

Gender Studies: Crossing Boundaries



Charting New Directions

By Elsa Leo-Rhynie

Centre for Gender and
Development Studies
1993-2003

Tenth Anniversary Lecture
Centre for Gender and
Development Studies
The University of the West Indies
St. Augustine Campus

December 3, 2003

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(1993-2003)

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St. Augustine

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Elsa Ann Leo-Rhynie

Elsa Leo-Rhynie assumed the post of Pro Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI) on August 1, 2002, following her tenure as Deputy Principal of the Mona campus since 1996. Prior to this, she served as Professor and Regional Coordinator of the UWI's Centre for Gender and Development Studies (1992 –1996), and lecturer and senior lecturer in the School of Education.

Dr. Leo-Rhynie's academic interests centre on the gender socialization of very young children, as well as educational factors which influence development of gender identity among children and adolescents.

She has published extensively in the areas of education, training, and gender concerns. Her most recent publications are 'Gender analysis in educational policy and practice' in the 1999 *Journal of Education and Development in the Caribbean* and "Education and Gender in Jamaica and the Commonwealth Caribbean: inclusion, exclusion and impact" in the December 2002 volume of the *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies*.

Preface

It's a pleasure for me to write this preface to the publication of the Public Lecture, which was given to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the St. Augustine campus. Hosting this celebration was important as it served as an opportunity to reflect on our achievements and those things which we still need to do, to honour those who have contributed to our successes and to make a contribution to the growing body of knowledge on Caribbean Gender Studies coming out of The University of the West Indies.

We were especially pleased to have Prof. Elsa Leo-Rhynie as the lecturer on this occasion. Prof. Leo-Rhynie has had a distinguished career at The University of the West Indies and was the first recipient of a professorship in Women/Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies. Prof. Leo-Rhynie continues to serve as Chair of the Regional Steering Committee of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies in addition to the other positions, which she has held at The UWI, the most recent being Pro Vice-Chancellor for Undergraduate Studies. We were quite pleased that she accepted our invitation to deliver this 10th Anniversary Public Lecture.

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies was established within The UWI system in September 1993 with units on all three campuses and a regional coordinating unit on the Mona Campus. Its establishment was the result of eleven previous years of active lobbying, pilot teaching, strategising, training and early research and publication by members of the Women and Development Studies groups on the three campuses of The UWI. There were many persons who contributed to this process and we acknowledge their hard work, vision and foresight at the crucial early stage of this process.

Although the Centre was established in 1993, it was not until August 1994 that the first staff were appointed to the CGDS St. Augustine Unit. Dr. Jeanette Morris, then campus coordinator of the CGDS, hosted the first CGDS Board of Studies meeting during this period. In August 1994, the Centre properly began operations with an establishment of one senior lecturer and one secretary/stenographer. No office space was allocated. Today we have a full-time establishment of six, academic, administrative and support staff, and three staff funded from non-university funds. We have definitely outgrown the space currently allocated to us.

Over the ten-year period we have also accomplished a creditable body of research and publications, introduced two minors in Gender Studies in the Faculty of Humanities and Education and in Gender and Development in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Additionally, our graduate programme attracts students from a wide range of research interests and backgrounds and is contributing to the development of scholarship in this field. At St. Augustine, undergraduate level gender-related courses are now available to students in every faculty of The UWI except the Faculty of Engineering.

In addition to our research and teaching, our established outreach programme is considered an important aspect of our work. We therefore cherish our relationships with women's organisations, men's organisations, community-based organisations, arts and theatre organisations, government departments and international and regional organisations. These relationships have been very important in allowing us to fulfil our mission and objectives.

The Lecture presented by Prof. Leo-Rhynie and published here is extremely relevant to this occasion. It traces the historical and intellectual processes which led to the emergence of gender studies within the

University of the West Indies, and the philosophical underpinnings, dilemmas and challenges that have shaped its direction over these years. She also interrogates the epistemological challenges, which we have presented to the Caribbean academic tradition and the wider context of education within our region and the world. I recommend this publication highly.

