

IFJP 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition  
Feminist Scholarship, Feminist Institution-Building, Feminist Friendships  
Catherine Eschle and Sandra Whitworth

It seems a long time ago now: the turbo-charged stampede to delivery of our first issue; the long phone calls with contributors about the detail of their articles; and the excited discussions about process or about proposed special issues. Our recollections are often hazy but sometimes crystal clear. Laughing with Board members while sprawled on floor cushions at one particularly memorable conference dinner. Glimpsing via Skype the epic snowfall outside the Toronto journal homebase office. Arguing repeatedly about the role of the Oxford comma in sentence construction... Listening affectionately to the sleepy yawns of a co-editor up at 6am for a conference call that crossed three time zones. These are our recollections of the daily grind and the deeper joys of editing a feminist journal.

We served as *International Feminist Journal of Politics* Editors from 2005 to 2011 and during our first three years worked with co-editor Rekha Pande at Hyderabad University, and in the final three years, with our co-editor Teresia Teaiwa of the University of Wellington. That timing means we were charged with overseeing the tenth anniversary edition of the journal. We will say frankly that our first reaction in being approached by the current editors to contribute to this twentieth anniversary celebration was to be astonished that another ten years has already passed. But then it was time to pause and consider this accomplishment. At a time in which feminist scholarship and activism are under attack in ways we could not have imagined possible ten or twenty years ago, IFJP's success and longevity is a heartening reminder that feminist scholarship, institutions and communities can be forged and can survive even in the face of the most unexpected, and sustained, onslaught.

We wrote in the tenth anniversary edition that we were proud to be part of the journey that is IFJP, and that is still very much the case – it was an engaging intellectual time for us and one in which we learned a great deal about feminist scholarship and about helping to run a journal. IFJP's great strength, of course, is the quality of the scholarship it publishes: that was what attracted us to consider serving as editors in the first place. It is an exhilarating and quite privileged form of intellectual and political engagement to shepherd work through to publication, and to make connections between writers and reviewers and, in this way, be part of a small village of people focused on helping researchers to expand our intellectual horizons and writers to hone their craft.

It is invidious to single out single articles for special mention, so we will resist the temptation. But we recall still that frisson of satisfaction felt when particular pieces that caught the ear at conference made it through the long road of multiple reviews and redrafts to finally reaching print. If the daily work on articles sometimes obscured the larger picture, from our present-day perspective we can see that some of the pieces we saw to publication undoubtedly shaped debate in feminist IR and beyond, in critical security studies, international political economy and geopolitics, and are still widely read today. We were personally delighted when the guest editors of the various special issues on our watch jumped successfully through all hoops and around all obstacles, to push forward the research agenda on issues as diverse as gendered violence in a global frame, the international political economy of water, Islam and feminisms, intersectionality in the European Union, new directions in human rights, and critical assessments of UNSCR 1325. Similarly, there was great intellectual delight to be had in pulling together special sections on particular themes, or forums on particular articles, from prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib to militant masculinities in anti-globalisation activism. In such ways, editing IFJP may have been hard work for us as individuals, but felt like an important and meaningful form of academic labour - one

that made a substantive difference to individuals and to the feminist IR community, and that was personally richly rewarding.

IFJP is also sustained by a whole host of small institution-building measures, introduced throughout its history. These are far less visible than the feminist content of the articles we publish, and perhaps to outsiders far less exciting, but we learned over time that they are an equally important part of the ecosystem that is IFJP, contributing to its continued vibrancy and relevance.

