the state of Victoria, Australia, where a system of legalized, regulated brothels was established, there was such an explosion in the number of brothels that it immediately overwhelmed the system's ability to regulate them, and just as quickly these brothels became a mire of organized crime, corruption, and related crimes. In addition, surveys of the prostitutes working under systems of legalization and regulation find that the prostitutes themselves continue to feel coerced, forced, and unsafe in the business.

A survey of legal prostitutes under the showcase Netherlands legalization policy finds that 79% say they want to get out of the sex business. And though each of the legalization/regulation programs promised help for prostitutes who want to leave prostitution, that help never materialized to any meaningful degree. In contrast, in Sweden the government followed through with ample social services funds to help those prostitutes who wanted to get out. 60% of the prostitutes in Sweden took advantage of the well funded programs and succeeded in exiting prostitution.*

* *The full Scottish government report on prostitution policies can be seen at www.scottish.parliament.uk*

So Why Hasn't Anyone Tried This Before?

Why, then, with Sweden's success so clearly lighting the way, aren't others quickly adopting the plan? Well, some are. Both Finland and Norway are on the verge of making the move. And if Scotland takes the advise of its own study, it will go in that direction too. But, the answer to the question of why other countries aren't jumping to adopt Sweden's plan is probably the same as the answer to the question of why governments haven't tried Sweden's solution before.

In order to see prostitutes as victims of male coercion and violence it requires that a government first switch from seeing prostitution from the male point of view to the female point of view. And most, if not virtually all, countries of the world still see prostitution and every other issue from a predominantly male point of view.

Sweden, in contrast, has led the way in promoting equality for women for a very long time. In 1965, for example, Sweden criminalized rape in marriage. Even by the 1980's there were states in the United States that still hadn't made that fundamental recognition of women's rights to control her own body. The Swedish government also stands out in having the highest proportion of women at all levels of government. In 1999, when Sweden passed its groundbreaking prostitution legislation, the Swedish Parliament was composed of nearly 50% women.

Sweden's prostitution policy was first designed and lobbied for by Sweden's organization of women's shelters and was then fostered and fought for by a bipartisan effort of Sweden's uniquely powerful and numerous female parliamentarians. Nor has Sweden stopped there. In 2002, Sweden passed additional legislation bolstering the original prostitution legislation. The 2002 Act Prohibiting Human Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation closed some of the loopholes in the earlier legislation and further strengthened the government's ability to go after the network of persons that surround and support prostitution, such as the recruiters, the transporters, and the hosts.

And Why Can't We Copy Sweden's Success Here?

While it's probably true that we and other countries are still much more steeped in patriarchal darkness than Sweden, there's no reason we can't push now for the policy changes that Sweden has made. The beauty of it is that once the ground has been broken and the proof of success has been established, it should be ever much easier to convince others to go down that path.

- Submitted by Anne Bodman - ©Marie De Santis, Women's Justice Center, www.justicewomen.com

IN MEMORIAM

We remember our members who have passed on.....



KATH MAYOR

Kath Mayor died peacefully on 26th October 2009. She was born in 1915 near Manchester, into a Unitarian family and had one brother Roy, to whom she was devoted. Sadly he died as a young adult.

Bad eyesight precluded Kath from a career as a teacher or a librarian so she was employed in the accounts departments of various engineering firms. In 1944 she married Albert, whose work in the Admiralty meant that they lived in various places around the country. Wherever she was, Kath always joined the local Unitarian congregation.

Kath was a passionate supporter and tireless worker for Send-a-Child-to-Hucklow. She wrote 24 booklets called “Junior Network” for REYD, beginning in 1976. These booklets were aimed at 7-11 year olds. Kath wrote stories, poems and devised the activities included in them. She also wrote many “Tales to Ponder” for the Inquirer.

Kath attended Family Holiday Conference weeks for many years and contributed to the famous Hucklow Herald. She had countless friends in the Movement. She was good company and a great raconteur, with a fund of interesting and amusing stories, both of her family and of Unitarianism.

Kath took many excellent Services and was a founder member of the Bath Fellowship of which she was made Life President.

She had an extensive knowledge and great love of English Literature and gained an Open University degree when she was sixty.

Her health declined in later years and it was through the devotion of Frances Shipley and her partner Steve, that she was able to remain in her own home.

Kath will be greatly missed by everyone who knew her. We will not see her like again.

IN MEMORIAMcont'd...



