

FUTURES

BULLETIN



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD FUTURES STUDIES FEDERATION | VOL 27/4 & VOL 28/1

A Bright Future for Kure

60 participants from 15 countries spent three days participating in the 18th World Conference,

November 13-16, 2002 held in Kure City, Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan. The conference was small by WFSF standards, yet the hosts, the mayor and city planning staff of Kure City made up for it with first-class accommodations, top-notch conference planning and organization, and lavish cultural and culinary events. Conference participants engaged in two days of panels and workshops that dealt with a wide range of topics including: cultural personality, macrohistory and peace, local government transformation, and post-human futures (Sustaining Humanity in a Sea of Change); the futures of oceans, water culture in Taiwan, whales as canaries, emerging development and issues in the deep sea (Sustaining Oceans); and, therapy for futurists, new maps for deep analysis, and a "state of futures education" (Sustaining Futures Studies).

Our hosts provided excellent transportation and translation services and treated us to delightful



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ceremonies and food. There was a wide assortment of excellent food from East and West and drummers and acrobatics! We had a both beautiful and sobering excursion to Miyajima Island and Hiroshima's nuclear bomb memorial and cultural park.

Continued on page 21

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Ideologies of Futurists (Conclusion)
- Kure Highlights & Reports
- Tamkang FS Education Conference
- Budapest
- Prague

contents

MARCH 2003 -- COMBINED ISSUE VOL 27 NO 4/VOL 28 NO 1

- 1 A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR KURE
- 3 ANNOUNCEMENT: BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE
- 4 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
- 7 UNCUT, UNEDITED AND NOT-YET-RATED: DISCUSSIONS OF FUTURES IDEOLOGIES (PART 3)
by Richard Lum et al.
- 14 PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED
- 16 2002 PRESIDENT'S REPORT
- 18 GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT
- 22 REFLECTIONS ON KURE
by Alexandra Montgomery
- 23 BOOK REVIEW: TRANSFORMING COMMUNICATION
by Glenn Hough
- 24 TAIWAN FUTURE EDUCATION CONFERENCE, TAMKANG UNIVERSITY by
Patricia Kelly



Alexandra Montgomery is a graduate student intern for the WFSF, will graduate in May 2003 from the University of Houston-Clear Lake with a M.S. in Studies of the Future. Some of her interests include the future of futures studies, ethnographic futures research, and environmental scanning.

She belongs to the UHCL Student Futurist Association and the World Future Society. She was among the 2002 Best of Clear Lake.

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Contributions by members in the form of announcements, news articles and / or features are always welcome.

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Announcement: Budapest Futures Course

ACTION FOR THE FUTURE Youth for a Less Selfish Future

**August 17-23 2003, Budapest
Futures Studies Centre, BUESPA**

The World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF), a non-governmental organisation supported by UNESCO decided in 1997 to revive the European Course on Futures Studies in Budapest as "Budapest Futures Course" (BFC). The course director is an executive board member, Prof. Dr. Erzsébet Nováky, Head of the Futures Studies Centre at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, Budapest, Hungary.

From the special cultural-political position of Hungary between West and East, North and South, Budapest represents a particular culture reflecting at the same time the values of the Euro-Atlantic development as well as those of alternative social frames. The Budapest Futures Course emphasises the expression and the possible synthesis of the different cultural, political and economic traditions, which shape the coming futures today.

Backgrounds and target

The Budapest Futures Course 1999 started a discussion on the theme "Youth for a Less Selfish Future", which became the main principle of the programme planned for the long range. The expression 'for a less selfish future' points out that the leading principle is future orientation in harmony with the new programmes of UNESCO: 'future talks' and 'future discussions'.

The BFC 1999 has emphasised 'youth'. Our task was to study the future orientation of youth and to compare the results of international surveys. The presented papers, surveys and the outcomes of the course have been published by the Futures Studies Centre, Budapest.

Underlining 'less selfish' BFC 2001 aimed at discussing new values on which new societies can be built. We focused on how these changes appear in futures studies and in future visions of the youth. The programme concentrated on the

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cultural surroundings of shifts in values. The course was structured on a three dimensional approach: time, space and field. Time refers to the global need to changing values. While the technological revolution has been transforming the economic and political subsystems of developed countries, the dominance of the cultural leadership is still ahead. Space-dimension incorporates the different local appearance of values and social visions. The field represents different aspects of values, such as sociology, politics, natural and artificial environment, technology etc. It is only the materialisation of values that enables cultures to dominate social development.

The Budapest Futures Course 2003 plans to discover institutions and movements acting for the future in order to network the international efforts. This makes complete the Youth for a Less Selfish Future programme with an emphasis on 'for' this time.

We plan to invite future activists, representatives of futures institutions, those of different groups of young people, of future movements and want to analyse their activity. This course discovers some of the existing institutions, movements and their aims; the range of activities, international relations, networks they participate in. The programme analyses the mode of organisation, and the experience they can share. We also plan to investigate the cultural determination and values of different future actions.

The BFC 2001 has decided to launch an organisation of the participants and its extension to Hungarian universities, colleges. The principles and the structure of the organisation are on their way; and in its framework future oriented courses have already been organised. In the BFC 2003 we want to make use of international experience, to share our ones and to explore how these activities fit other participating programmes. The jointly created Organisation (labelling is part is the BFC 2003 programme) is to become a youth network of WFSF.

Characteristics of the course

International workshop

The BFC is mainly an international workshop, which determines the features and aims of all other forms of education such as introductory lectures, small group work or informal presentations.

Postgraduate course

The BFC is postgraduate and invites young fellows who actually participate in education, research work, economic policy, business etc., those who have the ability, possibility

Continued on page 27

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Dr. Peter Bishop and Professor Richard Slaughter,

Two days ago I read your latest exchange in the World Futures Studies Federation's latest "Futures Bulletin". I would like to share a few personal thoughts as an Australian Foresight Institute student. They reflect my own mind, not AFI's program or policies.

I'll start with Zia Sardar and Merryl Wyn Davies' book "Why People Hate America" (London: Icon Books, 2002), since the US company I consult with will be releasing this book in the United States in March 2003. I'm glad to hear there are many Americans who feel that "U.S. policy is self-interested, unilateralist and ultimately destructive of both natural and cultural resources around the world" as the publisher would love to have a bestseller. I'm currently compiling a discussion/reader's guide that Disinformation Books will make available as a free Adobe PDF, so if you have any comments about this specific volume and/or Sardar's work in the futures domain, I'd be happy to include them. My aim in compiling this is not to indoctrinate people to a preselected point-of-view but to encourage critical and self-reflective debate.

Sardar and Davies' book reflects a mini-publishing industry that has grown since Florida 2000 and 9/11; the authors cite earlier books by Noam Chomsky, William Blum, Edward Said, Howard Zinn and many others. Each of these authors has their own merits and critical limits. What I find relevant about Sardar and Davies' book is its contribution to the post-9/11 debate in America and how to deal with the "War on Terror". This isn't "anti-American" as some of its critics have claimed: it reflects a critique of dominant power begun by Alexis DeTocqueville's "Democracy in America" and continued in works like Bertram Gross' "Friendly Fascism" (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1982) when he cites George Washington's warning against "false patriotism". University of Houston-Clear Lake

courses on "social change" have a significant contribution to make here. If this debate can be found "in most American publications today", then great. There are always new minds that can hear these truths, even if they are "old news" to us. And whether this debate changes the "political will" is another matter.

Professor Slaughter's critique of "pop futures" is used in the context of his structural matrix of "pop", "problem-oriented/social policy" and "critical/epistemological" futures. This isn't simply meant as a pejorative description of the "American empirical tradition" but does highlight the potential distortion and misuse of futures techniques in the public domain (for example, simplistic readings of Alvin Toffler's Future Shock or John Naisbitt's Megatrends). Likewise, Slaughter's critique of the "Millennium Project" and other documents has focused on the conceptual limits and worldviews that these have, not the nationality of its authors. If the authors that Slaughter critiques all seem to be American — maybe these projects could try, as "WFSF" has promoted, to have a more diverse and global group of practitioners? And even if this is "anti-American": why? Why now? What could be significant about this for you and the futures program at UHCL? (Can we Delphi or "emerging issues" analyze it?)

The difference Slaughter highlights is between a relativistic/integralistic viewpoint and a strategic viewpoint that does not question its assumptions and assumes a "best way" that privileges itself at the expense of others. Because this difference is at the level of worldview, and not nationality, it can certainly apply to "Islamic fundamentalists, Hutu warriors, Chinese Communists" and other groups. And certainly the ability to *constructively* critique the "current hegemon" will be crucial to what Ulrich Beck calls the specter of 'a post-political technocratic world society'.

You cite Eric Hoffer's "True Believer" description in your reply to Slaughter: perhaps budding futurists should draw on your sociology, history and philosophy studies to examine the legacy of the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot's "Year Zero" or Nazi Germany. I'm familiar with the latter from undergraduate studies in political science: futurists might want to check out Peter Viereck's "Metapolitics: The Roots of the Nazi Mind" (New York: Capricorn Books, 1965) and Lawrence Birken's "Hitler as Philosophe: Remnants of the Enlightenment in National Socialism" (Westport, CN: Praeger, 1995) for details. One example of the kind of "Institute of Foresight" that we don't want UHCL or AFI to become is Heinrich Himmler's "Ancestral Heritage Project" (Ahnenerbe). For details see Michael H. Kater's "Das 'Ahnenerbe' der SS 1935-1945: ein Beitrag zur Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reiches" (Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1974) and Walter Bruno Gratzner's "The Undergrowth of Science: Delusion, Self-deception and Human Frailty" (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). A contemporary scenario of an "Ahnenerbe"-like foresight institution in a post-9/11 environment is portrayed in John Shirley's three-volume "A Song Called Youth" trilogy: "Eclipse", "Eclipse Penumbra" and "Eclipse Corona" (Northridge, CA: Babbage, 1999). You make some excellent points about the often-overlooked contributions of the empirical and positivist schools. At AFI we have discussed Wendell Bell's analysis of "Critical Realism" as a philosophy that includes the empirical/positivist in a post-positivist framework yet avoids the "dissolution of identity" problems of the "post-modern turn". At his best in books like "Integral Psychology" (Boston, MA: Shambhala Press, 2000) and "A Brief History of Everything" (Boston, MA: Shambhala Press, 1996), Ken Wilber has synthesized many different fields into a useful framework. I have some personal reservations about some of his later books, but it's a meta-map worth looking at, then investigating the primary sources, thinkers and practices that Wilber summarizes. It's an approach that goes beyond what many of my undergraduate philosophy lecturers contended, which was that any *useful* philosophy ended with Sartre and Camus, or with Dennett's "teleport paradox".