On this occasion, it is true to say that we are quite proud of our achievements, but we must acknowledge that we owe much to the collaborative and cooperative actions of many. This public lecture puts it all in perspective.

Rhoda Reddock
Professor and Head
Centre for Gender and Development Studies
The University of the West Indies
St. Augustine Campus
January 2004

Message from:
Prof. Barbara Bailey
Regional Coordinator
Gender and Development Studies

I am very pleased to be associated with the publication of the lecture entitled *Gender Studies: Crossing Boundaries, Charting New Directions* presented by Professor Elsa Leo-Rhynie as one of the many events planned by the St. Augustine Unit to mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Gender and Development Studies as an autonomous teaching and research Centre of The University of the West Indies.

Professor Rhoda Reddock is not only distinguished Head of the St. Augustine Unit of the Centre but is also numbered among the pioneers who worked assiduously during the 80s and early 90s to lay the groundwork for the eventual acceptance of Gender Studies as a legitimate academic pursuit within the academy; and, I would venture to suggest, that since its establishment the Centre has contributed, in no small measure, to enhancing the international standing and visibility of the institution through the high quality of the teaching, research and outreach activities of the Units on all three campuses. Within the ten year period the Centre has instituted a non-degree certificate programme, an undergraduate minor on all three campuses and offers graduate level M.Sc., M.Phil. and PhD programmes. Among other things, the Centre has also produced six major interdisciplinary Readers, based mainly on Caribbean research to support these teaching programmes.

The title of the lecture succinctly reflects the twenty year journey that the Centre has taken, from the conception of the idea in the early 80s of finding innovative ways to introduce Women and Development Studies, to institutionalization of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies in 1993. From the outset, it was clearly established that not only was Gender Studies a new academic pursuit in relation to The UWI experience but that it transcends and transgresses disciplinary boundaries and therefore brings with it new epistemological, pedagogical and organizational challenges. In the journey we

have therefore been forced to cross long established and entrenched academic and structural boundaries and chart new directions in establishing the Centre outside of the existing faculty modality. The journey has been exciting but the project is still a work in progress.

In many regards the Centre has therefore been in the vanguard in promoting one of the core values that the University of the West Indies proclaims to cherish and is determined to preserve that of 'cultivating multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration.' As we move forward into the next decade I fully endorse the sentiments expressed by Prof. Leo-Rhynie in her concluding comments and reaffirm the Centre's commitment to preserving the tradition of crossing boundaries, charting new directions, producing active thinkers, researchers and learners who will be equipped to effect social and political change at all levels and in all sectors of Caribbean society and in so doing promote continued efforts to achieve gender equality and social justice.

Barbara Bailey, PhD
Professor and Regional Coordinator
Centre for Gender and Development Stud

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
CENTRE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES
ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

TENTH ANNIVERSARY LECTURE
December 3, 2003

*Gender Studies: Crossing Boundaries,
Charting new Directions*

Elsa Leo-Rhynie

It is both an honour and a delight for me to be here with you to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies (CGDS) and to have been invited to participate in the St. Augustine celebration in this special way. I thank especially Professor Reddock and Dr. Mohammed, Rhoda and Pat, for inviting me, and thank you all for coming to share with us. I bring greetings from the Mona and Regional Coordinating Units in Jamaica and special good wishes from Professor Barbara Bailey, Regional Coordinator of the CGDS.

The past ten years have been eventful and highly productive – a decade of which the Centre can be justly proud. Although we speak of a tenth anniversary, however, the beginnings of CGDS date long before that, and we must salute and honour the pioneers whose work, dedication and commitment to our cause nurtured and brought Women and Development Studies from the margins of the University to its Centre and ushered Gender Studies into the academy. Although the focus this evening is on the pioneers at St. Augustine, the trailblazers include Dr. Peggy Antrobus, Professor Joycelin Massiah, Professor Rhoda Reddock, Dr. Lucille Mathurin Mair, Dr. Marjorie Thorpe, Mrs. Kathleen Drayton, Ms. Dorianne Rowan-Campbell, Mrs. Hermione McKenzie, Dr. Patricia

Mohammed, Professor Barbara Bailey, Dr Eudine Barriteau, Mrs. Louraine Emmanuel. We must record also the significant contributions of our colleague institution, the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, the Netherlands Government, the Ford Foundation, UNIFEM and other funding agencies whose generosity and commitment to social and political change have enabled and facilitated the work of the CGDS.