PATRICIA WALKER-HESSON 1939 - 2009

Patricia Walker (who died on 2nd October) was one of the earliest members of UWG and she will be missed for her enthusiasm and friendship.

I met Patricia in 1982 and she helped me to turn my life round. I had come to London to get away from a marriage that had become violent and was staying at Chiswick Refuge. I met her at the Unitarian Women's Group at Essex Church and she was immediately sympathetic and invited me to dinner (and fed me roast lamb) and I met her partner Donald. Gradually we found out more about each other and she became interested in the Refuge and what she might be able to do to help. When she came to visit she was warm and encouraging to everyone she met. She helped to put on a 21st birthday celebration for Lu, mother of two boys and later in the year arranged a 40th birthday party for me.

We had Unitarianism in common, shared a love of the theatre, books and art. We passed many comfortable evenings in her kitchen, me knitting, she crocheting, listening to the radio with Donald, who was blind, or in discussion about all kinds of topics. Patricia was very skillful at describing things clearly and concisely for Donald. She also used to touch him (on his cheek I think) and tell him "That's my smile".

She and I spent many Saturday afternoons together looking round the shops mostly in Hounslow or Hammersmith where if we were lucky we could find something new to wear for £5. These afternoons always had to include a cup of tea and a cake and we got to know a remarkable number of cafes!

Later she met and liked my four children and they accepted her as the person other than me whom they could completely trust. We spent Christmas day together for many years.

When my family moved to Acton it was no longer possible to pop in to each other's homes and the ties between us loosened a little but we still knew we could completely rely on each other.

At her 50th birthday party Patricia told us that she was embarking on a part time degree. She chose to study geography as one of her subjects because it was an interest she and Donald could share. She planned her study time carefully and after seven years hard work she attained a first.

Soon after this she had to care for Donald full time until his death in 1997.

In 1995 Patricia began to suffer from arthritis though, once she had a balance of medication, she did not allow it to hold her back and she was able to enjoy travelling to Australia, China, U.S.A., Morocco, Libya, Cyprus and France.

She also wanted to give time to her spiritual life and she attended the Meditation Fellowship and Summer School at which she acted as dean for two years. She felt that Unitarianism was one of the best things that she had found in life and she wanted to pass that gift to as many people as possible.

-Juliet Edwards

THE HEROINES

BY PENNY

WINDSOR



We are the terraced women
piled row upon row on the sagging, slipping hillsides of our lives.
We tug reluctant children up slanting streets
the pushchair wheels wedging in the ruts.
Breathless and bad-tempered we shift the Tesco
carrier-bags
from hand to hand
and stop to watch the town.

The hilltops creep away like children playing games.

Our other children shriek against the schoolyard rails -
"There's Mandy's mum, John's mum, Dave's mum,
Kate's mum, Ceri's mother, Tracey's mummy".
We wave with hands scarred by groceries and too
much washing-up
catching echoes as we pass of old wild games.

After lunch, more bread and butter, tea,
we dress in blue and white and pink and white checked
overalls
and do the house and scrub the porch and sweep the
street
and clean all the little terraces
up and down and up and down and up and down the
hill.

Later, before the end-of-school bell rings,
all the babies are asleep
Mandy's mum joins Ceri's mum across the street
running to avoid the rain
and Dave's mum and John's mum - the others too -
stop by for tea
and briefly we are the wild women
girls with secrets, travellers, engineers, courtesans, and
stars of fiction, films
plotting our escape like jail-birds
terraced, Tescoed prisoners rising from the household
dust like heroines.

SEX AND WOMEN AS PORTRAYED BY THE PORN INDUSTRY

The negative portrayal of women and sex by the porn industry is an alarming problem for society as a whole – especially since this problem has the backing of a multi-billion dollar industry that is funded by millions of people everyday.

The porn industry can be down right disrespectful of women in their descriptions and portrayals, with violent and derogatory terms often being used to indicate the rough nature of how the women appearing in the films are used and abused. Women are seen as sexual objects to be used for the physical pleasures and perversions of men. No matter how brutal or invasive the act may be, women are also shown as enjoying it immensely – and in fact desiring the same things. Women are perceived in such a way that they would like nothing more than to have sex with any man with a pick up line and some easily removable pants, but contrary to what some men may allow themselves to believe, this is not the case. There is nothing wrong with seeing a female as a beautiful and sexual being, but that is not all that they are – and most desire much more than sexual gratification (especially if its in weird and unflattering ways).