Any subjective experience, especially on an existential or spiritual path, needs to be approached with caution (cf. Carl Sagan's and Michael Shermer's skepticism), and Wilber's work contains many injunctions about potential problems. A relevant consideration is whether or not the "futures" community represents a "community of practice" for these experiences or not.

Personal confrontations with the "global problematique" have aesthetic, psychohistorical and psychological elements. However these experiences cannot always be simply reduced to their empirical or rationalist components. There can be an interpretative (dare I say, "personal hermeneutic"?) element, too. Dealing with this in an academic environment has been "taboo" since Timothy Leary's LSD trip and John Lilly's experiments with Ketamine and the floatation tank. It's something both AFI and UHCL tread very carefully on. What Slaughter has done, by drawing on Wilber's work, has been to reference a key and recognized thinker who acknowledges the subjectivedomain, as well as the contributions/limits of the empirical tradition, in a "consciousness" framework that has breadth and depth. Ask your Generation X students about how they dealt with Reagan's "Strategic Defense Initiative" or the dystopian visions unleashed by the Club of Rome's "Limits To Growth" report, and you may hear some personal anecdotes (perhaps worthy of sociological analysis) of why some current futures students are "seeking after" such post-positivist frameworks (and I'm sure you have some of your own from other contexts).

I hope both AFI and UHCL can network and collaborate where possible on projects of mutual interest, without the need for turf wars or bitter "personalizing" that some exchanges fall into. Sometimes Australians do misjudge the "American empirical tradition" and are surprised. The recent visit of UHCL-alumni Andy Hines, and his key insights into consulting, are one example; Jose Ramos' positive words about UHCL's "social change" course are another. Thanks.

Alex Burns
Melbourne, Australia

Dear Editor,

I am writing to contribute to the continuing "Uncut, Unedited, and Not-Yet-Rated: Discussions of Futures Ideologies" by Richard Kaipo Lum, et al. One of the solid clichés of American political life applicable to other areas is "Where you stand [on a political issue] depends on where you sit." Put differently, the way you earn your living influences your position. As a long time futurist I would like to suggest that there is a third way between the normative and applied futures work discussed in the August 2002 issue.

In my business that I ran from 1979 – 2001, we did an average of ten studies per year or approximately 220 studies for all kinds of institutional clients. In addition to that, I published 240 articles since 1990. I taught futures at George Washington University in the Graduate School of Public and International affairs for about 15 years. My work, directly attempting to influence a particular person or group of people, has at its core a quite different concept from those that were discussed.

I see that the primary value in futures work is to push people to an explicit awareness of their own assumptions about the future. If a product of mine were fully accepted by a client that would mark failure. I would like about 80%-90% concurrence by the client and 10%-20% of uncertainty or disbelief, because the latter is the basis of a useful discussion, which will reveal the client's assumptions to him or her and in turn, lead to a change in his or her assumption set. I see the goal of futures work is to change people's minds. I don't particularly care what I change their minds to. It is my observation in changing people's minds that it is overwhelmingly likely to move them into a better direction than they were in before. It is also my observation that most clients do not like to have a wagging finger pushed in their faces announcing: "You must do this," "You are morally responsible for doing this," or "This is the only right thing to do." It is much more effective to treat the normative implications as just one of a range of alternatives in changing a mind and expect that what the client sees as a better way to go is the better way to go.

Recently in counseling a brilliant young man about a possible career in futures studies, I made the point that he should at every possible turn have a client, since there is nothing more demanding or satisfying in terms of one's intellectual output in this art form, the study of the future, than to change the behavior or the outlook of a person. Without a client one is only confronting a vague, uncertain, and gener-

...there is nothing more demanding or satisfying in terms of one's intellectual output in this art form, the study of the future, than to change the behavior or the outlook of a person.

ally temporally remote critic.

On the other hand, my articles often have normative ideas in them for whatever value they may have to a reader.

Joseph. F. Coates

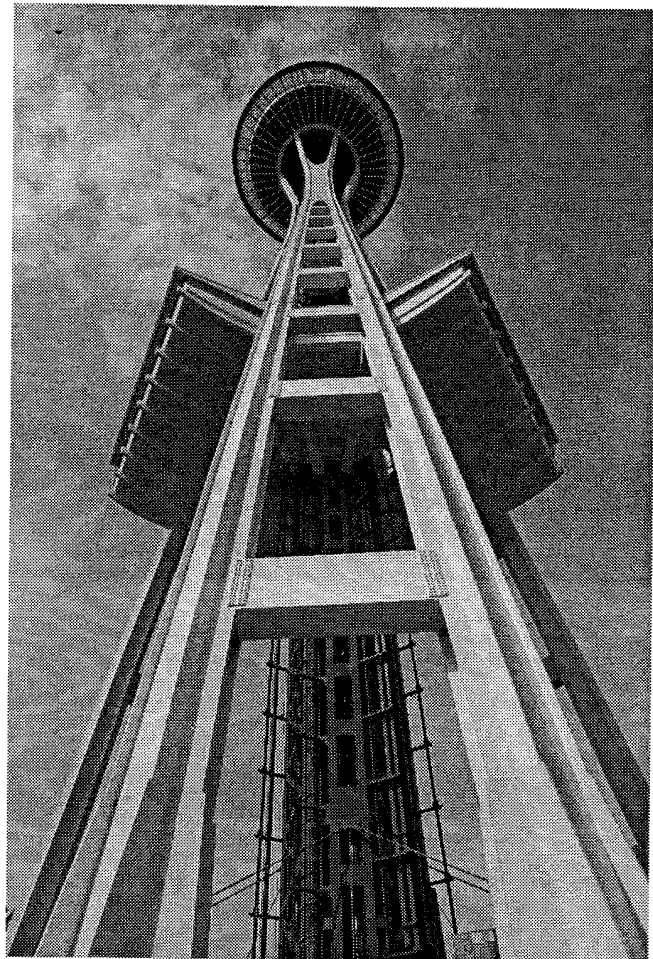


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Uncut, Unedited and Not-Yet-Rated: Discussions of Futures Ideologies (Part 3)

by Richard "Kaipo" Lum, et al.

Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002
From: Jim Dator
Subject: The tension is about standards

I did not find what Christian said to be controversial at all. I agree it is a huge problem for us that is not easy to solve. What did I miss?

Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2002
From: Tom Conger
Subject: RE: Defining and using normative futures

I was swinging labels around so quickly that I accidentally called Chris Jones an insider who was technically normative when I meant Christian. Sorry Chris. If that's the worst thing you've ever been called, you're doing all right.

Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002
From: Sohail Inayatullah
Subject: RE: Defining and using normative futures

I guess questions, I might ask of worldviews is:

Is the world view (wv) helping achieve one's visions and goals, or hurting?

Is one aware of the contradictions in the wv?

Does the wv allow conversations with other wvs or is it the sole?

What are the implications of wv?

And, again, being clear of my own values, I might ask questions of the wvs capacity to effectively create other futures?

From: "Hines, Andy (A)"

I'd like to clarify Tom's technical definition of normative vis-a-vis what I am thinking:

"Only when the creation of preferred futures makes explicit use of the client's values and ethics do we consider it normative futures work, from a technical point of view. (I think this captures Clem and Sohail's thinking, but I'm not so sure if does the same for Jim)."

I would say the normative futurist drives the client to the futurist's particular values (not those of the client). Actually, I think Tom's definition above is close to what I am calling client-centered (for lack of a better name), in that the futurists viewpoint is held back and the client's viewpoint drives the work. As an example of normative, in the way I'm thinking of it. I, as the normative futurist, believe in the concept of sustainability. In my work with clients, I push hard on them to adopt sustainability as a guiding principle in their futures work (whether they like it or not). I, as a client-centered futurist, would not push clients to adopt sustainability even though I believe strongly in it. I deal with the future views they put forward, and can still prod them to think broadly, but don't favor my particular viewpoint, in this case sustainability.

These are extremes. but hope it illustrates my thinking. Look forward to your comments.

This is the third and final exchange in a three-part series based on selections from an online discussion elist that was initiated by Richard "Kaipo" Lum subsequent to an informal meeting of [mostly] North American futurists at what was called the Applied Futures Summit held in the spring of 2002 in Seattle, Washington, USA.

The series is mostly "uncut, unedited and not-yet-rated" but otherwise Ready for Prime Time.

From: "Michele C.S. Bowman"
Subject: RE: The tension is about standards
Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002

Christian,

Thanks for being willing to start this conversation.... can I just say, as a side note, that one of the greatest benefits of our Seattle meeting, IMHO, has been that the level and quality of our conversations has skyrocketed, and that I hope this can continue....

I'm still trying to digest most of post, but if I can offer this into the mix:

Before we can start talking about standards, I think we need to define what exactly it is we do as futurists that is different than the "average" person thinking about the future. Please (please!!) pardon the consultant-speak, but, what is our value-added? What do we (in terms of methods, content, perspectives) bring to the table that should even allow us to say that we're worthy of professional recognition?

From: Christian Crews
Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002

I think we talked about this a bit at UHCL and we arrived at this: there are a few tools that originated in the field and we can call our own (such as Delphi, Scenario matrix, technology forecasting, etc.), and there are a lot of tools we've adapted to the field (statistics, issues management, systems thinking...), but our value add is the way we package these tools into a process that helps people realize the future will be different than they imagine, that uncertainty can be held and used, that the environment can be influenced positively, that planning ahead makes a difference, that future generations need a voice. Maybe we should pull Wendy into this conversation - I think she synthesized some of these discussions. I think Sandy was working on this at UHCL (is that right?)

