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Readers of Gender Dialogue will have discerned a recurring focus on gender mainstreaming. For ECLAC, like the rest of the United Nations system, a widespread incorporation of gender analysis into policy-making and planning processes represents the best approach to bringing an end to all forms of discrimination against women. The national machineries for women (however described, either as women's departments or departments of gender affairs) are central to this effort as they are expected to provide overall coordination, including advocacy and monitoring of the gender equality goals.

In this issue of Gender Dialogue, we wish to congratulate Ms. Ingrid Charles-Gumbs, St. Kitts and Nevis; Ms. Miriam Roache, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Ms. Lera Pascal, Saint Lucia, on the assumption of the positions of heads of the national machineries in those countries. One of the purposes of this newsletter is networking and we are therefore providing some information on these three new officers, in our *'Profiles of the new Heads of the national machineries for women'*. We have also invited some of the "older hands" to share some of their experiences as head of national machineries and to give some advice. We are grateful to have received contributions from Ms. Anita Zetina (Belize) and Ms. Sheila Roseau (Antigua and Barbuda).

We note that Ms. Jeannie Ollivierre, a long serving coordinator of the Women's Bureau in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, has now retired from the public service and we wish her all the very best. Ms. Bernadette Springer of Saint Lucia is now the Administrator of the Gros Islet Polyclinic and Ms. Rosalyn Hazelle has been promoted to Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social Development in St. Kitts and Nevis.

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Miriam Thompson-Roache is the new Coordinator (Ag.) of the Gender Affairs Division, within the Ministry of Social Development, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Her experience goes back some 20 years ago when her teaching career began. Since then she has worked her way up to Deputy Headmistress, a position she held until August 2000, when she joined the Gender Affairs Division. Miriam has sought to develop herself as a leader and her role as general secretary of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers Union for many years, is testimony to this.

Occasioned by her desire for the advancement of women, Miriam first pursued the Certificate Course in Gender Studies at Cave Hill Campus in Barbados, in 1996. For her practicum, she did a study on the "Involvement of women at the leadership level in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers Union from 1975 to 1996". She is presently pursuing management studies at the UWI Cave Hill Campus (UWIDEC).

Miriam has two daughters. Lisa, who wants to be a teacher, is presently studying Math and Physics at Mona Campus in Jamaica and Khalila, who works with a local airline. Her interests involve swimming and sharing and interacting with people.

The guiding philosophy of Miriam Roache is "the love of children and the elderly and the respect of intellectuals".



Ingrid Charles-Gumbs has been actively involved with the Department of Gender Affairs, St Kitts and Nevis, on a part-time voluntary basis since 1995. She participated in the 1997 UNIFEM Caribbean Women's Rights Campaign 'A Life Free of Violence, Its Our Right' and the Fort Thomas Consultation which secured a cabinet decision reiterating the right of teen mothers to complete their secondary education.

A parent of two sons, a community leader, an educator for over 20 years, Ingrid believes that as a women's rights advocate she is fulfilling a Divine calling.

Ingrid's official assignment as Director of Gender Affairs began on 1 October 2001. She brings to the directorate much experience in the area of education and community leadership, the dynamism, love of people and bowel of compassion that leadership in this sensitive area demands.



Lera Pascal was, by training and professional experience, an educator prior to taking up the portfolio of Director, Division of Gender Relations in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Gender Relations, Saint Lucia. Her last assignment in that capacity was as Principal of the Sir Ira Simmons Secondary School of which school

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she was in fact the first Principal.

Making the career shift from education to gender relations, Lera acknowledges, is a challenge given the scope of material that she has to now treat with. It is a learning experience, however, which she embraces and she expects that her interest in human resource development would facilitate this transition.

The challenges involved in promoting and implementing gender mainstreaming is already clear to Lera. She understands that the Division's role includes that of being an advocate for the concept and she looks forward to meeting with the other directors of the national machineries for women to share and to learn from their experiences. Lera is an ardent conservationist and is member of the Saint Lucia National Trust.



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Anita Zetina, Women's Department, Belize

In my 12 years working towards the empowerment of women, I have been met with many challenges but have also been blessed with many positive experiences. Working for and with women requires very high levels of personal and professional commitment. Surely things do not change overnight and do not happen on their own. Hard work and dedication are key elements for success in this field.

I believe that the advancement of women has posed many challenges, stimulated new thinking and made significant strides to the point where our Caribbean society is hammering on the concept of men at risk or male marginalization. However, we must not let statistics showing more women in educational institutions, lead us away from our ultimate goal of gender equality and equity. While we recognize that there are areas that need attention, for example young men, we also know that many of their problems are not due to systematic discrimination but in many instances a matter of personal choice.