The title I have given this lecture is, "Gender Studies: Crossing Boundaries, Charting New Directions." This, I think, has been the hallmark of our work ever since it started over twenty years ago. We were involved in a new exciting area of concern and activity, we were pioneering an initiative which not only opened up new avenues of research and scholarship but also captured our emotions and our spirit of social equity and moral 'rightness' and we recognized that our venture was one which had major implications for change. We had to be prepared to cross the boundaries of resistance to change and to meet the challenge of charting the course of the new directions demanded by that change.

Crossing boundaries: activism to scholarship

Gender studies had its origins in the social and political ferment of the 1960s and 1970s, and particularly the political activism of feminists, in which the concerns were with power and influence in the lives of women and their relationships with men, the family, the community, the workplace and the State.

The first boundary to be crossed was that between the activism of the women's movement and the scholarship of the academy. The trigger and stimulus for this boundary crossing was the Women in the Caribbean project, directed by Professor Joycelin Massiah and spanning the late 1970s and early 1980s, a project which was interdisciplinary in scope and innovative in implementation. This initiative took place during the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985) and explored new research methodologies in documenting the lives of women across the English-speaking Caribbean. The innovative use of photography and video, which was bold new research technology at the

time, to permit the actual reporting from the women themselves, of statements of their lives and experiences, provided a rich source of data and forced new approaches to analysis, and different ways of communicating the message. At the same time, the Women and Development Unit (WAND) of The University of The West Indies was newly established in 1977 as an arm of the Extra Mural Department (now School of Continuing Studies). Dr. Peggy Antrobus was the first Tutor Coordinator of this Unit, and both she and Professor Massiah recognized the vital importance of getting the messages from the research and from the outreach projects of WAND into the university curriculum. Professor Reddock prepared a position paper on the Introduction of a Programme of Women and Development Studies at The University of the West Indies, which was presented to a regional meeting in March 1982. The strategy developed to achieve this goal was that of forming, on each campus, Women and Development Studies (WDS) groups to promote the findings of the project across the region and also to see to their inclusion in relevant disciplinary courses. The strength and cohesiveness of these groups were achieved through meetings, seminars, formal and informal, campus-based and regional, carried out in a spirit of collaboration and partnership, and guided by a regional steering committee chaired by Professor Joycelin Massiah.

Funding to support the work of these groups in the Caribbean was sought and obtained from a number of sources, but chiefly from the Ford Foundation and the Government of the Netherlands. The intent was the introduction of a programme of Women and Development Studies in the University and central to the groups' strategy of crossing the boundary into the academy was the establishment of a record of scholarship in the field of study. This was achieved through the staging of a series of three interdisciplinary and seven disciplinary seminars between 1986 and 1994. These yielded over 120 papers, covering a range of topics, using a variety of methodologies, and all indicative of a surge of interest in, and the intent to be part of the initiative to explore the historical and contemporary status of women, and most importantly to contemplate the societal gender systems which had governed the status of women and men over the years. Mathurin Mair

(1988) in the Foreword to the publication of papers from the Inaugural Seminar, commented that as seminar participants become involved

with the analytical tools of various disciplines, they are articulating a gender focused critique of development theories and models which promises in time to penetrate academia and to inform processes of national and regional planning. (p.x)

The work of the WDS groups served as a catalyst for the penetration of academia and for the exciting and dynamic growth of scholarship in the area of gender and development in the region. The papers from the Inaugural Seminar were published in a volume edited in 1988 by Patricia Mohammed and Catherine Shepherd, *Gender in Caribbean Development* and in use before the CGDS was formally institutionalized. It is now in its second edition and is still a valuable source book for students and those seeking an introduction to issues of gender and development. The tradition was continued after the formation of the CGDS with the publication, in 1997, of another edited volume, *Gender: A Caribbean Multi-disciplinary Perspective*, which contains a selection of papers from the other interdisciplinary and disciplinary seminars. The sharing and collaboration involved in the development and staging of the seminars, and the networks which developed as a result, enhanced the work of each participant and in turn the work of the various disciplines; academics who hitherto had not thought of gender as a field of enquiry now found it a fertile source of new information and research. The work thus became 'both transformative and generative' (Lave 1997).