Wendy's definition of what futures studies is (this arose out discussions we had in class):

a transdisciplinary, systems-science based approach to analyzing patterns of change in the past; identify-

ing trends of change in the present; and extrapolating alternative scenarios of possible change in the future, in order to help people create the futures they most desire.

From: "Michele C.S. Bowman"
Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002

Christian,

I'd be interested to know WHY you think it is we dance around this question....

My feeling is that it isn't a dance as much as it is the lack of energy/a mechanism it deal with it effectively. I'm really interested in what WFSF and the APF will propose, and hope that I can add my two-cents into those efforts (being non-male and not particularly skilled at standardized tests). :)

I did find interesting, however, your comment that you would be weary of any organization that immediately certified you.... if not us, then who? It we, collectively on this list, are not representative of professional futurists (in all of our normative/applied glory), then who is??

From: Christian Crews
Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002

Was it Mark Twain who wrote he would be suspicious of any organization that would have him as a member?

I think learning the tools is probably not enough - otherwise those of us with academic degrees would be automatically in. I would suggest maybe provisional membership until a certain period of time actually practicing. I guess I've been doing this for 4 years now since graduating from UHCL's MS program, and I can't imagine requiring more that amount of journeyman time. So I guess I wouldn't be suspicious if I was accepted, certified, whatever the term we arrive would be.

From: "Sandy Burchsted"

Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002

I'm still in process mode in regards to all of the posts, but am truly enjoying our discussion.

Since Christian asked, I'll dip my toe into the conversation and say one of the defining characteristics of a futurist is that we work with an extended time frame. That distinguishes us from just about every other field or profession I can think of.

We also help our clients place foresight, planning, and decision making within as on going alternative futures context.

Wendy told us in Intro that "Futurists work on making normative futures probable". She also said that the troika of futures studies was the possible, probable, and preferred.

More than our tools make us different.

From: "Hines, Andy (A)"

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002

Christian et al,

I thought your initial post about standards tackled a key issue, and was very well stated. Thanks for your courage. I admire your stance about not wanting to be directly involved in standards-setting due to your background. Being less sensitive, I am willing to charge into the foray. There is a vacuum, and I'm willing to take the heat of trying to do something. And I am sure that I offend lots of people, and that my presence may be a turn-off to some. To me, however, it beats the alternative of hoping someone else will step up. I think, if we are sensitive enough, and work really hard on building bridges with the rest of the global futures community, we can pull it off. I would encourage you Christian, and others who may be feeling similarly, to jump in. There just ain't enough of us that we can afford to have your incredible talent not actively helping around this thorny issue.

To me, while APF is not only about standards, that is going to be one of its key issues and one of the principal reasons I'm involved. It may not be the right way, but it's an attempt, and until something better comes along....

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002

From: Tom Conger

Subject: Summary and oversimplification...

This discussion stems from Kaipo's observation following the Applied Futures Summit in Seattle that there was an undercurrent of tension in the field. He speculated, to paraphrase, that it might be between more pragmatic, surface-level and predominately North American futurists and those futurists that were normative and/or dealt with deeper trends and meanings. It appears that Kaipo's speculation was based on the mixed reaction to Wilbur/Slaughter and Sohail's methodologies. Did I get this right Kaipo?

This led to a discussion about what exactly it means to be a normative futurist. After contributions from Clem, Chris, Andy, Sohail, Jim, Kaipo and others, I was bold enough to state that perhaps we had reached some level of consensus, that normative futures "makes explicit use of the client's values and ethics." Andy held on to his own definition though, that a normative futurist "drives the client to the futurist's particular values (not those of the client)."

I also proffered that the tension was between insider and outsider futurists, between those futurists whose worldview coincides with the dominant structures and those whose world view does not. In this context, I also speculated that "normative" was actually a code word used by insiders to describe the outsiders. I got one "spot on" but it doesn't look like the idea resonated with many folks.

Christian said that the tension — the central issue — was around standards, and who controls them. Unqualified futurists often "win" because they have the "slickest message with the best financing." The term "pop" futurist was the only label Chris offered for this group. Based on the replies, it looks like there's some energy around this issue still.

So, at the risk of oversimplification, we have identified four potential sources of tension:

- 1) Shallow v. deep futurists (Kaipo)
- 2) Client-centered v. consultant-centered (pushing their own view) (Andy)
- 3) Insiders v. outsiders (differences in world view)(Tom)
- 4) Qualified v. unqualified (Christian)

If we could just agree that the problem is with shallow, client-centered, unqualified insiders, we could put this issue to rest. Or with deep, consultant-centered, qualified outsiders. If only life were so simple.

Did I capture this ok?

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002

From: Tom Conger

Subject: I support standards/credentialing, but with different expectations and reasons...

I support standards/credentialing, but I have different expectations and reasons than most of you though. I support credentialing as a more structured way of improving my skills — by studying for the initial exam and by taking the requisite number of continuing education courses to keep my certification.

I really doubt that the withholding of certification from well-financed but unqualified futurists will help change who the public trusts. Pop futurists will remain popular. And I don't think that certification is going to make a real difference in the marketplace. This isn't the ticket for young futurists to make a lot of money (to use your words Chris). Nor will credentialing attract back into the fold those futurists who have shunned the term from their professional title.

Does anyone really believe otherwise?

Credentials are symbols of one's own personal mastery. Pursued for one's own personal satisfaction and learning. That's how we should approach it.

Accordingly, I see no reason why this couldn't be pursued jointly by the Association of Professional Futurists and the World Futures Studies Federation.

Apply the same standards. Allow "cross-listing" of approved continuing education programs. Help both groups learn from each other. Doesn't that make sense for such a large undertaking? Or are the differences along the "fault lines" (shallow/deep; client/consultant centered; inside/outside; qualified/unqualified) too much for successful collaboration? Surely not.

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002

From: Tom Conger

Subject: What is a futurist?

Hi Sandy, glad you dipped your toe into the conversation. The water's not too hot.

Wendy has quite a following, but I don't think that "futurists work on making normative futures probable." Applied futurists do, but not futurists. Otherwise we could drop the term applied, right?

Bob Johansen, President of Institute FROM (as Michele puts it) the Future, made the distinction in Seattle between foresight, insight, and action (I think action was the third element). IFTF focuses exclusively on the foresight component and asks the client to create the insight and turn that into action. (I sure hope I've got this right.) Coates and Jarratt takes a similar view. When I was there, Joe described it as "having clients smart enough to figure out what to do with our stuff."

So in the context of credentialing, if we're talking about futurists (exploratory futurists), and not applied futurists, then we can stop at the foresight stage. Anything beyond that is credentialing applied futurists.

To get back to your question Michele, about our value-added, what we bring as a profession is our foresight. Without it, we are just facilitators, management consultants, academics, community advocates, coaches, product developers, etc. Just my opinion, of course.

From: Kaipo Lum
Subject: RE: Summary and oversimplification...
Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002

Tom,

Thanks, I think that's a fair wrap-up of our different takes on the "tension" we're talking about. And just for the record, I did appreciate your insider/outsider frame; I certainly felt it had some value as a way of looking at the issue.

As a short aside, it's been a genuine pleasure witnessing and participating in this discussion. I'm struck (in a nice way) by how this group of very smart, learned individuals whom I respect, all of whom share, I think, the same basic concerns, have different and compelling perspectives on futures. This is the vitality of diversity that one hopes to find in a field. If the rest of the world could discuss their differences in a similar fashion, with such acceptance and open discussion, it might be a different world.

I would offer here my own definition of futures studies, built off of my own experiences, introspection, and opinion on what our unique value is. In my mind, and what I tell those who ask me, is that in futures studies we:

1. Study how people conceptualize the future (as that conceptualization will affect their notions of the possible, probable, and even the "predetermined", and thus affects their planning and actions), and
2. We then develop methods to assist people in critiquing and reconstructing both their conceptualizations of the future, and any notions of the preferred that they hold.

In my mind this definition both presents the uniqueness (who else deals specifically with conceptualizations of the future for the sake of affecting that future?), and positions the "academic" and the "applied" in relation to each other, with neither being of much use without the other.

I know this won't satisfy everyone, but I'm quite comfortable with it. Incidentally, when I drop this on people, I usually get a "Wow..." and more often than not, they start to sense Futures as a distinct and comprehensible endeavor.

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002
From: Jim Dator
Subject: Applied?

Tom said, in part, "Applied futurists do, but not futurists. Otherwise we could drop the term applied, right?"

I have been wondering about the "applied" part too. What is the opposite of an "applied futurist"? What is the distinction intended here?

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002
From: Robin Brandt
Subject: Re: Applied?

Theoretical? Academic?

Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002
From: Tom Conger

I'm with Robin too, but preferring "theoretical" over "academic." And I like Andy's continuum that "unapplied" futurists generate the concepts and tools that applied futurists use (with concepts in my book including their conceptualizations of the future).

"Applied" generally means "put into practice or a particular use." Like applied physics. Theoretical physicists would be motivated by curiosity while applied physicists would try to answer specific questions. The same might be said of theoretical and applied futurists.

"Academic" seems to carry negative connotations in some circles, so I would prefer to avoid that term. "Research" is technically a correct term for this, but enough people in the field think of research as reading books, scanning, writing, etc. (for applied/practical reasons) that the term could easily be misunderstood. I liked someone else's suggestion of "exploratory" but it implies that the applied futurists aren't very exploratory, which (I hope) isn't the case.

For what it's worth, here's what the dictionary has to offer:

Synonyms: theoretical, abstract, academic, hypothetical, speculative. The central meaning shared by these adjectives is “concerned primarily with theories or hypotheses rather than practical considerations”: theoretical linguistics; abstract reasoning; a purely academic discussion; a hypothetical statement; speculative knowledge.

Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002
From: Jim Dator

Thanks for that.

I guess my next question is: do any of you know any futurists who are not “applied”—that are ONLY academic or research? I don’t think I do. And, while I suppose some of you might not be in the formal academy, my guess is that you guys do a lot of education—adult education—in your consulting.

From: “Hines, Andy (A)”
Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002

I have to laugh — I thought the same thing after I posted. Perhaps you might consider yourself primarily a research futurists and secondarily and applied one?

Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002
From: Jim Dator

No, Andy. I consider myself equally theoretical and applied, from two perspectives:

First of all, “praxis” is an essential point of Marxism that I have tried to embrace ever since I first heard of it (Could it have been in conversations with Karl when we were both youngsters? Maybe not.).

Second, though my initial “discovery” of futures studies while I was first in Japan and then at Virginia Tech in the 1960s was strictly “academic”, when I came to the University of Hawaii in 1969, the State had already created the Commission on the Year 2000 and I was asked to advise it as it began work that engaged almost every citizen in the State, on all islands, in thinking about their futures. So my work here became and has always remained both theoretical and applied. This relationship became even closer when the State created the Hawaii Research Center

for Futures Studies in 1971 to help the community do useful futures work, while the Department of Political Science created the Alternative Futures Option to do the academic work.

I have written about the necessary unity of thought and practice from the very beginning—two examples being a talk about the future of futures studies at the Bucharest meeting of the WFSF in 1972 and a talk about “decolonizing the future” at a WFS meeting in 1976 (using “Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance” as my text, since I take “praxis” to be Pirsig’s main point in that wonderful book).

From: “Sandra Burchsted”
Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002

Is this a difference that makes a difference?

I’m probably way out in left field, but I think the applied term is code.

It is the term we’ve come up with to distinguish ourselves from the tourist we all see at the WFS meetings. Some of the motivation for creating a professional organization of futurists comes from our need to rub brains with our peers and the desire to be seen as different from the “tourist” at the WFS meetings.

Am I totally lost in the ozone?

Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002
From: Tom Conger

Sandy, thanks for the decoder key on applied. I’ll add your comments to the potential sources of tension (if in fact there is any).

- 1) Shallow v. deep futurists (Kaipo)
- 2) Client-centered v. consultant-centered (pushing their own view) (Andy)
- 3) Insiders v. outsiders (differences in world view)(Tom)
- 4) Qualified v. unqualified (Christian)
- 5) Professional v. Tourist/Hobbyist (Sandy)

Michele, I think that what we’re doing is creating a shared vocabulary of who we are and what we do as

futurists — a perquisite for moving forward... you know the rest of the spiel I'm sure.

Jim, I think that theoretical futurists might include science fiction writers like Arthur C. Clarke. Closer in might be those futurists who spend most of their effort thinking about the future, rather than getting their clients to think about the future. The folks at the Institute for the Future and Coates and Jarratt come to mind (C&J does very little hand holding in my opinion).

Of course, no one is probably at either end — and some people like you Jim are going to fall right in the middle. Even so, I think that it's a useful continuum in understanding where we as futurist spend our time.

Date: Sat, 20 Apr 2002
From: Tom Conger

If you stick your neck out... I'll never learn :-)

Just for the record though, Chris, the only reason we were exploring these bipolar distinctions was because Kaipo sensed an undercurrent of tension in the field, which (unlike "frustration") implies to me opposing forces. We were trying to figure out who were the opposing forces, if there were any at all.

The byproduct (and perhaps only benefit) of this discussion has been that we (or at least I) have a better sense of how we see ourselves and our profession, our similarities and differences. I at least know what Sandi means when she says applied, or what Andy means when he says normative. More than I knew before...

Date: Mon, 22 Apr 2002
From: Sohail Inayatullah

Hi Folks
I am glad there is a new group called applied futures, largely as it creates new spaces, that other organizations are having a hard time with.

That said, Rick has spent many years working on professional standards, so that can be used as platform.

And applied needs to have values and theory built into it - all are mutually dependent, requiring interpenetrating reflection.

In my work, applied generally means that there is less time spent on teaching what futures studies is (in the model I use: macrohistory, action learning, anticipation, alternatives, ways of knowing) and more on getting to a vision or a scenario or a plan, or other "products" of the field. However, theory is always in the background as are values, eg in a workshop design, there is great attention to ascertaining when or if one should use shared history type work, when/if eia, when/if cla, when/if scenarios, when/if a discussion on patterns of social change, or all of them. For example, recently, I've led workshops with corrections, queensland art, redcliffe health and maroochy council. One wanted planning theory, another a clear vision of the future, another the vision was less central than creating a conversation around desired futures, another wanted to just have their views challenged. And, in more teaching or conference paper type situations, the praxis needs to be there. In Taiwan - where as a university course, theory is crucial, I divide the class into a policy think tank, private or public. There age-cohort analysis, eia, cla, scenarios that they develop over the semester are designed as clear policy documents, which then - the good one's - go the office of the presidential advisor, ie real outcomes can result.

The other dimension of applied is that it needs a real epistemological basis. For me, this is action learning, either the Reg Revens schools or the neo-marxist participatory action learning and development model, in either case is collectively learning from doing and reflecting on the doing. This differs from empirical forecasting orientations or interpretative image surveys or more critical deconstruction approaches. These all have a place in applied but it is action learning that is central. Much of this is developed in a new book of mine, Questioning the Future. Futures Studies, Action Learning and Organizational Transformation (details at www.metafuture.org).

This concludes the three-part series.

Publications Received

BOOKS

Gorzela, Grzegorz, Eva Ehrlich, Lubomir Faltan, Michal Illner. *Central Europe in Transition: Towards EU Membership*. Regional Studies Association, Polish Section, 2001.

Karpinski, Andrzej. *How To Create The Long-Term Strategy For A Country And A Region*. Elipsa: Warszawa, 2002.

SERIALS/SPECIAL ISSUES

Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration. Budapest Futures Course 2001. Budapest, 2002.

Geneva Association Information Newsletter. General Information. No. 173, October 2002. International Association for the Study of Insurance Economics.

Geneva Association Information Newsletter. Risk Management. No. 32, November 2002. International Association

for the Study of Insurance Economics.

Geneva Association Information Newsletter. Progres. No. 36, December 2002. International

Association for the Study of Insurance Economics.

Hallo Convention Bureau della Riviera di Romagna News. 18 November 2002. BTC Special Edition.

International Social Science Council. *Handbook 2002*. Paris, 2002.

International Social Science Council Newsletter 97. News on ISSC Activities. Paris/September 2002.

Journal of Future Studies. Vol. 7, No. 2, Nov. 2002.

New Zealand Futures Trust. Future Times. Volume 4, Journal 2002.

Polska 2000 Plus. Bulletin No. 2/2002.

Social Science Research Council. Items & Issues. Vol. 3, No. 3-4, Summer/Fall, 2002.

UNESCO. *The New Courier. Afghanistan A Nation at the Crossroads*. October, 2002.

UNESCO. *On the Ground Adventures of Literacy Workers*. France, 2002.

UNESCO. Institute for Statistics. *Education Statistics 2001-Regional Report Series-Latin America and the Caribbean, Good neighbors: Caribbean students at the tertiary level of education and Sub-Saharan Africa*. UIS, 2001.

UNESCO. *A World of Science*. Natural Sciences Quarterly Newsletter. Vol. 1, No. 1, Oct.-Dec. 2002.

UNESCO. Executive Board, 165th Session. Decisions adopted by the EB at its 165th Session. Paris, 8 November 2002.

UNESCO. Science and Technology Education in Europe: Current Challenges and Possible Solutions. *Connect*. Vol. XXVII, No. 3-4, 2002.

UNESCO *International Science, Technology & Environmental Education Newsletter*.

Correction

The correct citation for an item noted in the last issue should be:
Ojha, Ek Raj. Possessions, Problems and Potentials of Mountains: Special Reference to Nepal and its Far-Western Region. Kathmandu, Nepal: Ekta Books, 2002.

Our apologies for the error and misspelling.

UNESCO.
Intergovernmental Council
of the International
Programme for the
Development of
Communication. Final
Report of the 22nd session.
Paris, 10-12 April 2002.

UNIDIR. *Tactical Nuclear
Weapons Time for Control.*
Geneva, Switzerland,
2002/11.

UNIDIR. Le Conseil de
Securite a l'áube du Xxleme
siecle. Geneve, Suisse,
2002/7.

WIDER Angle. World
Institute for Development
Economics Research. United
Nations University, No.
2/2002.

The Civic Futurological Society in the Czech Republic cordially
invites participants to the seventh international colloquium
“**DESIGNING THE FUTURE IN EUROPE 2003**”
which will be held at the University of Economics, Prague on
September 8-10th, 2003.

Particularly contributions devoted to the future of the integrative policy of EU, to the future of transitive processes in posttotalitarian countries and to the future changes of conditions for autonomous national and transnational policies in Europe are welcome. Publication of the proceedings is intended.

The interested persons can receive more details about topics suggested for the sessions and discussions and further information about the colloquium from Barbora Slintakova, secretary of CFS, e-mail address: barbora@vse.cz. Information will be available on the website <http://www.sweb.cz/ofs>

ADDRESS CHANGE?

We are continuously updating the WFSF membership database. If you have changed addresses recently, please notify the Secretariat.

By E-mail	update@wfsf.org
By Web site	wfsf.org/membership/ (ID/Password: future/worlds)
By FAX	+1 281-283-3404
By Mail	World Futures Studies Federation Box 177, 2700 Bay Area Blvd Houston TX 77058-1098 USA

2002 President's Report

During this first year Chris Jones and I had one over-arching goal, and that was to begin the task of re-invigorating the WFSF. This was never going to be achieved in one year. Three subsidiary goals that will also take longer are to expand the membership, create new products and services for members and, finally, to locate new sources of funding. This report covers four main areas of activity during 2002. These are: setting up a working board, setting up the President's office, various duties and associated issues, and the history project.

Setting up a working executive board

In previous years the EB had been largely honorary. That is, people were voted on to the EB but then did very little to help in the actual running of the organisation. Chris and I made it clear from the start that we were initiating a change of culture, ie, that we wanted a working board, a group of people able and willing to share the load. Also we felt it important that everyone be accountable for what they did/did not do for the WFSF. So early on I asked for statements of intent, then, towards the end of 2002, I also asked for personal reports from each member of the group. We made it clear that we were willing to stand down people who did not want to, or could not, carry out useful work for the WFSF.