Women in the Caribbean "have not arrived". There is still a need for women specific projects, for new and amended policies and laws and we therefore cannot afford to now have the women's machineries taking on board specific programmes for men. This will mean having to reallocate our very limited human and financial resources.

But the reality is there and we will be confronted with the male marginalization concept daily as we implement our women's programmes. We can therefore embark on gender mainstreaming while maintaining our women specific projects.

How have we been doing this? The Women's Department in Belize has been reorganized to deal with the delivery of services and the development of policies. In the delivery of services we continue to empower women through education and training, awareness raising and support services to those affected by family violence. With regards to policy development, we have the National Women's Commission developing a gender policy, the Women's Issues Network implementing a project seeking to have all non-governmental agencies promoting the concept of gender and the Women's Department working on a training manual for public officers who will serve as gender focal points in their respective government ministries.

There are key elements for success:

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1. Planning: we must have a clear vision and mission based on indicators or statistical data that is disaggregated by sex where possible.
2. We must foster networking and partnership to achieve our goals and objectives.
3. We must mobilize human and financial resources both from government and agencies willing to assist us in our quest for equality and equity.
4. Finally, we must ensure continuity in our programmes.

I welcome those new directors to our world of challenges which, in many cases, gives us the impetus to forge ahead. All the best.

Sheila Roseau, Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda

As Executive Director for the Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda, the role has been very interesting and challenging, yet rewarding. Working in this role has given me the opportunity to spearhead the government's agenda and policy initiatives relating to the advancement of women in my country.

In order to execute the government's agenda and policy initiatives, it is paramount to have a knowledge and understanding of these policies that are specific to the advancement of women and be able to communicate these through the functions of the organization. Fundamental to this role is the ability and skill necessary to strike a balance between the government's agenda objectives and the communities' needs by harnessing, implementing and integrating both interests.

Gender issues, like other social issues are not given the priority they deserve; therefore when achievements are accomplished, it symbolises measured success for those groups that are disadvantaged.

As Chief Technical Officer for Gender and Development, you have to maintain the importance and interest of this role. One has to remain focused and current on the issues pertaining to gender and development. There are a number of support agencies, international, regional and national, and it is absolutely important to network and connect with these agencies. This presents the opportunity to network with women from all over the world to exchange and share ideas and this can make the work very interesting.

It is also very important to work closely with women's organizations in your country. Involve them in all of the activities of the organization. Consult with them, get their views, get feedback from them and inform them of all that is happening on the national, regional and international levels. Developing partnership can strengthen your advocacy and lobbying role.

The media is also a powerful agent to promote your work. Use the media to your advantage. Develop strategies to put the message across.

Also very pertinent to the role is the need for personal development and training.



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Interview with Professor Rhoda Reddock CARICOM'S 7th recipient of the Triennial Award for Women

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In the last six months, Dr. Rhoda Reddock, Head, Centre for Gender Studies, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, received a number of important accolades which in their sum, represent a timely recognition of her contribution to scholarship and activism in the furtherance of gender equality. In October 2002, she was the recipient of the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, Research, Outreach and Administration. At the same time she was conferred a professorship. In March 2002, Professor Reddock

was named the 7th recipient of the CARICOM Triennial Award for Women. We present her in an interview with Professor Reddock.

What have been the influences in your life (both academic and activist)?

The influences have been many. A most important one was my mother. In many ways she was a feminist. From very young she tried to make me aware of myself as a woman and the need to value that. She also bought me biographies of great women such as Madame Curie, Ana Pavlova and Helen Keller to read. Re: my academic side my mother was a teacher and so was her only brother. Her father was also a self-taught intellectual so I grew up in a house of books. We were among the last to get TV but we always had books. I was not a particularly diligent student but I believe the information and language skills I got from reading made me get by. Eventually I realized that that was not enough, that even though I was intelligent and had good general knowledge that more attention to study was required. This helped me make it through in the end.

You define yourself as a feminist. What does that mean to you?

My definition of a feminist is someone who recognizes the subordination of women and works actively to change it. By this token, feminists may differ on what they understand as the causes of the situation and therefore on the solutions required to change it. Feminists are a diverse group therefore but have the commonality which I stress in my definition.

I also note that individual feminists have always existed in patriarchal societies but it is when these individuals get together for collective action that it can be said that a movement exists. Additionally, many women, who do not use the term to define themselves or who are not aware of the term, can be described as feminists due to their convictions, statements and actions.