The boundary crossing into the academy was formally achieved in September 1993 when the Centre was institutionalized. Over the past ten years, the CGDS has been engaged in raising searching theoretical and methodological questions, generating and documenting new and important information using innovative, participatory research methodologies, developing new courses and teaching at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The Centre has challenged patriarchal theories of knowledge and has had a strong impact on the rethinking and

transformation of disciplinary discourse – in science, in sociology, in education, in literature, law and history, as well as research methodology.

Crossing borders: from disciplinary to interdisciplinary scholarship

The second major boundary crossing challenged the structure and organization of knowledge within the academy itself. Marilyn Boxer (2000) recounts her experience as a young academic in the 1970s facing a curriculum committee to consider the establishment of a minor in Women's Studies at her college and her consternation at the opening question from the Chair of the committee: 'Is Women's Studies a discipline?' She interpreted the question as a mechanism to 'discipline' her and her colleagues who sought to disturb the academic community with this new and contentious area of study.

As feminist scholarship developed, it was very clear that its concerns transcended disciplinary boundaries. Most persons who now work in Gender Studies have come to that area from disciplinary backgrounds. When confronted with the myriad aspects of knowledge with which they had to cope in understanding the feminist literature, sociologists, psychologists, historians, educators and scientists all became interdisciplinary learners. This was essential so that they could grasp concepts, and be properly analytical, and where necessary critical, about the material which was now part of their area of scholarship. This learning forced scholars to question certain disciplinary concepts and boundaries, to redefine traditional categories of analysis and also rethink existing paradigms which had strong disciplinary bases. Given the broad concerns of persons working in the area, the limitations of existing methods of enquiry became evident, as did the need for new research methodologies to fully explore dimensions of power and influence which cross gender, race and social class lines.

The complex 'trans-disciplinary' nature of Gender Studies led to the use of the term 'interdisciplinary' as a relevant descriptor of the fledgling scholarship which crossed disciplinary borders; this created problems for acceptance by the academy, however,

as the demand was that of proving Gender Studies to be a discipline in order for it to be recognized as equal to other disciplinary areas of study offered.

Interdisciplinary areas of study such as Environmental Studies have also faced difficulties in establishing their legitimacy within the academy, but the issue of gender has been an emotive one, challenging as it does concepts of power and hierarchy which typify many aspects of the structure of the academy, and presenting as part of this challenge a novel epistemological paradigm.

Lattuca (2002, 712) provides a definition of the term 'interdisciplinary' as:

An adjective describing the interaction among two or more different disciplines. This interaction may range from simple communication of ideas to the mutual integration of organizing concepts, methodology, procedures, epistemology, terminology, data and organization of research and education in a fairly large field. *The Journal of Higher Education* 73, no.6 (November/December 2002): 25-26.

This very comprehensive definition allows for a range of interactions within and across disciplines, and is based on the integration of knowledge across a fairly large field.

The process of crossing disciplinary boundaries and establishing interdisciplinarity within Gender Studies has been an evolutionary one. The objective of most academic disciplines is to produce scholars steeped in the content and methodology of that discipline and who will be committed and loyal to the tenets which define it. These disciplinary 'tribes of academe' (Becher 1989) have been criticized by feminist and other interdisciplinary scholars as being limiting and untrue to the nature of knowledge and knowing and the requirement of openness and interconnectedness in learning. Relke (1994) comments that the disciplinary model of academic organization reflects:

a perception of knowledge as a fragmented group of hostile nation states, surrounded on the curricular level by the barbed wire of course prerequisites, and defended by an academic border patrol, heavily armed with credentials, who guard against unlawful trespass.

