



The University of the West Indies

Barbara Joy Glendon

Chancellor, "Look Yah Now"is the title of a weekly Jamaica Observer column written by our honouree. It is but one of numerous vehicles that she has used to connect with her various publics. An immensely talented and principled communicator, she is also a popular talk show host, who has for years quietly but effectively given expression to her beliefs by practising her profession in bilingual mode, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of the Jamaican language.

Starting out as a Library Assistant at the Gleaner Company Ltd. when the manual typewriter was high technology in the male-dominated newsroom in which the combination of booze, cigarette smoke and spicy language would have been lethal to lesser mortals, she more than survived. Her quick wit, curiosity, proclivity for words, and ambition, combined to infuse the organisation with the energy of youth that soon saw her being promoted to the position of sub-editor.

This was merely apprenticeship for bigger things including the editorship of the Gleaner's Childrens' Own newspaper; Features Editor of all the Gleaner publications, and culminating with her appointment as the first female editor of the Star newspaper. Along the way she picked up numerous awards for outstanding work from the Press Association of Jamaica, including one for her column "Stella" carried in the Star for over 20 years.

She parted with that paper and its parent company on a matter of principle. It was her view then, as it remains today, that buxom bosoms may attractive centre spreads make but they do not make for good journalism. Note that the womens' movement, as it was then called, was still in its infancy.

For the next three years, her journalistic skills were deployed in service to the nation as Deputy Director of Tourism with responsibility for both local and international communication strategies. Progression from that to her own communications consultancy in 1982 was a seamless segue.

Her agency specialised in both local and international programmes concerned with women's issues and development as well as the labour movement. Most significantly, she made her talents and professional skills available to the church, particularly to the Anglican Diocese of Jamaica as communication specialist and Lay Preacher, as well as to the Caribbean Conference of Churches and the United Theological College of the West Indies.

But Chancellor, "Look Yah Now" ... her weekly column, plays second fiddle to the popular radio call-in programme "Hotline" which she has hosted for almost two decades, informing, entertaining and educating her many callers and listeners with her natural wit and the wisdom of experience.

Both these qualities have been features of the national Pantomime, the theatrical spectacle for which she has written over 12 scripts, bringing pleasure to generations of Jamaicans. As founder of the highly acclaimed Jamaica Pantomime Company, she can justly be proud. Her radio serial "Wrong Move", various theatrical reviews, and childrens' productions have made hers a constant cultural presence and household name in the life of our country.

That her advice would be sought by a wide variety of public and private bodies is confirmed by board memberships on a cross-section of corporate and state agencies including the Institute of Jamaica, the Multicare Foundation, and the Little Theatre Movement whose Board she chairs. Being Trustee for life of the Press Association of Jamaica testifies to the high esteem with which she is held by the fraternity of the "fourth estate".

Chancellor, look yah now. "Respec joo" to this remarkable Jamaican woman from St. Bess — principled journalist, newspaper columnist, radio talk show host, playwright, communication consultant, wordsmith, bilingual wit and raconteur, keeper of the culture and Lay Preacher — the Honourable Barbara Joy Gloudon nee Goodison, OJ ; OD — and by virtue of the authority vested in you by the Council and Senate of The University of the West Indies, I invite you to confer on her the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.

At the Mona Campus
November 8, 2003