

## UCL GOS ICH TRAVEL AWARD REPORT FORM

<b>Student's name:</b>	Abigail Bentley
<b>PhD Project title:</b>	Family violence against women and common mental disorders in urban informal settlements of Mumbai, India
<b>Primary Supervisor:</b>	Professor David Osrin

<b>Conference Title:</b>
Gender Studies 2019 Conference: on violence
<b>Dates of Travel:</b>
23/10/19 – 27/10/19
<b>Venue/Location:</b>
Helsinki University, Helsinki, Finland
<p>In October 2019 I attended the Gender Studies conference at the University Helsinki, which had a theme of violence. I was surprised to learn when I arrived that the co-host of the conference, The Association for Gender Studies in Finland has been established since 1989 and running conferences for the past 30 years.</p> <p>Whilst my research is based on some feminist theory, I have approached the field of intimate partner violence from a global health perspective and this is therefore usually the context within which I present my work. I wanted to attend the Gender Studies conference in Helsinki in order to learn from, and present my work to predominantly feminist scholars working in a different discipline to myself. I felt it was important to gain peer feedback and perspectives from colleagues working in the gender studies field, given that my research is inherently based on a feminist issue.</p> <p>Not only was I able to present my work, but I came away from the conference having learnt a lot. I now have new avenues of literature to pursue that I believe will enhance my work on violence against women and mental health in the global health field.</p> <p>The conference focused on many aspects of violence, including interpersonal violence against women, violence against LGBTQi groups, structural violence and war. This helped me to think about the multiple ways in which people can be victims of violence and is a theme that I will try to identify in future research, particularly when working with women in low socioeconomic settings.</p>

Of particular interest to me was a symposium focusing on the links between climate change and violence. We discussed the structural violence in this context, whereby some communities are already experiencing the devastating effects of climate change, yet these communities have contributed the least to the crisis. We also discussed how shortages of resources due to the climate crisis could lead to an increase in interpersonal violence, due to the additional stressors placed on people within the community, as well as the increased risk of war as people fight over scarce resources. Whilst I felt this was an interesting and important debate, and was happy to see it included in the schedule, it did strike me as somewhat hypocritical that most of us had flown to Helsinki to partake in the conference and then talk about climate change. This has made me think about our role as academics in the climate crisis and how we can mitigate the impacts of our work – particularly for those of us working in global health.

Overall the conference was a very fruitful and enjoyable experience and I am looking forward to reading further about some of the things that I learnt.