Study within disciplines restricts and compartmentalizes knowledge, while interdisciplinary studies seek to link and integrate knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. Reality is multifaceted and not experienced in an ordered and structured manner in keeping with the disciplinary model. Disciplinary learning results in the development of partial and often distorted images of reality, yields half-truths, as it emphasizes one area of enquiry and knowledge with little thought to the inclusion and integration of relevant knowledge from other disciplines. In many instances, there is a total disconnect between what is taught in some disciplines and students' lives and experiences. Learning as a continuing process of students questioning their experiences outside the academy, and their experiences in their courses of study, within or across faculties, is not facilitated.

Achieving interdisciplinarity therefore involves:

- Deconstruction of the existing disciplinary structures and boundaries which have been established through a thorough critique of how they were built up and the artificiality and lack of integrity of their 'separateness'
- Bringing together the work of analysts and critics in different fields and using a compare and contrast type of conversation to point to the areas where integration is possible
- Employing the tools of different disciplines (theories, methodologies) to arrive at deeper, more textured meaning of existing phenomena or to explain the particular needs of new concepts
- Developing tools specially suited to the field of study, which can enhance the understanding obtained using existing tools from other disciplines and also inform those disciplines in different and novel ways

The processes involved in achieving interdisciplinarity can take place within a discipline or can be used to facilitate and enhance work between or among disciplines, and they are particularly relevant when used to address the development of interdisciplinary programmes such as Gender and Development Studies. The questions raised by gender are not confined to a particular discipline as they are complex, multifaceted questions which reach across and beyond disciplines.

The inadequacy of discrete disciplines to respond to these multifaceted questions led to questioning and assessing critically the methods used in the production of certain types of knowledge, the politics and the ethics of these methods, the choices made in terms of what is omitted and what is included. This critical assessment is shared with students, who are encouraged to consider these issues even as they relate to the content of the programmes in which they are themselves engaged – Who made the choices of the content? The texts selected? The method of assessment? On what basis? What special institutional and personal biases led to that configuration? The process is one of reflexivity, which has become a method widely used in educational and other programmes to stimulate critical thinking and develop a reasoned understanding of how the world is organized and how knowledge of that world is produced. Students of gender make the world, and individuals' experiences of that world, whether orally recounted, or documented in books and magazines or other media, sources of information which must be critically examined along with those recommended texts and readings which are provided with their course outlines. This approach opens up the possibilities for research and new methods of obtaining data which are not discipline bound, and which encourage independent learning.

Interdisciplinarity thus becomes a process of clearing the hurdles of disciplinary language, disciplinary methods, disciplinary content, of effecting 'translation' of these disciplinary concepts into the interdisciplinary discourse and through a process of 'dialogue' across disciplines achieving a broader, more comprehensive and more complete view of

specific problems, promoting an integration and a synthesis which provide a comprehensive base for the search for solutions.

A major criticism of interdisciplinary learning is that it does not allow sufficient depth of knowledge and learning in any one area and so the student tends to have a superficial grasp of many concepts in different disciplines but is not 'grounded' in any one – even though there may be criticisms as to the arbitrary nature of that one. Friedman (1998) comments that

If the danger of disciplinarity resides in potential overspecialization, the danger of interdisciplinarity rests in potential superficiality. Disciplinarity offers depth but also insularity; interdisciplinarity offers scope but also rootlessness (312).

The process of criticism, important as it is, must be accompanied by respect for the intellectual rigour and the historical underpinnings of each discipline, and the work of those who ensured that the components identified as representative of a discipline were sufficiently established for the area of study to be acknowledged and recognized.

One of the demands of most universities is that, upon institutionalization, an interdisciplinary programme conforms to the disciplinary demand of structure and organization and the somewhat arbitrary demarcation of the discourse of this scholarship into a 'disciplinary' framework. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary learning are now being emphasized in the literature on learning in higher education. This value has been declared by many universities but the structures to permit this have not changed sufficiently to permit true interdisciplinary collaboration, partnership and learning. The result is that the term 'interdisciplinary' has become a handy descriptor, and refers in most instances to a collection of courses, which imply that they are integrated in some way, but this integration may not actually be realized. Romero (2000) has warned, referring to graduate degree programmes in Women's Studies, that the institutionalization of these programmes may result in the construction of a Women's Studies discipline that is very similar to traditional disciplines, emphasizing research

over teaching and certainly, over activism. This danger exists for programmes at the undergraduate level as well.