The main problem with this portrayal is that many porn users are exposed to porn at a young age, which may lead to an early lack of respect for females and for sex itself. This in turn can breed a society in which not only is it the norm for men to see women as sexual objects, but young girls may be conditioned into believing that this is normal.

We live in a society where sexual values and ethics are fading, as young men are all too willing to have sex with the first willing female they can find and young women do not value themselves and the act of sex enough to wait for the right time and partner. The sexual antics with no personal connection shown in porn movies can be seen as a contributing factor to the promotion of promiscuity and casual sex. Sex itself is not the problem here – it is the way in which it is used and portrayed by the pornographic industry.

Any act seen in a porn movie can be considered to be acceptable, as long as it is done with genuine love and consent by all those concerned (which is unlikely, especially in terms of group sex or any form of humiliation), and not for economic gain where it is used as a tool of trade. Sex is not a commodity to be filmed and sold and no matter what they are being paid, the “stars” of these films are going very cheaply. As with many multi million dollar industries, ignorance is indeed bliss, as the women who act in these films are treated like the objects that they convey.

If you watch a pornographic film, how do you know when you are watching an abused or psychologically damaged women “performing” or not? Perhaps you are funding the drug addiction of abused and humiliated women who are selling their dignity and respect for their next hit? The porn industry is rife with these kinds of stories, and many worse – so if you’re not sure where your money or attention is going, why fund or use any of it? There is genuine sexual fulfillment to be found in the real world, in real relationships – where there are no cameras, money and profit margins involved.

This was submitted by Anne Bodman and can be found at:

[http://www.infobarrel.com/
Sex_and_Women_as_Portrayed_by_the_Porn_Industry#comments](http://www.infobarrel.com/Sex_and_Women_as_Portrayed_by_the_Porn_Industry#comments)

CLOSING WORDS

by Kath Mayor

This is the journey we share
In thought and time,
A journey of hoping and seeking,
For by travelling together we find
A support and a love and a caring.
It is not that we all view the same
Horizon, or trace in our mapping
A route that in every detail
Is planned by the rest.
We talk and debate and discuss
The possible methods of seeing,
Of hearing and thinking and dreaming,
And sometimes we change our perspective
In the light of the talking and living
(Especially the living).
But still we press forward together
With a strength we could never find singly.
This journey we share has its highlights,
Its times when the caravan pauses,
And we greet one another, and gather
Together to worship with singing
The Spirit we cannot define,
But whose presence we feel
In our midst.
Then in faith we move on.

Dear Sonya & Margaret

Thank you very much for your letter and cheque, sent on behalf of the Unitarian Women's Group. I enclose a receipt for £78 and please will you pass on to the members of the UWG our most grateful thanks for this kind donation, we do appreciate your support.

It is so good that we can help each other and work together.

With all good wishes

Eunice

Letter received from one of our members

Dear Danielle,



I have just received, and been reading the March 209 Newsletter, and the Report of the Conference last year. I then picked up our local weekly newspaper, and felt violated.

I know I am getting rather elderly to put it mildly, but I felt that what I was reading was exactly fulfilling your title "Positive Images of Women and Images that Kill Us Softly". I now copy part of the article about a local pub/restaurant staging "a pub theatre programme with a performance of the Vagina Monologues, by Gambolling Arena on Saturday May 9th.....Eve Ensler's unforgettable Vagina Monologues, which was recently performed in front of sell-out shows in Liverpool.....The Vagina Monologues sees four local actors following in the footsteps of some of the world's most talented and famous women, from Kate Winslet to Whoopi Goldberg, as

they bring to life a hilariously witty and moving collection of tales."

I wonder if the said ladies know about it, and if so, what they think.

I have never heard or read of anything similar using the appropriate part of their anatomy so far as men are concerned. Neither do I want to.

Coming straight after hearing about the rape of a two-year old I just wonder what on earth the world is coming to.

Sorry, but I am feeling very upset about the whole disgusting business.

Daphne Roberts.

Do you know - I pressed 'send' and got the following message which I think absolutely says it all - "Your message regarding UWG Conference 2008 is likely to offend the average reader. You might consider toning it down" And I was given the choice of "Send Anyway" or "Cancel".

I just burst out laughing.

I feel a bit better now, other people think the same as me!

Letter received from Rev. David Usher



Dear Anne,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of The Unitarian Women's Group.