What do we mean by this? First, there are a number of really smart things the founding editors introduced into IFJP's editorial structure, they made some very thoughtful, and we would add, compassionate choices about what could be called institutional micro-politics. One of these was establishing the practice that editors can serve no more than two terms, thus acknowledging that the labour to produce a journal is significant, and that it should be shared. No one should carry that burden indefinitely, but just as important, no editorial team can 'own' the journal. This means IFJP will continue to move forward and to be infused by new vision (and new energy) as intellectual generations shift and as new people come forward to do the work we all need. Second, the founding editors established an editorial board structure and ethos that was thoroughly collective in character, and activist. No rubber stamping of editorial decisions here: the editorial board was, since its inception, expected to engage closely with both the strategic direction and everyday practices of the journal – a crucial component in enabling the journal to serve its community from within. The editorial board has since grown in innovative ways, but that basic principle continues to be key. It fundamentally shaped our work as editors, making our life challenging at times but also offering reassurance, support and guidance when we needed it most.

We saw our tenure at IFJP, as the third editorial team, in terms of institutional consolidation. In contrast to the imaginative vision and sheer bloody-minded determination of the founding editors – and also to the innovative institutional experimentation of our successors – we had it relatively easy, and were perhaps a little dull, concerning ourselves with strengthening day-to-day process. We strove to bed-down review processes, routinise and improve communication with authors, build a stronger and more transparent relationship with the editors of the conversations and book review sections, institute clear and constructive guidelines for reviewers and speed up the review process, gather routine data about review times and rejection rates, and routinely meet publisher deadlines. Such is the unglamorous work of institution-building. However, this was crucial to a more major institutional shift during our tenure: IFJP's entry into the Social Sciences Citation Index.

Neither of us are deeply invested in research metrics, and indeed consider them problematic in many ways (like much of IFJP's readership, we suspect). Thus our eyes may have had a tendency to glaze over when previous editors raised the importance of the SSCI at board meetings. However, through the repeated efforts of board members to raise the issue, and through our interactions with prospective authors at conferences, the significance of playing the publishing game in this regard gradually became clear to us. Without listing on the Index, and as research metrics started to bite within the university sector more generally, it was becoming harder and harder for junior scholars, and/or those based in the global South, to justify submitting their work to IFJP. We always took very seriously the journal mission to expand the pool from which its contributors are drawn. It took a lot of work from us, from section editors, from reviewers and from authors to meet the timely and regularized review processes and the submission of copy required by the ISSI, but we were delighted when the journal finally made it in. IFJP had safely made it over the bar of professionalisation and respectability in the newly metricised research world. This was only ever intended as a means to an end, a way of ensuring that the journal

could continue to serve its community, to grow and to thrive. As it certainly has done in the years since, in the form of the many and astonishing achievements of subsequent editors – notably the regular international conferences, recent efforts to widen the geo-political pool of board members and contributors, and the creation of more open-access content. We like to think that the mundane institutional work we undertook helped to lay some of the foundations of what lay ahead.

So much for feminist contributions to knowledge and to institution-building. On a more personal note, perhaps the biggest legacy we take with us from our time as editors is, in fact, the friendships we have built – with each other and with those who joined us on the IFJP journey. Much of that was built on the back of rapidly changing internet communications technology that sustained (and sometimes impeded!) our interactions across three continents. But face-to-face editorial and board meetings remained crucial, underpinned by financial contributions from our publisher for which we remain very grateful. At Teresia's suggestion, moving the IFJP board meeting for one year from the North American International Studies Association to the Oceanic Conference on International Studies in Auckland opened up new vistas and relationships, and cemented deep friendship amongst ourselves. We haven't worked together for years now and, very sadly, lost Teresia to cancer last year (you can read the IFJP tribute to her here <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14616742.2017.1323707>). However, Teresia's influence on both of us remains profound, in terms of both her wonderfully positive and calm personality in the face of the challenges life threw her way, and her situated, deeply politicized, commitment to building knowledge about and from the Pacific region. We learned a lot from her, as we continue to learn from each other. Forged in the daily grind of feminist editorial work, and replenished only rarely, these friendships nonetheless remain important to our continuing individual and academic journeys. We end by toasting a glass, always half-full, over great distances, to each other, to Teresia, to all editors past and present, and to the wider IFJP community. Here's to the next twenty years, everyone.