A next step was to consult the EB about the setting up of four working groups. After some discussion it was decided to set up four such groups, as follows:

- Group 1: the bulletin, publishing and research;
- Group 2: futures in education and young people;
- Group 3: links, services and materials; and
- Group 4: membership and funding.

It then took much of the year for the groups to 'settle in', as it were, and for the chairs and tasks of each group to be confirmed. Prof. Erzebet Novaky got off to an early start with group 1. Group 2 was eventually headed up by Prof. David Hicks (not an EB member but co-opted for the task) with a specific focus on young people and futures education in schools. We still lack a suitable chair or coordinator for tertiary and professional futures courses. Group 3 was ably constituted by Fabienne Goux-Baudiment, with assistance from Alex Mullan. Group 4 languished for a while but was finally taken up by Cesar Villaneuva. The original reporting schedule I set up for the groups was not met. But groups 1 and 3 eventually reported prior to the Kure conference. (The other two had not had sufficient time to do so.) Next year things should run more smoothly and I anticipate a series of productive team efforts.

Setting up the President's office

This was a fairly easy task since the office of Director of AFI (the Australian Foresight Institute) had already been established. The Vice Chancellor of Swinburne had given his prior approval to the parallel establishment of the WFSF



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President's office, so all we had to do was to add some new functions. One of these is a dedicated address which is: wfsf@swin.edu.au Please direct any messages to this address.

We then began scanning in back issues of the Bulletin with the intention of creating a complete archive of back issues. Some were sent on to Chris for the web site. We then ran into a few problems but I anticipate resuming scanning again soon. AFI also employed an intern, Jose Ramos, and he has carried out a variety of useful tasks. Among these are the first two rounds of an international survey of university futures courses and units. The results can be found on the AFI web site: <http://www.swin.edu.au/afi>

Duties and issues

As reported on the list serve earlier in the year I have visited a number of organisations. These include: the OECD and UNESCO in Paris; a EuroProspective conference in Brussels; Strathclyde University Business School in Glasgow and the Australian UNESCO Commissioner in Canberra. The Director General of UNESCO sent an invitation to join a Council on the Future, which I accepted.

Here at AFI I initiated a number of projects and processes that will bear fruit over time. For example I asked one of our graduate students to carry out a preliminary investigation into the overlap between philanthropy and foresight. I have just seen the early results and they are encouraging. More on this another time. Together with Joseph Voros (who is joining me as a new member of staff at AFI from January) and Peter Hayward (an AFI PhD student) an afternoon was spent mapping out the current distribution of WFSF institutional members. Briefly, the pattern suggests a need to become much more strategic in this area. Further work is already under way.

After some discussion I initiated a review of the role of WFSF Fellows, basically suggesting that we should ask them to take on certain tasks, one of which would be to mentor new members, particularly young students. This discussion is continuing and a discussion paper will be produced in due course. Last year Sohail and others put forward proposals for WFSF to provide professional recognition of futures courses. A meeting was held at the recent Tamkang University conference (Taiwan) that touched on this and on developing notions of an International Masters in FS. A report is due out soon. Meanwhile, as noted above, we do need a second coordinator for group 2, into whose remit this falls.

History project

One thing I promised to do at the Brasov meeting was to get this project off the ground. So I'm delighted to say that we are making progress. Bart Van Steenberghe produced the first chapter and Eleonora Masini followed suit. Several others are working on their chapters as well. What is emerging is NOT a single 'official' history but, rather, a series of overlapping accounts by 'those who were there'. This is, I feel, in keeping with the pluralistic culture of the WFSF and its strong support for cultural diversity. While some may see this project as an academic exercise I see it as a step back to move forward. By understanding the origins of the WFSF we can better ground ourselves for the demanding tasks that lie ahead. A clear overview of the history therefore provides strength, motivation and insight.

The Kure General Assembly

Four other issues were discussed at Kure. One is the issue of WFSF publications. We looked at the ambiguous role of commercial futures journals and considered a number of options for expanding the Bulletin and maybe embarking on other publishing ventures, such as monographs of leading futurists. We briefly covered the issue of the status and duties of Fellows, as mentioned above. We picked up the theme of whether or not the WFSF should have some sort of permanent Secretariat. The culture and practice of the Federation has dictated that it move every four years. But each time it moves there are hidden costs, both organisational and financial. This obviously needs further discussion. Finally, members of the EB who were at Tamkang and Kure discussed the idea of setting up a Council of Elders. This would be for ex office-holders and other senior people who at present have no official role but whom collectively represent a rich resource of wisdom and experience.



Rick Slaughter and members of the Tamkang University delegation at the Kure World Conference

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General Assembly Report

Minutes of the WFSF General Assembly Meeting, World Conference, November 13-16, 2002, Kure City, Japan

Kaoru Yamaguchi
Fluvia Onorati
Arrigo Giovannetti
Alexandra Montgomery

[The meeting of the World Futures Studies Federation General Assembly was called to order by Christopher Jones in the Light Room at the Clayton Bay Hotel, 10:30 a.m. on November 15, 2002.]

Christopher Jones announced that the Federation constitution is written so that no quorum is required but, out of respect for absent members, no changes requiring full ratification should be authorized.

Agenda

- I. Participants
- II. Secretary General's Report
- III. World Conference Proposal
- IV. President's Report

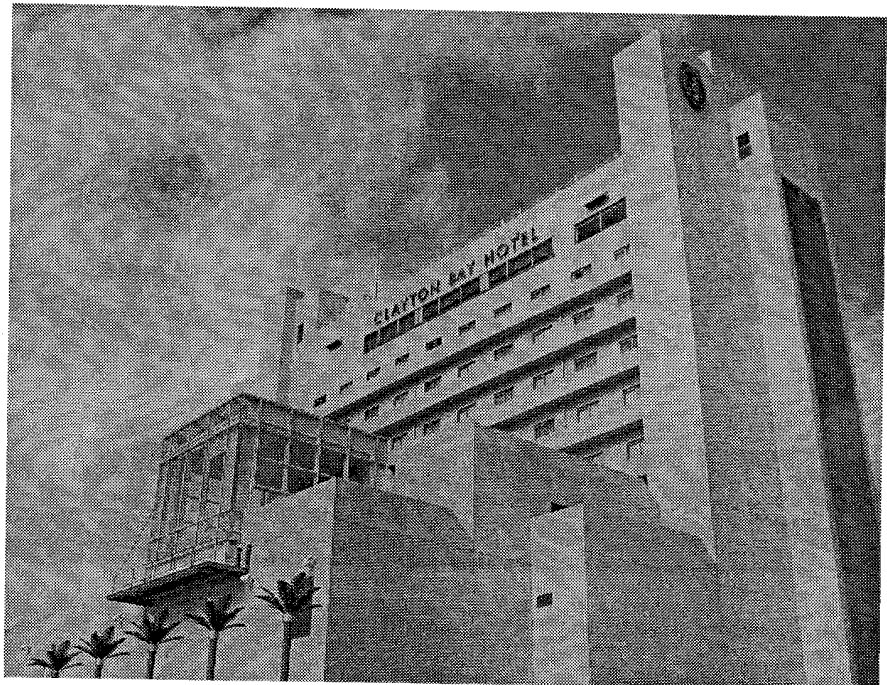
II. Secretary General's Report

I. Participants:

A report of the Secretariat's first year in Houston:
- Preparing/colonizing the Futures Lab at the University of Houston-Clear Lake for suitable office use including the purchase of office furniture, computer system, fax machine, phone lines.

- Securing office support with volunteer, employee and intern (paid and unpaid) assistance among Clear Lake students for day-to-day and/or conference-related tasks.

Christopher Jones
Fabienne Goux-Baudiment
Fumio Nakajima
Jocelyn Ortt-Saeed
Janferie Williams
Markus Gossas
Derek Woodgate
Monika Merkes
Kazuo Mizuta
Rei Kawashima
Bruce Tonn
Laurie Wheldon
Richard Slaughter
Dennis List
Grzegorz Gorzelak
Caesar Villanueva
Wendy Schultz
Anne Boysen
Linda Groff
Anne Haggerty
Kuo-Hua Chen
Dina Supple



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- Producing and distributing the Bulletin involving advanced technology/software (Quark Xpress), update addresses for mailing the Bulletin to individual, institutional, subscriber and exchange members, distributing the Bulletin by mail, and making pdf format available to Members Only section of website.

- Contributions to the Bulletin are welcome, the only stipulation is that the work has not previously been published.

- Member Services, such as operating listserv pulong and promoting conversations among Executive Board, purging 20% of the data base (4+ years unpaid dues), switching database from Access to ACT software, managing an online system for collecting payments and making website revision 'phase one' complete (making proceedings, old Bulletins, historical and new documents available online to members).

- Promoting the WFSF: in Houston by making local outreach to area students and alumni of UHCL and internationally, planning the 2002 World Conference in Kure. UNESCO participation programs in Hungary and Venezuela are in effect and institutional collaborations are planned with Tamkang University (Taiwan), Swinburne (Australia), University of Hawaii (US), the Futures Lab (US) and others.

Budget:

Expenses were \$11,682.76, most of which went toward labor and the printing and mailing of the Bulletin. Some of this money counts toward inevitable future purchases (i.e., printer).

Income was \$14,347.72 from two income streams: UHCL and member's dues and donations. Only about \$1500 totaled in contributions; most of the surplus came from catching up past-due members.

[Wendy Schultz moved to approve the report and it was seconded by Linda Groff. Motion to approve minutes was passed.]



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Plans for the next year and beyond:

- wfsf.org 'phase two' includes publications, photos, a member directory, places and accomplishments relative to the WFSF. Assistance from eBlink will be arranged, as before.

- 2004 Conference: More features, graphics and, hopefully, member contributions in the Bulletin in 2003.

- Pursuit of educational grants and more membership outreach.

III. World Conference Proposal by Secretary General, Christopher Jones

The 19th WFSF World Conference should be held near Houston in December 2004 or January 2005. The proposed theme is "Past as Prologue: Legacies and Futures of the Futures Studies Movement". It was proposed that the next conference should also provide a General Assembly meeting in order to elect a new board, executive and officers.