There seems to have been some misunderstanding, and I apologise on behalf of the Annual Meetings Panel if our initial letter explaining the changes was unclear in its intent. As an Affiliated Society, The Unitarian Women's Group will be offered a one-hour slot between the hours of 9.00 and 10.00 on one of the three mornings. It is for the Women's Group to decide what it wants to do with that slot, but there is no question about whether you will be granted it. All

Affiliated Societies which ask for a morning slot will be granted one.

The slots which are subject to the discretion of the Annual Meetings Panel are those in the afternoon, when the commissions and panels have been invited to submit their programme ideas in addition to the opportunities they will have to report on their work of the past year and to present their plans for the present and future year. The Panel is keen to ensure a high quality and diversity of programmes - in style, content and target audience - rather than simply scheduling whatever is submitted regardless of their likely appeal or relevance.

The next meeting of the Annual Meetings Panel will be a site visit in Nottingham on November 13th, and I will raise your concerns. You will see that I have copied in the members of the Panel on this correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

David Usher

Rev. David Usher

5 Westerham Road

Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 2PX

01732 465248

davidusher@dpa.org.uk

EXTRACT FROM “REFLECTIONS ON CULTURE” BY LYNNE TRUSS



At the cinema these days there is a rather peculiar advert for jeans. It is basically a witty rewriting of Cinderella, but since it appears to have been edited by a madman run wild with a bacon-slicer, the narrative unfolds so precipitately that it takes at least two viewings to get the gist. Anyway, it goes something like this. Clock strikes bong for midnight. Boy rushes off without his jeans. Girl holds jeans to face with funny wistful-but-determined look in her eyes, then hawks jeans around town getting big fat men to try them on. Finally, she locates her beloved, who buttons up a treat. And that's it.

Allowing for how difficult it is to make trousers even slightly interesting, this ad is a huge success.

The thing about fairy tales, surely, is that they can be used to sell anything; indeed, it is almost their primary function. Anyone who thinks it is radical of the Disney studio to turn the heroine of Beauty and the Beast into a modern-thinking self-determined book-lover (“There must be more than this provincial life!” She sings discontentedly, several times) is right in only one respect. Yes, it is radical of the Disney studio. Previously Disney sold other things; now it is selling this. A generation of girls grew up believing that to be a heroine (Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty) all you required were a decent whistling technique, first-class handiness with a broom, and an ability to sleep for extended periods in a glass box without mussing your make-up or dribbling on your frock.

And, as values go, these were probably OK for the time.

But my point is this. In the traditional folk tale, women were not these puny types. Big tears did not roll down their pretty faces, and they did not wear rouge. Instead, they rescued princes from enchantment, tipped witches into ovens, all that. The reason we know only of the rescue-me namby-pambies is that we inherit our knowledge of folk tales from the Victorians, whose respect for divergent viewpoints, especially in the realm of sexual politics, was notoriously meagre. Funny how The Sleeping Prince got dropped from the canon, wasn't it? I wonder why.

UNITARIAN WOMEN'S GROUP

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 30th October- 1st November 2009

In Attendance

Ann Bateman, Anne Bodman, Juliet Edwards, Mary Frodsham, Sheila Jones, Jean Mason, Cathie Masztalerz, Margaret Pyle, Sonya Richards, Barbara Smith, Christine Thompson, Linda King, Jackie Richards, Ingrid Tavkar, Shama Joshi, Dawn Buckle, Penny Johnson, Dorothy Haughton, Margaret Robinson, Claire Maddocks, Shirley Fieldhouse, Linda Koncowoj.

Chair for the meeting: Sheila Jones

Sheila expressed thanks to the Steering group of Christine Thompson, Sonya Richards and Margaret Pyle in organising the weekend's theme and activities.

1. Apologies

Christine Martin, Helen Parsons, Danielle Wilson, Gillian Peel, Colleen Burns, Stephanie Ramage, Margaret Hamer. Glen Williams, Sue Cooper.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 26th to 28th September 2008.

The minutes were corrected to state the correct meeting date and then were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Matters for Discussion

4.1 UWG slot at 2010 GA in Nottingham

The GA arrangements had changed so that slots for the various affiliated groups were subject to a bidding process made by the GA panel and they were not guaranteed. In addition the timing of the slots, from 9 am to 10 am, made the arrangement of a speaker more costly and onerous than in previous GA meetings.

For these reasons it was agreed not to bid for a slot at the GA.

Cathie was a member of the committee who had been tasked by the Executive to consider how the GA could be run more effectively. She explained that the committee had made recommendations that the GA should act more as a flagship and celebration of the movement with keynote speakers and such like as opposed to a vehicle for groups to carry out their AGM meetings.