In Gender Studies, interdisciplinarity and disciplinarity are not mutually exclusive; both are relevant, institutionally as well as in scholarship. As Relke (1994) observes:

Women's studies is the interdiscipline par excellence. Gender also cuts across all other interdisciplinary programs in a way that virtually no other interdisciplinary theme does. Moreover, women's studies has its own discourse, its own burgeoning body of scholarship, its own highly sophisticated array of interconnecting theories, and its own set of methodologies. Hence, it's also what I can only call a megadiscipline.

Gender Studies has indeed become what Lattuca (2002) refers to as a 'community of practice' with its own ways of knowing, its own methodologies of research and its own pedagogical demands.

Charting new directions – the pedagogical challenge

The imperative of interdisciplinarity was strongly intertwined with the need to change the existing structure of knowledge and its method of transmission, in order to create alternative narratives and a new pedagogy which would be liberating and empowering.

Pedagogy has been defined as:

the transformation of consciousness that takes place in the intersection of three agencies – the teacher, the learner, and the knowledge they together produce (Lusted 1986, 3).

That intersection, in an interdisciplinary Gender Studies programme, must be linked to the critical stance which governs the programme's development and structure. Given the feminist stance against oppressive and dominating experiences in the society, traditional methods of teaching which are teacher

centred and which emphasize the power of the teacher as expert, as knower, as dispenser of knowledge, and the student as seeker and passive recipient of knowledge from the teacher, had to be critically examined and changed. The lecture room and tutorial encounters had to reflect a difference in the traditional use of power through the objectives set, the teaching methods employed and the methods of assessment used. Thus students' opinions, their criticisms, their questions which challenge the teachers' views and those of other students must be encouraged, and the resulting participatory mode is expected to develop that analytical capacity and trigger the evaluative ability so important in challenging the status quo and effecting the transformation sought.

The use of personal experience in teaching has been a major focus. This is closely linked to the activist origins of the feminist struggle – the practical problems of women in the field – and the strength of the interdisciplinary thrust was fed by the knowledge and interaction with women's lives, so that theories and analyses could draw on real life experiences. Socialization was not just a theoretical concept, it was observed; domestic violence and the trauma it produces was known because of the close connection between those teaching about power in sexual relationships and those who witnessed or shared the experience of the willful and traumatic expression of such power. This enhances learning as it emphasizes the situated nature of knowledge, and the different locations from which individuals speak – as students and teachers. It also allows students to develop the skills of analysis which permit an assessment of how these experiences have been influenced by people, events and situations. Thus they can develop a sense of self-understanding, an integrated sense of personal identity and the way in which this identity determines how persons locate themselves in the family, the workplace, the community and the world. There is a risk involved, however, that experience becomes authority, and rather than using experience to start new conversations, they become the only conversations. The use of experience, while valuable, must be accompanied by the critical analysis of the relationship which exists between experience and knowledge. Also, if interdisciplinarity is about

'translation' and 'dialogue' across existing disciplines, then there must be discussion among students who bring their varying perspectives to the classroom. Discussion groups allow students to understand the collective nature of the learning process and the different perspectives from which a problem or an issue can be approached. Students often find the reflexive process and the 'unlearning' of previous teaching and learning methods, as well as the practice of sharing their experiences and arguments, intimidating and yet stimulating and liberating.