The University of Houston Clear Lake may be able to support with \$5000-\$10,000 in funds. The Student Futurist Association at UHCL as well as the Studies of the Future student body, could be enlisted as volunteers. The Galveston area would be the preferred locale for the conference and the theme was elaborated on to say that the Federation should make use of and honor the founders of Futures Studies with the next conference.

[The floor was opened to the General Assembly]

To summarize the discussion, many members disagreed with the theme for a variety of reasons: does it look back instead of forward? Will it promote WFSF in a desirable way? Why not highlight founders in a single panel? Is the topic interesting enough?

Some concerns were raised about traveling to the US, so an alternate venue (Spain) was proposed. Other suggestions for possible venues were made (India or Southeast Asia). It was also decided that some proposal should be brought forth relating to attracting students to attend conferences. The topic was set aside for further discussion.

IV. President's Annual Report

Richard Slaughter took the floor to report on the activities of the president over the past year, namely the job of reinvigorating the Federation, involving:

- Setting up an accountable working board (more than honorary)
- Setting up four working groups:

Backup for Bulletin/Publishing/Research: (E. Novaky) reports 350 students taking futures studies course in Budapest, will have a piece in the Bulletin.

Futures in Education and Youth: (D. Hicks) young people and schools, survey of international futures courses (J. Ramos), active involvement as NGO with OECD's futures unit and UNESCO, grant proposals, submissions to the "Courier" welcomed.

Links, Services and Materials: (F. Goux-Baudiment) a list of future-oriented institutions,

services the Federation should consider offering, survey to be carried out and complete materials about how to do a conference

Membership and Funding: (C. Villanueva) new sources of funding and philanthropy especially in the US (also being investigated by Swinburne).

In closing, Slaughter said that the WFSF needs to get into position to offer professional recognition of futures courses before a commercial entity comes forth and does it first. The international Master's program in futures will have 4 units online by 2004. Also ongoing is a history project seeking overlapping accounts of the history of Futures Studies by the people who were there at the time. Linda Groff, Sohail Inayatullah and others are writing chapters for this work of looking at the past to understand the future (available online to members until publication).

[Motion made to accept the report. Motion was seconded. Discussion was opened to the General Assembly.]

Discussion, in short, covered:

- The relative 'health' of the Federation
- Strategic elements of plans to reinvigorate the WFSF
- How to attract new members and more diverse members
- The increase in membership (5%) since the application process has become more democratic
- Whether to appoint regional representatives and/or semi-permanent Secretariat
- The hegemony of western language/culture in conferences

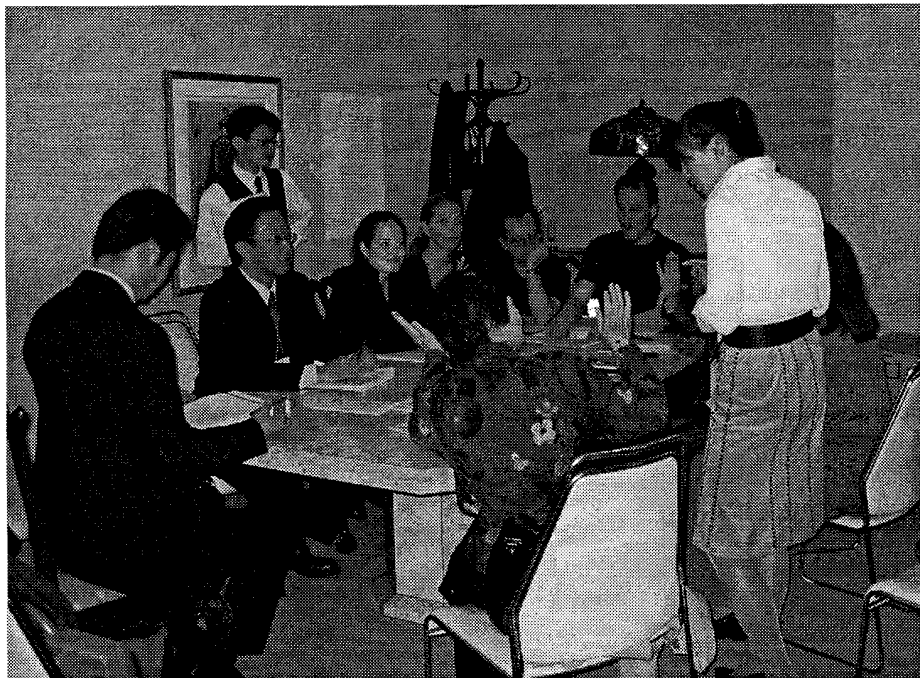
[Richard Slaughter called for a vote on the president's report. The report was approved and meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.]

Respectfully submitted,
Alexandra Montgomery
Graduate Intern

World Conference

from page 1

While the Houston Secretariat staff were responsible for the academic conference, our local hosts provided the logistic and facilities coordination, and did an extremely professional job. The large translating and volunteer pool of nearly 50 went a long way towards easing language barriers and making every foreign visitor feel “at home” and they provided transportation to and from the Hiroshima area, about an hour away. The weather and surroundings could not have been more spectacular as the conference and excursion to picturesque Miyajima Island took place during the “peak” season for the changing colors of maple trees.



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The two teams of staff, from the Houston Secretariat and the Kure City mayor’s office and a small subset of Kure translators worked closely together and made some lasting connections.

Especially noteworthy was the large proportion of students at conference—nearly one third of the total—representing futures programs and courses at: Tamkang University (Taiwan), Aichi University (Japan), and the University of Houston (USA). A new feature of the conference this year was the implementation of poster sessions, presented by seven students from the USA and Australia. A session devoted to local participants featured a panel of futurists, students, and local officials attended by two hundred citizens of Kure City in addition to WFSF members.

Especially noteworthy was the large proportion of students at conference—nearly one third of the total—representing futures programs and courses at: Tamkang University (Taiwan), Aichi University (Japan), and the University of Houston (USA). A new feature of the conference this year was the implementation of poster sessions, presented by seven students from the USA and Australia. A session devoted to local participants featured a panel of futurists, students, and local officials attended by two hundred citizens of Kure City in addition to WFSF members.

A session devoted to local participants featured a panel of futurists, students, and local officials attended by two hundred citizens of Kure City in addition to WFSF members.



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Reflections on Kure

As part of my volunteer duty at the recent WFSF conference, I was asked to take notes at the General Assembly meeting. This being my first WFSF conference, I was happy to be given such an important job. The GA was a long and lively meeting during which I absorbed a great deal about how the organization works. This is important because I am interning for the Secretariat; I was thrilled to be 'in' on some of the international action. Since hearing the proposal theme [rejected by the General Assembly] for 2004, "Past as Prologue: Legacies and Futures of the Futures Movement" I have reflected a bit on the history of futures studies.

I have never been comfortable with Futures Studies' North American origins. My understanding is that one futures movement began in the USA during the height of post-WW II Cold War mentalities. The American military-industrial complex may have first institutionalized futures thinking, but I like to believe that wise people have always been futurists.

Just doing everyday life involves some conception of the 'future' be it as near as the next minute or week. Yet, wartime strategists are considered by some as the founders of modern Futures Studies. It was an unpleasant legacy to accept as I wandered through the Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima on the sightseeing portion of the recent WFSF conference in Kure.

Today, of course, most professional futurists are engaged in something very different from military planning and my so-called everyday futures thinking. One hot button futurist issue is the "Future of Futures Studies" which usually involves defining what a futurist exactly is (and is not). I thought about this while reading one of the many emails I've received from Kure. As those who attended the conference will agree we were treated to the ultimate in hospitality and local culture by Kure citizens, especially those who volun-

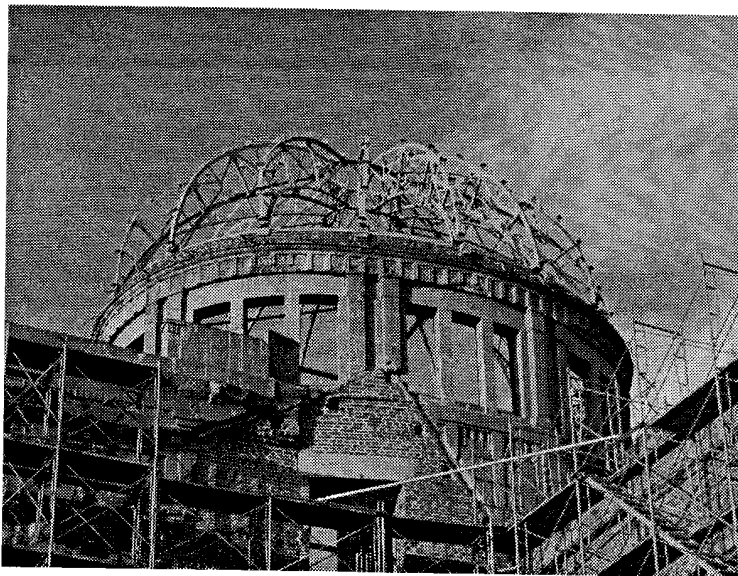
teered to chaperone and interpret; many friendships were made. One particular friend told me that she would like to become a futurist, and wondered if I thought that was possible. And I've received more inquiries: requests for the titles of good futures books, universities where futures courses are offered, a more "concrete" description of what futurists do. I did not imagine that the people of Kure could take such an interest in our field.

But, why not? After all, it was a remarkable conference. Based on the papers and Powerpoint presentations, respect for life and dedication to a more livable world are among futurists' primary concerns—how did humanitarianism emerge out of the science of scenarios crafted to plan an attack? True to the conference theme (and the overall modern pulse of the futures field) conference presentations and plenaries emphasized the importance of practical strategies in futures studies, the delicate connections between human and other life forms,

understanding transnational identities and cultural exchange. Quite a jump—and a drastic improvement—from deciding which building or village will take the next hit.

Perhaps Futures Studies was born of nations feeling threatened by one another's ideology, such as the tensions between the US and Japan that resulted in World War II. However, visiting Kure—and especially, Hiroshima—impressed upon me that despite its roots, modern Futures Studies has evolved to be most of all life-affirming, not destructive. Could foresight eventually displace domination geopolitics? It's not exactly world peace, but may become a basic universal ideology through which all sorts of devastation can be avoided.