How would you characterize gender relations in the contemporary Caribbean?

Gender relations in the region I would say are at a pivotal period. In other words we are at that period where they can improve, stand still or decline. This happens in every process. This period is pivotal for a number of reasons.

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1. The generation of feminists of the 1970s and 1980s are no longer able to give the time and energy to the movement as they did before:
2. There is a serious backlash against the movement by male supremacists who would like to turn back the clock, religious fundamentalists who would like to re-establish religious control and more conservative political climate where many challenges to the status quo are not well accepted.

This of course is changing although we in the Anglophone Caribbean appear to be a bit behind. The Anti-Globalization movements are one case in point, there has been little Caribbean involvement at a mass scale and this is an issue in which the women's movement internationally has been at the forefront.

Another factor here is of course the US globalized media, which has a great impact on young people and young women. The women's movement has not really been able to influence the media and capture the imagination of young people in the same way so we may not be reaching as many as we should.

What have been our gains?

There have been many gains, some overt, others not so visible. These include:

1. The delegitimization of violence against women;
2. The establishment of institutions with responsibility for women's and gender issues at national, regional and international levels;
3. The development of formal academic programmes in women's studies, and gender studies;
4. The development of a strong body of research information, knowledge, books and audiovisuals on relevant issues. The issue now is to increase the reach of these materials.
5. The empowerment of individual women to make changes in their lives. This may be small but most women have a larger vision and great expectations of their possibilities and potentials in life even though they may have never ever joined a women's group;
6. A new awareness among some men of their existence as gendered beings and the need to come to terms with this. The emergence in the region of an incipient pro-feminist men's movement is one sign of this and this is supported by the introduction of courses on men and masculinities at the UWI.

Are you able to identify unexpected setbacks in attaining the gender equality goal?

Yes, maybe one can say the changes in the international political climate and the emergence of the male backlash. I think we maybe under-estimated how strong this would be.

For many policy makers in the Caribbean, the relevant gender question now is making sense and addressing the underachievement of boys in the school system. How do you respond to this?

This is an important question but one response to it would depend on the starting point of the question. If male underachievement is seen as the result of female achievement, then we have a problem as one is seen as legitimate and the other as usurping the others right. Unfortunately there are some with this position.

Most persons though are merely concerned with a general problem of the lower male motivation for scholarship, propensity for criminal behaviour, especially violent crime, etc. We already have some early information on contributory factors and the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the UWI will soon be embarking on regional research in this area.

We do know however that this issue has to be understood within a wider

context of masculinity and manhood and its relationship to femininity and womanhood. And being as we are in a period of shifting gender relations these things are not as clear cut as they were in other times. It is a complex topic and we cannot deal with it fully here. Interested persons however can join our UWI undergraduate courses on Men and Masculinity in the Caribbean.

It should be noted however that in the region, men's share of earned income is still much higher than women's so the tide has not totally turned.

What advice would you give the women's bureaux in this changing terrain in which we are seeking to reach gender equality?

First I think the question of good training for their staff is imperative. These issues are complex and the staff needs to have confidence and commitment in applying strategies. Second I would try to develop a good database either on my own or through collaboration with relevant agencies or the UWI or other research institutions to support interventions within the State and other sectors. It may be necessary to prioritize and use key sectors of interest e.g. education, health or crime prevention may be useful ones to win over public support.

Having a long-term vision or policy is key and trying for a non-partisan commitment or relatively independent space would be useful although not always possible. For some reason Women's or Gender Affairs is always low priority but heavily State-controlled.

How do you characterize the main challenges facing Caribbean peoples?

There are many challenges not least of which are the negative impacts of globalization and uncontrolled free trade. The development of a strong sense of identity and self worth is also important.

The challenge of the brain drain and of gender specific migration is another problem, the latter stemming from the difficulties facing poor women, mothers, providers and heads of households in the region. Making their situation more secure is central to our peace of mind and security as the situation of women directly affects their children.

Third an empowering education system is key, not simply for marketability but for the ability to understand a situation and strategize a positive way out of it.

Of course in some parts of the region issues of race/ethnicity are key and here the women's movement should take a leadership role as women suffer greatly in cases of inter-ethnic strife. We also need to incorporate diversity education in schools and through public education. The formation of Anti-Racist/anti-sexist coalitions would also be a step in the right direction.

You have received substantial recognition over the past year for your contributions towards academia and development work. What next for you? Have your personal goals changed any?

Well I have been very lucky and feel overwhelmed. My next step?? Well my heavy workload continues. I have some book projects on the back burner but I shall see what emerges on the horizon!