Enriching learning through the use of new pedagogical methods is both complex and challenging. Paolo Freire (1972) spoke of developing 'critical consciousness' and his views of education as the 'practice of freedom' found resonance with feminists who emphasized the need for education to liberate and transform the patriarchal domination of society. Questions have been raised, however, about the effectiveness of education in achieving change in certain areas (hooks 1988). Self-understanding does not necessarily lead to change; women who demonstrate the ability to think critically, to be analytic, to espouse strong feminist views, for example, remain in relationships in which they continue to experience the very conditions they openly denounce. Despite an understanding of patriarchy, despite their experience and critical analysis of male dominance and male privileging, they remain powerless to change this in their personal lives, at the workplace, in the community and the society. In charting new pedagogical directions, therefore, the question becomes – how can the message of gender be made more liberating?

In the late 1980s, intent on having the message disseminated, the women and men who were members of the WDS groups developed a course: 'Introduction to Women's Studies' and despite the lack of status of the WDS groups in the official university structure, negotiated its approval through the then Faculty of Arts and General Studies, which facilitated its administration. It was taught, starting first at St. Augustine in 1986, then at Cave Hill in 1987 and last at Mona in 1989, without compensation, by teams of WDS members and

colleagues who recognized the validity and significance of feminist scholarship and who brought their diverse theoretical frameworks, disciplinary understandings and methodological approaches to knowledge generation and knowledge sharing to Women's Studies' classrooms. Although this was valuable, and provided a welcome introduction to gender through a consideration of many themes: in literature, education, history, law, religion and science, integration was difficult and the pedagogy utilized varied with each presenter. Some of the students' satisfactions and the lecturers' difficulties were documented by Kathleen Drayton and Elaine Fido following the first year (1987/1988) of offering 'Women's Studies: an introductory course' as a university course at the Cave Hill campus. The course was open only to students in the Faculty of Arts and General Studies. The following are excerpts from that report:

Student satisfaction:

It (the course) made me more aware of the contradictions regarding women in my own society...it also made me speak out more vigorously against these contradictions in other group discussions.

I had a traditional upbringing wherein I saw myself as being subservient to the male. I no longer see myself in that light. I see us as equals. I value myself now for what I am and not what society wants me to be.

Lecturers' difficulties:

The students' questionnaires this year show that they sensed a gap in our ability to cross over disciplines

We sometimes felt that we might have been relying on students to make the links between the different areas of knowledge which we as teachers should have been doing.

Women's Studies requires us to retrain ourselves as scholars and teachers so that we are able to deal at an undergraduate

level at least with knowledge and skills which do not fall into our primary area of competence

The issue of integration was a persistent and troubling one, but once the CGDS was established, the faculty member appointed on each campus was able to facilitate that integration and also ensure that the pedagogy was in keeping with that expected in a programme which challenged power relations in a number of different settings, including classrooms. New courses, developed and taught by faculty attached to the CGDS, have consciously sought to address both the interdisciplinary and the pedagogical demands and have attracted students from most faculties. A minor in Gender Studies is now offered on all three campuses,* cross campus teaching persists and allows for the considerable expertise from each campus to be made available to students on all three campuses.

Charting new directions – creating an interdisciplinary Centre.

The CGDS was to be a new structure within the academy, with a unique interdisciplinary mission. Its autonomy as an interdisciplinary Centre was to be paramount and so it was not to be attached to a faculty. It was important, therefore, to devise an appropriate alternative model for approval, offering and administration of its courses and programmes rather than being forced to fit into the structure developed for faculties and which was inappropriate to the Centre's objectives. Special arrangements had to be put in place to allow for the reporting which is a well-established part of the disciplinary faculty structure. The formation of Boards of Studies on each campus has satisfied this objective; the Boards include representatives from different disciplinary areas, the library and the student body, and reflect the Centre's concerns with 'cross-border' knowledge in its broadest sense.

The CGDS, in its interdisciplinary thrust, has tried to overcome difficulties which are not only administrative and bureaucratic but also academic. Team-teaching, cross-listing of courses, cross-campus teaching, seeking and obtaining agreement for joint

A minor in Gender and Development is also offered on the St. Augustine Campus. (Editors Note)

appointments to the CGDS as well as to a disciplinary area, and the designation and listing of lecturers who work in gender from a disciplinary perspective as 'associate lecturers' are all strategies which have been employed to ensure the interdisciplinary thrust, but also the maintenance of autonomy. The further education of lecturers through staff fellowships, of graduate students through study grants and the contributions of visiting lecturers, initially from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague and also from each campus, have been sponsored, from 1986, by successive projects of the Netherlands Government, and have allowed for a sharing and cross fertilization of concepts and experiences which have enriched teaching, and enhanced understanding of the scope of the concerns which are part of the gender and development initiative.