Alexandra Montgomery



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Book Review

This is a blow up of the 1/100 microprinting font in the UPC code on the book *Transforming Communication*.

WARNING!!! WARNING!!!
WARNING!!! WARNING!!!
WARNING!!! WARNING!!!

The following is an officially sanctioned shadow government warning for the book *Transforming Communication: Technology, Sustainability, and Future Generations*, edited by Sohail Inayatullah and Susan Leggett. You are forewarned that this book acts as a benchmark for what these particular futures thinkers, and their cohorts, are thinking at this particular time, which is currently not a Federal Offense within the boundaries of the USA, it's territories, it's closest neighbors, it's best friends, it's marginal allies, it's puppet governments, it's barely leashed despotic regimes, or any other god fearing place where money and power can win friends and allies to even the most heinous crimes against humanity (i.e., New Jersey).

You are forewarned that generational differences may cause you to view this book differently than those younger or older than yourself. If this does occur, it is recommended that:

a) if you are in the up and coming age group of futurists you give a derisive sniff and whine: "And?! You're not telling us anything we don't already know. Future generations, sustainability, and tech-

no-dweebs. We've heard it all before. It's your generation which is the problem!"

b) if you are in the middle category of established futurists, a hearty: "Boy, that Sohail is really great. So much to think about. So many new things. So much to do... which reminded me, when is that appointment with DOW chemical?"

c) if you are in the category of the grey haired elder of the futures community and "In my day..." or any similar reaction occurs naturally, seek immediate mental help from Dr. Phil or Oprah's book club.

You are forewarned that if you are not within the futures field, practicing or not, schooled or not, then you have obviously picked this book up by mistake. Put it down now. Back away quickly and you will not be harmed.

You are forewarned that the possible side effects from reading this book may include, but are not limited to, critical thinking, greater understanding of complex issues, greater understanding of other indicators of progress, different ideas and perspectives, male pattern baldness, worry, anxiety, sleeplessness, a low tolerance for spoonfed BS, disrespect to traditional moral values, high blood pressure, and sexual dysfunction (in both women and men). If any of these symptoms occur, discontinue immediately and seek mental help. Again, Dr. Phil or Oprah's book club are recommended.

You are hereby forewarned that this book asserts, among other things, that the following are important: the future, future generations, women, communication, and "other"

ways of knowing. Capitalism is deemed as not important and technology is deemed as not being value neutral.

You are hereby forewarned that the editors of this book, it's contributing authors, and any who purchase a copy with Visa or Mastercard over the internet for \$25.00 at amazon.com, will be placed on a watch list. You are further forewarned that anything you actively participate in to change the current ruling system will not work; you are a loser; you smell bad. This has been the officially sanctioned shadow government warning for the book *Transforming Communication: Technology, Sustainability, and Future Generations*, edited by Sohail Inayatullah and Susan Leggett.

You did not read this. This warning does not exist. For a free sample of Viagra, call 1-800-555-F8CK.

WARNING!!! WARNING!!!
WARNING!!! WARNING!!!
WARNING!!! WARNING!!!

Personal thoughts
As I sort out my impressions from *Transforming Communications*, I realize that I've gone through three distinct phases of thought concerning this book. The first was immediate, and obvious. This book was published by Praeger for their Praeger Studies on the 21st century, so that must mean it's good stuff. The books in the series I've been through already show a distinct level of quality, so I can give this one the benefit of the doubt already, right? And besides, it's got Sohail's handiwork in it and we all know how good he is, don't we? In the process of reading, the

opinion changed to the concept of a benchmark. Oh, this is really a good benchmark for where this particular line of inquiry in futures studies has gone so far, or at the very least when the pieces were written, how ever long ago that was. The third phase is one that holds a smile at how this book has furthered my thinking and a small smirk at how familiar it all was. As I finished the book and sat to reflect upon it, yes it furthers my own thinking on these concepts, but let's be honest, this book is like preaching to the choir, to the already converted. One could almost say: "Yes, communication does not equal the sheer number of emails, Duh!" I don't think I ran across anything really new, just more in depth, greater breadth, more focused than what I'd already been learning. I get it, but then again, I'm part of the choir. There's nothing wrong with preaching to the choir on occasion. They need the encouragement and the furthering of their own understanding as well. But the real question is how does it play with audiences that don't get it, aren't hip to what's *going down*, and are mentally stuck in older paradigms? I'm afraid I'm completely unqualified to even venture an opinion on that question.

So, after a pregnant pause, what do I think? If technology, sustainability or future generations is of any interest to you, then read the damn thing if you haven't already. And if you don't, it's just another lost opportunity to further your own understanding. Your loss, not mine, since I've read it twice now.

Glenn Hough
<gally_angel@yahoo.com>

Taiwan Future Education Conference, Tamkang University by Patricia Kelly

The Global Conference On Teaching Futures Studies at Tamkang University, Tamsui, Taiwan, November 5-7, 2002

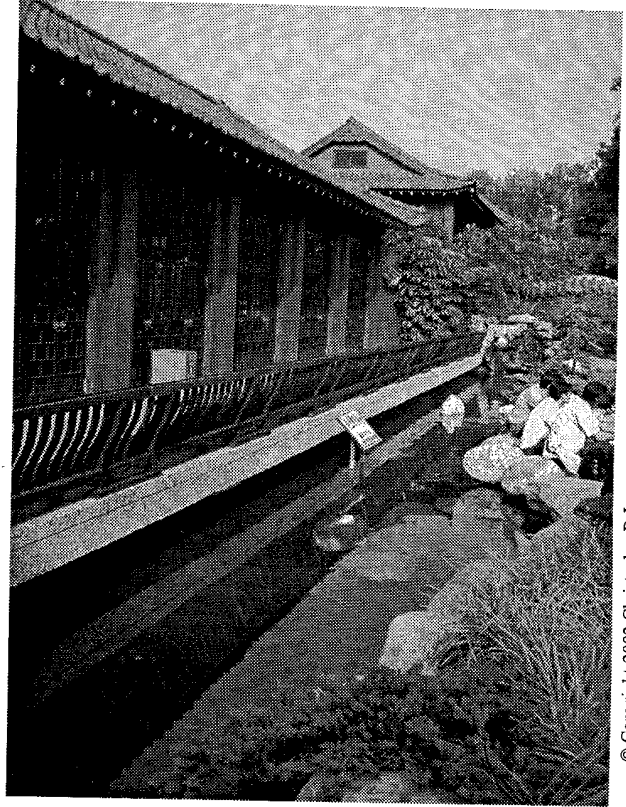
Patricia Kelly

Introduction

I am happy to report on the November, 2002, global colloquium. The founder of Tamkang private university, President Clement Chang, had the foresight to make Futures Studies an integral part of education in all disciplines. The November conference was part of the ongoing commitment to developing Futures Studies at Tamkang and globally through encouraging connections between futurists and institutions worldwide. I felt privileged to be a part of this group, some of whose work I had read and used in my struggles to understand, others whom I knew only from World Futures Studies Federation email lists. Most papers from this conference are to be published in the February edition of the *Journal of Futures Studies*. Mine is in the November, 2002 issue (Kelly, 2002). I was invited to the Tamkang colloquium because my work with large, diverse cohorts involves transformation and change and is informed by futures thinking. Everyone who was at the Tamkang conference had unique conference experiences. This brief report reflects mine. I will set the scene and then devote the rest of this brief report to my learning highlights and thoughts for future action based on that learning.

The context

This was my first visit to Taiwan. For those who have not yet visited Tamkang University, it is a beautiful tree-lined campus in the Tamsui district about forty minutes by the MRT from Taipei or an hour and a half by road along a traffic-choked six lane highway. The university is near the mouth of the river through which the Portuguese entered the island in 1517. It is still possible, in the precious remaining areas of untouched hillside, to see why they named the island *Ilha Formosa*, beautiful island. Tamkang University provided generously for our accommodation, living costs



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and food while we were there. We stayed in a nearby hotel and were collected by car or minibus for the short ride to the university each day. Our Taiwanese colleagues and their students were exceptionally warm, generous and thoughtful hosts.

Highlights

Small is beautiful

It was a pleasure (and a relief) to be part of a small group. The theme was clear, the attendees committed and interested in what was being said and who was saying it. It was Natalie Dian, I think, who said how nice it was not to have to apologise for thinking or talking about alternative futures or matters of the emotions or the spirit. The women I spoke to agreed they had all wasted some of their lives compromising aspects of their character or appearance in order to try to teach in this area. The language of alternative futures appears increasingly out of step in these times of increasingly utilitarian and market driven forms of education (Hicks, 2002 p.43) and therefore attracts less support.

Speakers at this colloquium were inspiring in their honesty about how this lack of support had affected them personally and the futures programs they taught. To hear futurists of the calibre of Graham May and Chris Jones share their struggles was encouraging to those of us who begin to doubt if the struggle is worthwhile. Gatherings like this provide soul food. Another source of soul food was the students, particularly the post-graduates, who were so supportive and so eager to learn and share learnings.