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The Thirty-third meeting of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean was convened in Port of Spain, 9-11 October 2001. At that meeting, which was attended by CDCC member countries, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago, focus was given to poverty and gender mainstreaming. Among the presentations made were those of Ms. Sonia Montaña, Head of the Women and Development Unit, ECLAC, and Dr. Eudine Barriteau, Head, Centre for Gender Studies, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus.

Speaking on poverty and women, Ms. Montaña concluded that the formulation of anti-poverty policies should be based on a perspective of universality, equity and efficiency and should focus on investments in education that would equip poor women to enter the labour force. The equitable distribution of opportunities for gaining access to the labour market and to the institutional structure and the endowment of women and men with similar opportunities for achieving competitiveness were the two mainstays of the effort to combat poverty and thus superseded palliative, short-term measures. The struggle to overcome poverty and to attain gender equity called for cross-cutting, integral, decentralized policies based on empowerment as the only avenue for the convergence of rights and opportunities.

Dr. Barriteau, agreed on the need for a new approach to gender mainstreaming since the experiences demonstrated the existence of structural and conceptual obstacles. She felt that insufficient attention to the processes and excessive interest in the outcomes prompted the introduction of change without due concern for the patriarchal resistance and the values underpinning public policy. Recognizing the tensions caused by resistance to gender mainstreaming was crucial, since that recognition was a prerequisite for a proper theoretical approach. The implementation of gender mainstreaming was a lengthy process which

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required patience and which could not be expected to yield results in the short term. The struggle to reverse a relationship of dominance deeply-rooted in history required, moreover, substantial financial, human and technical resources.

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The full report of the meeting can be viewed online at <http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/UnidadMujer/4/LCL1654/lc11654i.pdf>.

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Social Services and the Law by Jackie Sealy-Burke

(This article is an excerpt from a report on "Family Law Reform: The Social Service Implications" which was commissioned by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court as part of the Family Law and Domestic Violence Legislative Reform Project)

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Family law, by its very nature, is inextricably linked to broader social issues. Accordingly, any reform initiative in this area must also be guided by considerations of a more socio-legal nature so as to recognize and respond to the strong underlying social factors. Many aspects of family law require the intervention of supporting services and, therefore, comprehensive family law reform in the Eastern Caribbean must seriously address the social service implications of family law. The blending of the legal process with social service creates a multidisciplinary approach to family law that enhances the overall system.

There are two primary factors contributing to the inadequacy of the present family law regime among the member countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Firstly, the laws themselves are often outdated and have not evolved with the English law from which they were derived. This dormancy of the substantive and procedural family laws results in a system that is not reflective of changing societal concerns and evolving cultural idiosyncrasies. The second major factor is the lack of a supporting social service infrastructure to give meaningful effect to family legislation.

Legislative reform approaches, evident in other jurisdictions such as England, Canada and the United States, depict a growing awareness of the need for a multidisciplinary approach to family law. While available resources in the OECS cannot be compared to those in developed countries, it is important to have an awareness of these models with a view to actively informing the way forward. In this regard, the more recently created legislative frameworks in the region do reflect more modern trends in family law and have some limited provision for social services intervention. One such initiative is the recent Families and Children Act out of Belize.

Special attention should be paid to the law with respect to young offender because it is becoming increasingly evident that the criminal jurisdiction of the courts is not the ideal forum for addressing the needs of young people who come into conflict with the law. There is a growing recognition of the inter-sectionality of family law and the law as it relates to children who commit criminal offences.

In addition, there are specific branches of family law that also demand enhanced social service intervention. Of particular importance are the areas of custody/access, child protection, adoption, maintenance enforcement, domestic violence and young offender (juvenile) matters. In the area of custody/access, the study found that the courts were often making decisions about complex cases without being able to accurately determine what was in the child's best interest. Very few independent reports are utilized by the Court in resolving contentious custody issues. In the area of child protection, counselling was shown to be sadly lacking despite the fact that it was recognized as integral to the ultimate goal of family reunification. Maintenance enforcement was seriously compromised by poor mechanisms for collection of arrear payments and the adoption laws were hampered by the inadequacy of the assessments that were conducted for adoption proceedings.

Improved infrastructure to support services or intervention is therefore needed to bring meaningful effect to the delivery of family law. In meeting this overarching objective, a number of steps are integral. The legislative reform must reflect the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to resolving family matters and should include initiatives such as increased reliance on social inquiry reports; increased counselling provisions and widespread mediation as a first approach to resolving conflict. The implementation of a supportive infrastructure contemplates services such as counselling, mediation, drug and alcohol abuse intervention; specialized police and medical intervention; institutional care or other placement opportunities for children in need of protection; programmes and shelters for victims of domestic violence and enhanced probation services and legal aid services.