Difficulties persist even ten years after institutionalization. The Centre's autonomy is frequently challenged, attempts are made to include the Centre as part of one or other disciplinary area, the Centre is often omitted from mailing lists which contain information sent to faculties but also relevant to its activities; problems even arise in providing computer codes for courses offered by the Centre and which are not faculty based. Although the UWI Strategic Plan 2002 – 2007 lists one of the core values of the institution as 'cultivating multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration,' none of the stated strategies address how this is to be achieved, and the difficulties involved in sustaining an independent interdisciplinary Centre within The UWI persist.

The fact that the Centre has been able to obtain significant external grant funding to support some of its activities, the innovative and highly visible scholarship in this area, the requirement by several funding agencies that projects include a consideration of gender, have been factors in overcoming the conservatism and skepticism of some sectors in The University, and have helped to establish the legitimacy of the Centre's work.

At the same time, traditional disciplines have not remained

static; they have had to adapt over time to accommodate new thinking and contemporary issues. Many have had to become more interdisciplinary in their approach, and gender is now a component of many courses, and is even completely integrated in some instances in the humanities and the social sciences. Thus, the work of Gender Studies has exerted a significant impact on the rethinking and transformation of disciplinary discourse, its pedagogy, as well as its research methodology.

Research has flourished and the research findings have fed, naturally, into the teaching carried out by each of the campus units, and into the curriculum design and development process involved in the preparation of new undergraduate courses. Ongoing research has informed new courses such as 'Men and Masculinities in the Caribbean,' those which comprise the taught Master's programme in Gender and Development, the offering of a concentration in this area to students from the Consortium Graduate School of the Social Sciences (discontinued when the Consortium became part of the newly formed Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies), and the supervision of graduate and undergraduate research. Research at the Master's and Doctoral levels encourages the depth of analysis necessary to add new empirical data to the current record and also to further challenge and critique existing theory.

Teaching and research activities have not been limited to the intra-mural programme; the CGDS has honoured its commitment to reach beyond the boundaries of the academy to the various stakeholders in spreading the theoretical and interdisciplinary message of gender to agencies and organizations regionally. The offerings of the summer Certificate in Gender and Development Studies (1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 and 2003), included the development and ongoing review of curricula. The new Certificate by distance learning, introduced in 2003, has been a major project in curriculum building, partnership and collaboration to develop material for the distance mode yet retain the pedagogical demands of a programme in gender. The Gender in Policy and Planning course, which also involved curriculum design

and development carried out within the Centre, has been of benefit to many policy makers, and that programme, along with the significant consultancy work of the CGDS undertaken internationally with the United Nations and other agencies, regionally with CARICOM and Caribbean women's groups, and locally with Bureaux of Women's Affairs and other government agencies have been 'informing processes of national and regional planning', as envisaged by Mathurin Mair. Some of these projects not only involve the Centre in charting new directions through interesting and valuable research, they also ensure the crossing of boundaries back to our origins – supporting the outreach which is a major component of the mission of the Centre, and extending the theoretical analysis to the work of activists.

Conclusion

I have only touched on some of the boundaries and new directions which Gender Studies has crossed and charted, and we persist. After three decades of scholarship and massive volumes of literature, the dynamism of this area ensures its persistence and growth within the academy. Its interdisciplinary nature and its special pedagogy, methodologies for research and insistence on reflexive thought and critical analysis, will continue to influence scholarship and stimulate societal change. The CGDS, the Caribbean hub of scholarship in this area, remains committed to preserving this tradition of crossing boundaries and charting new directions and to producing active thinkers, researchers and learners, equipped to initiate and effect social and political change within the network of regional and international educational institutions, governments and non-governmental agencies.

My very best wishes as you face the challenges of the next ten years.

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