The workshop

David Hicks and I were asked to do a workshop on Day 2. This was a challenge because we had to plan it the night before working with a mixed audience of undergraduates, post-graduates and teachers from within and outside the university. It was an opportunity for me to apply workshop methods in a Taiwanese setting and to work with David. The setting was a large hall with the audience sitting behind tables. With no Chinese language, we were presenting in English to an audience with varying levels of skill in English as another language. Fortunately, we were working with Tamkang colleagues who were superb interpreters, and Jon Solomon. Laurie Wheldon also offered support. However, the organisers had asked for a workshop so we planned it as follows: David and I “modelled” an interview with each other, asking questions:

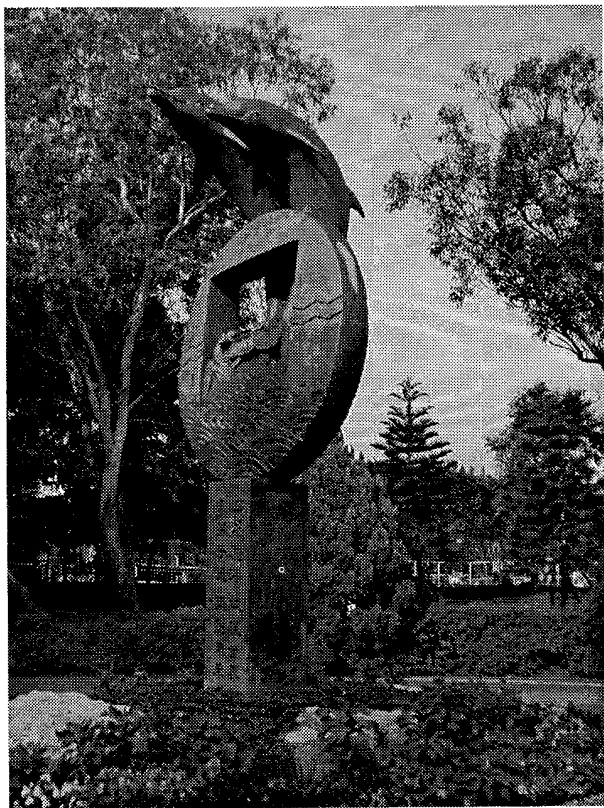
How did you become interested in futures studies?

- *What do you do?*

- *What do you hope to learn from today's session?*

We then explained that we began with an interview because we wanted the audience to do the same, pairing with a person they “*didn't know yet*”, to ask each other these same questions. We then asked them to find two other pairs and share one thing they had learnt from doing this activity. After the initial shock, realising that we were serious about this and with their teachers encouraging them, the noise began to rise to gratifying levels as the neat rows broke up into active groups. This ended in a feedback session where group spokespersons were invited to “*share their thoughts with us so we can learn*”. One brave student began with an excellent summary in English. What was even more rewarding was when presenters, with encouragement, switched to Chinese. This was summarised in English by their teachers, for our benefit. The comments and ensuing discussions were lively and engaging. One group spontaneously presented a small environmental drama which drew enthusiastic applause. David introduced Elise Boulding's concept of the two hundred year present with a simple and powerful example of a grandmother's ring worn by a little girl. Her child in turn might wear that ring and in that simple way, she was connected to generations before and after her time. This powerful metaphor crossed cultures immediately and affected me personally. He couldn't have known I was wearing my own much loved grandmother's ring, inscribed with the date 1896. I recalled Sohail Inayatullah telling me that even in working with tough army generals, the concept of future generations as expressed through their grandchildren was always the most effective concept.

Due to pressure of time, we didn't do all our planned activities, but the groups discussed how Boulding's concept might be useful in Taiwanese contexts and then presented their thoughts. I could see as I mixed with the groups and watched their interactions, that, (as at QUT) there were some students who resisted this kind of work and didn't want to leave their comfort zones. For the vast majority though, it seemed to be the same liberating and empowering experience that it is for students and staff I have worked with in Australia and elsewhere. This leads to some broader reflections on futures conferences and colloquia.



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Redesign conferences and colloquia

Most conferences are still designed on the Sage on the Stage model. This model, in my experience of conferences, makes it more difficult for young people and females to speak up. It also means that most of the time is taken up with presentations rather than discussions about their significance. The workshop responses revealed the deep concerns these students and teachers had about their society and the world, but there was no time to pursue these in further sessions or to receive their feedback about what they thought. Student Poster sessions, as Wendy Schultz reported from the Kure, Japan conference, may be one move in this direction, as long as there is time for discussion.

Begin all conferences or workshops, large or small, with opportunities for getting to know others. This work can incorporate the conference aims and themes.

Even at a small conference, it is important to have time and activities designed to help people get to know each other *as part of* the conference timetable, rather than add on social extras. Even in this small group, I didn't know all the visiting professors, except by name in many cases. It was difficult to approach a stranger and begin a conversation despite the dizzy and undeserved promotion on my name tag from PhD student/lecturer to "Professor" in the American style. I would have loved to have begun with small group work designed to introduce us to each other, and to the wonderful students who were our guides for the three days we were there. Some people always seem to think this is a "waste of time" that could be spent on "content". It actually addresses intersecting issues of power, gender and culture relations. Students and visitors could have established common ground and issues of difference. We were fortunate that it was a small group and there was a welcoming dinner for us which did help but even so I didn't get to know some people until the last day (Hicks, 2002).

Make time to discuss papers and presentations in small groups with colleagues and students

A few of us spent the last morning took up the invitation to attend one of Sohail Inayatullah's graduate classes. The students, all female, did a wonderful job of explaining their chosen macrohistorian's ideas and how they were useful. Two thoughts struck me at this point. Wearing my hat as a teacher of English as a Second Language, I thought it would be a useful addi-

tion to their course to have a separate session devoted to the English of the topic under discussion and the language of critical discussion, which they could then practise in their tutorial. Wearing a semiotician's hat, I saw that, as in most other universities, there were no images of alternative futures on the walls. I had already noted that advertisements on Taiwanese television, like Australian television, urged young people to see themselves as fortunate inheritors of fast food and fast car futures, dependent on their disconnection from home-culture and the Earth. As I write, I see above me on the wall, a poster called Spirit of Life, with two Bottlenose dolphins leaping joyfully out of a clear sea. It reminds me that I also work for the diminishing number of other species with whom I share the planet and on whom I impact. All of our cultures must take responsibility for changing things we now take for granted if all other species and future generations are to inherit a planet worth living on.

In hindsight

I regret not giving the simpler presentation I had originally planned but changed the night before. I should have said.

I am informed and inspired by these futurists and I am working hard to be a more effective teacher and change agent.

The best of what I do is to work with a large, diverse, mainstream engineering cohort with not much support or encouragement from senior staff, males in particular. Recent student interviews show me that even this small and imperfect intervention is having positive effects on the way students see the future and their responsibility for it as engineers.

The negativity towards or invisibility of our (the teaching team's) efforts really gets me down. Teaching initiatives such as these need support and encouragement to survive. Being part of a gathering like this revived my interest in my work and research and my belief that it might be useful.

I envy a university that has the support to teach futures studies.

What would help me now is feedback on what I am doing and how I am trying to do it.

I would really like to know what students and teachers of Futures Studies at Tamkang and elsewhere find the most inspiring and challenging. How do you use what you learn, to uncover and challenge taken for granted knowings? What have you had to "unlearn"?

Unlearning includes moving past the litany or surface levels of dialogue to facing our respective areas of cultural contest and change. For example, the roles, contributions and treatment of Indigenous people are issues common to many countries, including Australia and Taiwan, but they did not feature in our conversations at Tamkang. Moreover, how can we create alternative futures to the nightmares envisaged by those who strangle the language to create terms such as “pre-emptive defence”? As a card on another wall in our house reminds me every day, “*We are going to change the world! If it isn't you, little one, who is going to*

begin to change the world, who will do it? (Barbara Choc, 1993).

Hicks, D. (2002). A Futures Perspective: lessons from the schoolroom. Paper presented at the Teaching Futures Studies: Innovative approaches to pedagogical practice and institutional structure - an International Colloquium, Tamkang University, Taiwan.

Kelly, P. (2002). Integrating Futures Thinking into First Year Engineering: learning for sustainable futures. Journal of Futures Studies, November.

Hungary Futures Course 2003

from page 3

and willingness to spread the spirit and the very practical result of the BFC.

Output orientation

Our intention is that the participants could formulate a message from the analysis of the given programme for their own special field. The participants actively contribute to the course with interchanging of ideas, sharing their own research results, discussing those of the invited lecturers. Thus the programme of each summer course is particular and concretely specified.

Organisation and course site

Budapest Futures Course is organised by the Futures Studies Centre of the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration. The course is announced at the WFSF home page, its mailing list and bulletin as well as in Hungarian forums. Actual organisation starts one year before the event and with the follow up finishes about one year after the course.

The site of the course will be the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, where all facilities are at our disposal.

Accommodation and meals are provided close to the University.

Participants

We expect 30-35 young, future oriented fellows, mainly from the less developed countries with experience in research and its applications. The BFC programme, its message and notion is to be transferred and applied by participants, hence we try to “involve” hundreds and hundreds of people.

The course mainly consists of workshops with introductory presentations. The Budapest Futures Course is thus not divided by lecturers and participants – we have only participants with changing facilitators each time. As the spirituality of the Budapest Futures Course is an interchange of ideas, participants are expected to prepare and take part in the discussions. Participants who meet output orientation will be recognised by a certificate.

Follow-up work

The BFC is more than just a summer course. We want to make available how the participants man-

age to put the message of the course into practice, what experience they have. We plan to issue publications from these contributions, from the materials and the outcome of the course, as well as the new results of research work on the topic of previous courses.

The most important follow up will be the permanent operation of an international network including many future oriented institutes and movements. Network participants will interchange experience how each member managed to meet worldwide as well as local challenges, what tools they had to tackle new circumstances and what results they expect. Hence it will be possible to react locally to global changes having consulted with many active centres all over the world.

The BFC is a series of events progressing on a biannual basis. Forthcoming courses are organised in accordance with the previous messages, with up-to-date challenges, future interest and financing.



www.wfsf.org

The Inaugural 'Australian Foresight Institute Monograph Series'

The Australian Foresight Institute (AFI) is situated in Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia. AFI is a specialised research and postgraduate teaching unit, which was established in 1999 to develop an innovative set of postgraduate programs and research in the area of applied foresight. The Institute offers a Master and Doctorate award in Strategic Foresight.

The Institute has embarked on a publishing program for 2003, of which the monograph series is the first product. This inaugural series contains four works by different authors, which highlight the breadth of application and research into foresight undertaken within the Institute. Topics include the history and evolution of critical futures studies; foresight in everyday life; and innovative environmental scanning techniques.

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Andrew Wynberg, *Wider and deeper: review and critique of science and technology foresight in the 1990s*

Jose Ramos, *From critique to cultural recovery: critical futures studies and Causal Layered Analysis*

Dr Joseph Voros, *Reframing environmental scanning*

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**IN THE
NEXT ISSUE:**

■ Futures of Oceans

■ 2004 Conference Proposal