With respect to juvenile justice, alternatives to incarceration must be developed and corporal punishment as a sentencing option abolished. Beyond legislative reform, policy initiatives to improve juvenile justice and child protection could include the development of a comprehensive child abuse protocol and the creation of formal foster-care systems.

Although legislative reform is critical to achieving a multidisciplinary approach to family law, it is only one of the means for effecting change. In addition to legal reform, policy reform, attitudinal change and shifts in perspective are all going to add to the success of the reform process and to advancing a holistic approach to family law.



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Two of the more popular sociological approaches to the study of crime among juveniles are the Social Disorganization thesis and the Cultural Deviance thesis. The first set of theories account for delinquency in terms of normlessness, the second does so in terms that indicate a prior commitment to an alternative culture. Both approaches, we contend, lead to the silencing of the voice of the youth. This is part of a process that can lead to their marginalization, demonization and their condemnation as hopeless criminals. This approach finds expression in the sentencing policy in the courts where the possibility of reform and rebirth seem to take second place to the need to punish and control. We want in this article to listen to the voice of a young offender from Central Trinidad in order to try to gain an understanding of why he has reacted to his social circumstances in the way that he has. The interview with this young man is part of a series of qualitative interviews with eight inmates of the Youth Prison in Trinidad and Tobago that is part of a larger study of delinquency and achievement in Central Trinidad. Listening to the voices of young people also tell us of the **possibility** and **importance** of reforming their lives. This is in contrast to the structuralist approaches, which in their over emphasis of external causal factors, seem to suggest that the social setting of these young people condemns them to a life of banditry.

The nature of the social context in which juvenile delinquency occurs would seem to be one in which the major cultural groups are involved in a process of assimilation. In the first instance this took place under the aegis of the dominant colonial power and now the much more intrusive and much less paternalistic and benevolent global economic system. The assimilation is ongoing and creates a sense of a society that is still trying to properly define itself. Although some measure of anomie, or normlessness attends this process, it has nonetheless become possible to speak of a system of values and aspirations that is Trinidadian in character. This has informed the conduct of the majority of the country's

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residents regardless of ethnicity or cultural identity. This Trinidadian ethic is contextualized and influenced by a number of factors. These include, the paternalist character of the colonial authorities; the fact of the historical regency of the Indian subgroup, their involvement in specific occupational spheres in the earlier periods; the relative affluence of the society due to its rich endowment in petroleum; and the political dominance of the African subgroup. Let us now listen to the voice of one young juvenile delinquent. Sonny Bridgell is 18 years old, of East Indian descent and has been charged with breaking and entering as well as absconding.

Sonny lived with his father, his mother and his elder sister. Both parents worked as farmers. His father was also a 'jack of all trades' and his mother did odd jobs wherever she could. Sonny admits that he lived in a "neat lil' board house", but never wanted for food or clothing. His father was a man who worked hard to provide for his family. Sonny reveals, however, that he could never afford or get from his parents the extra things that he wanted. His feelings of being poor came from his inability to attain these items and his parent's constant refusal to provide them for him.

At age 13, after having failed his Common Entrance and School Leaving Exams, Sonny set off to learn a trade. He worked in a car garage as a 'straightener' and painter. Sonny also adds that he had a terrible relationship with his early boss, who would 'curse him out' telling him he wasn't doing a good job. This, Sonny says, would 'build a temper in him' making him feel to lash out. It was here at this job that Sonny was introduced to stealing. Overtime, Sonny engaged in many delinquent acts – robbery, breaking and entering and even arson.

Sonny's involvement in delinquent acts is related to his insatiable hunger for 'respect'. He is prepared to do anything, no matter the cost or the consequences to be affirmed by others. He says "if yuh wha'(want) yuh respect long like a train, yuh ha' to do to get respect". Sonny would even be prepared to strike his mother or sister if they challenged or withheld their respect for him. He says that to earn respect he will do what it takes even "pick up a blade".

Sonny agrees that there is more than one way to gain respect from others. He suggests that a person can get respect by being polite and doing good

or positive things. Or, he believes, a person can attain respect negatively. He reveals that he wanted the 'negative' respect. He feels that only by engaging in tough negative behaviours he will receive the respect of big men. By robbing and forcefully entering people's homes, he draws attention to himself and satisfies his craving for respect. Delinquency gives him the platform to declare himself a big man worthy of respect.