Jean Mason considered that the Executive should have consulted the groups before making changes and proposed that the UWG write to explain how the changes have made it impractical to book a slot and speaker.

This motion was carried and the Administrator would send an appropriate letter. A draft was subsequently agreed which would be sent to David Usher, the Executive Committee and the Annual Meetings Panel plus a copy to Cathie as she was a member of the Panel which made the recommendations for the G. A.

Action: Anne Bodman

4.2 UWG Delegate to GA Meeting

Cathie's report as 2009 GA delegate was circulated. The meeting thanked her for her report and for the effective delivery of the UWG motion at the G.A.

It was proposed by Dawn Buckle and unanimously agreed that Christine Thompson would be the 2010 UWG delegate. As well as the normal delegate duties of reporting back, attending meetings, voting, speaking if necessary and carrying the UWG banner, there would be an additional duty of organising the table and display.

Sonya and Margaret were thanked for their efforts in organising the display in 2009 and congratulated on their initiative in producing and selling UWG mugs.

It was agreed that the administrator would apply for a Table and Display. The cost would be £50.

Action: Anne Bodman

It was agreed that the display should comprise of this weekend's theme of Heroines and also next year's planned workshop. The delegate would organise the display with assistance from this year's steering group.

Action: Christine Thompson

4.3 UWG Motion to GA

There was disappointment that last year's UWG motion to recruit a Social Justice Officer had been passed but the Executive had not as yet taken any action.

The administrator confirmed that she had not received any proposals for motions in advance of the meeting.

In the light of receiving no proposals it was agreed that a motion would not be put forward.

4.4 Steering Group

The following appointments were all agreed unanimously:

Administrator – Anne Bodman with Margaret Hamer

Membership Secretary – Stephanie Ramage

Newsletter Editor – Danielle Wilson

Treasurer – Stephanie Ramage

The administrator would send out a full membership list by email.

Action: Anne Bodman

4.5 Conference 2010

Subject to confirmation from The Nightingale Centre, it was agreed that the UWG weekend in 2010 would be Friday 29th, Saturday 30th October and Sunday 31st October.

Jean Mason stated that payment arrangements had changed so that full fees had to be paid up front to the Nightingale Centre. There would also be a charge of £5 per person per weekend for coffee and also a corkage charge for selling glasses of wine. Subsequent investigation by Ingrid showed that fees had to be paid 28 days in advance.

Ingrid Tavkar offered to be booking secretary to organise the letters asking for initial deposits, reminders to pay the balance to the Nightingale Centre and such like. The meeting thanked her and accepted her kind offer.

The Nightingale Centre was subsequently booked for the weekend of 29th to 31st October 2010. The centre would be shared with the delegates of the Earth Spirit Network with the lounge being a communal area for gathering and relaxation.

The meeting thanked Sonya, Margaret and Christine for this year's theme of Heroines. It was unanimously agreed that it had been well organised and everyone had enjoyed the experience and learnt a great deal.

Cathie agreed to organise the theme for 2010. It was agreed as a principle for future UWG weekends that any co-opted participant outside the UWG who gave their time and expertise in helping run the sessions would have accommodation costs paid for and be reimbursed for any other expenses connected with the running of the weekend.

4.6 Collaboration with the Women's League.

There had been an informal meeting between the UWG and Women's League at the GA. Mary Frodsham reported that agreed areas of collaboration were;

1. Meningitis Trust Charity
2. Joint Leaflet
3. Treatment of women in prison.

Penny Johnson had now become a member of the UWG and was welcomed wholeheartedly. She agreed to be the link person between the two organisations.

Barbara Smith added that the meeting at the GA had been very positive and she was looking forward to the two groups working together.

4.7 Treasurer's Report.

Copies of the report were handed out. It was noted only a few people had paid subscriptions. However Jean Mason had collected the subscriptions of the weekend's delegates.

The meeting conveyed thanks to Stephanie for her work as treasurer.

5. Date of next meeting

29th to 31st October 2010 at the Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow.

DIARY DATES

**29-31 October 2010 - UWG Annual Meeting
@ Great Hucklow**

* * *

**31 March 2010 - UWG Annual Subs due for
2009/10 - Please send to Stephanie Ramage,
address in UWG Contacts box below.**

**If you require a receipt, please send SAE with
your payment.**

* * *

**8-11 April 2010 - General Assembly @
Nottingham**



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