This desire for 'respect' is also reflective of the youth culture in Sonny's community. Sonny explains that many of the youths in his area demand respect and want others to look up to them. To maintain their turf, they have to be respected. To be disrespected is to be small in the eyes of their peers. They would be insulted and ridiculed. It is not just a matter of being respected but the extent or size of the respect commanded is just as important. Therefore, earning respect through legitimate means ceased to be an option.

Sonny, himself, also has a need to be admired and noticed by others. Robbery and breaking and entering was not only a means of getting the material things he wanted, but it was also a way for him to meet a larger need for attention, self-worth and power and control. Without the respect and recognition of others, Sonny sees himself as a nobody. His sense of self is mirrored by other's view of him. He just doesn't want others to see him as Sonny, but to see him as Sonny – the Big man.

Sonny's illegal earnings also serve as a conduit to express his desire for and to demonstrate power and control. Therefore, what Sonny is able to use the money to do becomes of central importance to him. He says "when yuh have money, yuh doh study who dead!"

Sonny moved with a group of friends some of who were younger, some of who were older, and some who were also of the same age. All of these youngsters were African. Sonny states quite openly that he is Indian but wishes he was an African man. He characterizes Indians as "bobolets" and "imps". He wants to have a child with an African woman so that the child would not be associated with weakness.

Sonny and his friends are a part of the Trinidadian creole subculture which is heavily influenced by Jamaican dancehall music and Jamaica "outlaw" culture. He mentions a particular artiste and says that his music

inspired them to act like “bad men”. The music served as inspiration for a tendency to violence that was already there, according to him “yuh get lyrics from the music but the violence in your head”. One of the lines from the songs he mentions “bad man kill for fun” “to kill a man you walk 1000 miles”. So Sonny and his friends ask the question “so why we cyah kill for fun?” Moving with the gang gave Sonny a bad boy image. People started calling him a bandit. “Bandit”, he says, “is ah dread man, don’t go around he”. Sonny reports feeling proud of this reputation that he had in the community.

Sonny reports that he loved to rob Indian people because he considered them to be “stupid” for they gave up their money easily. He says “I robbing anybody I feel to rob”. But he would not rob the police since they might be armed and he showed respect to old people. Young people he said “could take blows.” Whether they were poor or not made no difference, he says “poor, no poor that ain’t yuh problem. They money is my money”.

Sonny’s idea of what a man is seems to have changed in the institution. He now says that being a man is having a job, keeping yourself clean, having self respect, giving respect to others, being able to take care of self and family and not stealing and robbing. He says with your girlfriend you must act as a man and must be able to tell her no and not show her your weaknesses. You must not be soft hearted and you must take care of her. And even though you should assist with domestic chores this should be the main responsibility of the woman. He says he has learned these things in the institution and that his father never showed or spoke to him about these things. Sonny also has the capacity for love and affection and speaks of showing his family his good side, making them laugh and not wanting to show them the bad side.

There are a number of factors worthy of note about Sonny’s situation. His family is Indian, living in Central Trinidad, the zone where the two main ethnic groups are most clearly juxtaposed. Sonny’s family has been separated from its traditional ethnic culture by the forces of society and history. This finds exemplification in its embrace of Pentecostalism. At the same time given the relatively low levels of educational attainment of his parents, in social terms, the family would still be shackled with a social identity defined in terms of poverty and powerlessness by the African-creole value system. Here, therefore is a family that has been cut

from its traditional moorings, but not yet found a 'place' in the 'new' culture and society. They have let go of the old, but are still not secure in the new- a classic case of anomie. In this regard, Sonny's description of his father is quite illuminating. He paints a picture of a hard working, but reclusive figure, a stranger to the modern urban culture of the town. Sonny's mother who is the more confident and assertive of his parents, nonetheless suffers from the serious constraint of low level of educational certification. The changes associated with neoliberalism and globalization have heightened the economic survival threshold and brought with it an influx of new values and norms. Sonny's case exemplifies both of these trends. Five years ago in the midst of the economic downturn, his mother took a job as a domestic that took her away from the home from 7.30 in the morning to 4-5 o'clock in the evening. Sonny's father works a 20-hour day. Sonny and his sister at 13 and 14 years old, respectively, were left to their own devices. He became totally absorbed in the African-Creole-Jamaican outlaw culture with its violent definition of manhood and love for brand name clothing.

The argument therefore is that the embrace of the criminal subculture by the youth is precipitated by a weakening of family bonds and a rejection of a value system that has been made inappropriate by the structural changes taking place in the wider society. Listening to the voice of Sonny enables us to understand that in spite of these circumstances he has the desire to overcome them and turn his life around. In spite of his life circumstances, Sonny has demonstrated the will to reform himself. Yet, he could continue into a life of crime. While not seeking to make a case for the irrelevance of structural context, those approaches to the study of crime that locate the causes outside of the individual, leads to an approach to the study of crime that silences the voice of the young people involved in criminal activity. This at best allows for their misunderstanding and at worst their misrepresentation.



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The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has developed an integrated data collection system for domestic violence for consideration by governments in the Caribbean subregion. The critical contribution of this initiative lies in its ability to effectively treat with the data collection inadequacies plaguing efforts to ascertain the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence in the Caribbean subregion.

There have been numerous attempts by various agencies to understand domestic violence. Accurate data enables policy makers and other stakeholders to engage in the following:

- (a) Obtain a profile of victims and perpetrator;
- (b) Understand the frequency and incidence of domestic violence;
- (c) Identify the groups at risk;
- (d) Develop intervention programmes; and
- (e) Monitor the effectiveness of violence prevention and intervention activities.

Development of a reliable data collection system

Reliable assessments of the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence is one of the main objectives of a data collection system in order to effectively treat with the social problem of domestic violence in the Caribbean subregion. However, the extent to which countries will be successful in attaining this objective depends upon their capacity to overcome a host of cultural, technical and bureaucratic challenges that are likely to obstruct efforts toward satisfying some of the preconditions of reliable measures of incidence and prevalence. In light of the difficulties associated with underreporting of domestic violence, a first step might be to ensure that every country has the capacity to at least develop a monitoring and surveillance system targeting reported cases. While not losing sight of the primary virtue, each country should also develop the capability to track cases as they relate to victims, domestic units (for example, households or other culturally-determined living arrangements) and perpetrators.

Building on other efforts

There have been recent efforts by PAHO/WHO to develop similar data systems in Latin America and the Andean region. In Belize, for example, a surveillance system has been developed and constitutes a useful model as ECLAC strives to develop a data collection protocol for the Caribbean subregion.

The Domestic Violence Surveillance System in Belize captures cases of

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domestic violence by using a registration form that elicits data on the characteristics of allegations of domestic violence including child abuse. These data represent part of the National Health Information System that is administered under the auspices of the Ministry of Health. The data collection instrument is multi-purpose insofar as it provides data for court proceedings, medical research and programmes development. For each case, data are captured on client, the perpetrator and the incident.

The data collection instrument elicits general information that includes date of registration, client's name, age, sex, nationality, and unique identifiers (registration ID and social security ID). The data collection instrument also captures other demographic data including place of residence, employment status, educational attainment, marital or civil status, ethnicity/race, religion and pregnancy status. In the case of child abuse, data are elicited on the name of the school, grade, and details of emergency contact. The incident is one of the principal units of analysis in analyzing domestic violence. The instrument provides a basis for capturing the characteristics of the informant and of incidents and focuses on occurrences (i.e. first incident or repeated incident), date of injury, type of violence (i.e. sexual, psychological, physical or other) and mode of injury (i.e. physical force, firearm, sharp instrument or other).

The data collection form also throws light upon the characteristics of the perpetrator. Apart from his/her name, address and registration ID, personal characteristics such as age, sex, relationship to client, occupation and perpetrator history (criminal record, alcoholic, drug addict, repeat batterer and/or other) form the basis of inquiry. There is also an attempt to gather details relating to remedial action resulting from the fact that there was an act of domestic violence.

Toward a data collection protocol for domestic violence

For countries that have nothing in place to capture the details pertaining to cases of domestic violence, the Belizean model offers some useful insights. It reinforces the importance of completeness, accuracy and promptness in documenting the incidents. It also highlights the importance of capturing more than one unique identifier since every client may not be able to use a common registration system for the purposes of personal identification.

In order to develop a protocol that is sufficiently appropriate to facilitate data collection in relation to domestic violence, one has to focus on the specific units that will be used for analytical purposes. Based upon earlier discussions, these are likely to be victims, perpetrators and the actual incidents of violence. It also means that some yardstick has to be put in place to uniquely identify distinct units and provide some assurance of confidentiality. For such purposes, some data collection systems have used social insurance numbers or personal identification numbers issued by national elections' commissions.

It is also important to establish some basis for classifying domestic violence. Given earlier attempts that have examined the concept, the proposed protocol will embrace the broad conception that treats with violence in terms of abuse and/or actions that cause or threaten physical harm. There should also be some consensus on the myriad forms that "domestic settings" can assume within the Caribbean subregion. In other words, there should be a set of boundaries defining the universal set of physical spaces and family relationships that constitute "domestic settings" within the Caribbean subregion. For the

purpose of the proposed data collection system, the “domestic group” is considered to be intra-familial since such a conception often includes family members within a household context and will also reflect experiences between family members living in different households.

The data collection process is facilitated through the efforts of the principal arenas where incidents of domestic violence are reported within national confines. It has already been noted that social service providers, health care providers and law enforcement agencies are the principal actors. While the latter are primarily public sector agencies, the others constitute agencies that are not only public sector interests but also operated by non-governmental agencies. In the context of every country within the Caribbean subregion, it will be important as a first step to list agencies that provide services to victims/perpetrators of domestic violence and, as a result, have developed some mechanism for collecting data relating to incidents that have affected the lives of their clients. Since each agency is collecting data to serve its specific programmatic agenda, a consultative process should be encouraged to ensure that such agencies continue collecting the data that serve their programmatic ends while at the same time, entertaining the data needs of the proposed data collection system. Thus, a participative approach should be embraced in order to produce a “win-win” situation for the various stakeholders.

In the Caribbean subregion, the countries are at different levels of readiness to accommodate the proposed data collection system. This hinges primarily upon levels of statistical sophistication, population size, cultural sensibilities governing interpretations of domestic violence as a criminal act and commitment toward data collection within the countries. Though several countries may consider the proposed model to be unattainable, it constitutes a reasonable target that should be the focus of aspirations. Despite limitations such as the prospect of introducing biased estimates, the proposed model has tremendous utility as a tool for monitoring and evaluating outcomes associated with changes relating to different aspects of domestic violence.



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CAFRA holds Triennial General Meeting in Suriname

The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) will be holding its Triennial General Meeting in Suriname on 23-30 May 2002.

The objectives of the General Meeting are to:

- Bring together the collective membership of CAFRA for a time of renewal towards a responsive, relevant and vibrant organization;
- Report on activities since the last General Meeting (1997-2001) and assess the status of the Regional Women's Movement;
- Conduct a conference on the Impact of Trade Liberalization on women, and share local, regional and international experiences and case studies;
- Inform participants on the process of the World Trade Organization, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the Cotonou Agreement and CARICOM, as well as the CARICOM Single Market and Economy;
- Receive the Report of the Committee set up to review CAFRA's structure and process and approve a Strategic Regional Plan of Action; and
- Elect a Regional Committee.

Workshop at Cave Hill

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in collaboration with the Faculty of Law University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, will be hosting workshop entitled Caribbean Feminisms Workshop Recentring Caribbean Feminism between June 17 - 18, 2002 at Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

The inaugural workshop seeks to create a permanent Caribbean feminist intellectual forum to formulate, debate, critique and disseminate new and ongoing ideas and knowledge within Caribbean feminist scholarship and its relevance to dissecting the multiple realities of women and men in Caribbean societies.

The workshop will examine four major themes:

- Recentring Caribbean Feminism: Issues and Challenges
- Intersections of class, race and ethnicity
- Caribbean feminisms and the nation state
- Feminist theorizing of sexuality in the Caribbean



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An Evaluative Study of the Implementation of Domestic Violence Legislation: Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (LC/CAR/G.659)

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This study, a component of the Family law and Domestic violence Legislative Reform Project piloted by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, evaluates the implementation of domestic violence legislation in four countries in the Eastern Caribbean and makes recommendations for legal and administrative reform.

Developing Social Policy for Youth with special reference to Young Men in Saint Lucia (LC/CAR/G.667)

This report, prepared in response to a request for technical assistance by the government of Saint Lucia, documents discussions with a cross-section of representatives of governmental and non-governmental agencies on the issue of perceptions of social alienation of youth and in particular young men in Saint Lucia. The report outlines some of the issues raised and makes recommendations for an integrated approach to social policies for youth which are informed by gender analysis.



Advancing Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Legislative Approaches to Sex Discrimination (LC/CAR/G.670)

This study contributes to a review and assessment of equality legislation in the English-speaking Caribbean, with particular focus on Guyana, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

Quality of Life. A Compendium of social statistics of Five Caribbean Countries (1995-2001) (LC/CAR/G.680)

This compendium is the first output of the fully searchable subregional social statistical databases, established at the secretariat and is drawn from the national data sets of the Survey of Living Conditions. It is intended for use as one of the tools to strengthen capacity in evidence-based social policy formulation in the Caribbean subregion.