

The Power of Feminist Pan-African Intellect

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Keep expanding your horizon, decolonise your mind, and cross over borders. (Kochiyama, 1996)

Introduction

Fifteen years since the launch of the first issue on Intellectual Politics in 2002, this special editorial marks the end of the first stage in *Feminist Africa's* life. The shared founding principle behind FA is the understanding that building strong and independent feminist movements is necessary for the liberation of our continent. Movement-building demands the mobilisation of multiple energies that work to demystify, resist and overcome the sex- and gender-based oppressions at work in our lives and communities, and in the institutions we inhabit. Conscientisation is a dynamic dialectical relationship between radical thinking and action.¹ It takes integrity and courage to listen across boundaries, to hear and respect the multiple languages of gender and sexuality, marked by the striations of other dimensions of power and status. Unless we link collective organising with coherent feminist consciousness informed by sound theories of gender oppression and change, we easily become subject to an identity politics that will keep us divided. By strengthening feminist consciousness, we strengthen the collective “will to change” that we express through activism.

Feminist writing and publishing is a key route to conscientisation. In the post-independence era, hundreds of thousands of Africans have received advanced levels of education and training, yet our presence in global publishing about Africa remains unsatisfactory, despite the astuteness of our feminist intellectuals. The same can be said for feminist publications. Reviews of African research in gender and women's studies observe that systemic

global inequalities maintain the Western domination of global publishing, and this reaches its extreme with regard to publishing on Africa (Mama, 1996; Lewis, 2002). There has been little change here; although recent years have seen an exciting proliferation of creative writing, non-fiction writing remains undervalued and inadequately supported. What happens to us when we cannot find ourselves, our historical and present-day realities, or our ideas in research on Africa? What happens to us when what we do find is distorted by the perspectives and positionalities of others? The short answer is that we fish endlessly through oceans of indigestible texts, and we either lose sight of our conditions, or we develop an appetite for something different, something feminist that is African too. The appetite of the 1990s soon became the collective hunger that FA seeks to both feed and nurture. Fifteen years further into neoliberal globalisation, it is clear that these conditions are still with us. *Feminist Africa* responds to the hunger that so many of us have felt for so long, but feeding a famine is never easy.

Feminist Africa was initially conceptualised in 2000 as part of a mission to radicalise the field of gender and women's studies scholarship by developing a feminist intellectual community grounded in critical engagements with local conditions and women's movements. The editorial policy (see ii, above) expresses the vision as follows:

Feminist Africa is guided by a profound commitment to transforming gender hierarchies in Africa, and seeks to redress injustice and inequality in its content and design, and by its open-access and continentally-targeted distribution strategy. *Feminist Africa* targets gender researchers, students, educators, women's organisations and feminist activists throughout Africa. It works to develop a feminist intellectual community by promoting and enhancing African women's intellectual work.

Excited by the possibilities of then-new ICT, an early model was for FA not to be centralised, but concurrently co-published at several locations. When this proved hard to realise, the second model was to rotate FA among Africa's leading public universities. The reality has been that FA has remained hosted at the African Gender Institute (AGI), and indeed owes its sustained existence to the AGI, and the sheer endurance of its leadership. Our location on the University of Cape Town (UCT) campus, well known to be one of the most elitist and colonial of Africa's campuses, was never the easiest of places for a

journal that would place emphasis on legitimising the (in that context, novel) idea of feminist intellectual work by and primarily for African audiences. While we savour the fact that FA has reached its 22nd issue, it is time to re-imagine. So much has changed. The institutions and movements that define us have been reconfigured, and the community of feminists across Africa has grown and changed too.

Subverting the Academy

In this Special Editorial, I move from editing back into writing, taking the opportunity to review and reflect on key aspects of the FA experience of the last 15 years, in the hope that these reflections can usefully inform the future of FA, and perhaps other feminist knowledge projects by, on, and for Africa's feminist movements. The first editorial conveyed our initial thinking:

Feminist Africa responds to the heightened salience of gender in African political and intellectual landscapes. It provides a forum for the intellectual activism that has always been intrinsic to feminism... It provides the first continental platform for reflecting on the accumulated wisdom which has matured in the cauldron of post-colonial gender contradictions... In focusing on contemporary post-colonial feminist theories, politics and strategies, *Feminist Africa* makes no apology for valorising feminist academic work and insisting on rigorous analysis. The triumphalist rhetoric of globalisation, the re-marginalisation of women in the new African Union, not to mention the escalation of poverty and outbreaks of conflict, civil and militarism, are all deeply gendered phenomena that demand incisive analysis. (Mama, 2002: 2)²

Two years earlier, not long after I assumed my duties at UCT, the Ford Foundation supported a landmark workshop that allowed the AGI to bring together over 30 feminist scholars.³ Participants at that gathering realised this was an historic event because until then we had not been able to convene at our own behest. Those of us who had occasionally met did so one or two at a time, in venues convened by our Western colleagues, usually overseas. Many of us had also been part of Africa's malestream scholarly networks, where intellectual gatherings remained heavily male-dominated spaces, in which many colleagues were disinterested, some viscerally resistant, to feminist theory and methodology. The rich sharing of ideas that occurred in

Cape Town 2000 ended with a planning process that informed the weaving of the AGI's continental feminist collaborative projects for the years to come. What has since emerged as Africa's feminist intellectual community shares the conviction that feminism is as intellectual as it is practical. We share an understanding of activism as rooted in critical reflection on our historical conditions, and feminist theory as most relevant when it is rooted in activism.

Feminist Africa emerged as one thread in an ambitious multifaceted continental project which treated feminist intellectual work as integral to socio-cultural and political transformation. I found myself in a highly privileged colonial institution that was removed from the continent on whose tip it sat, and as unaware of the world of radical, anti-imperialist ideas as it was obtuse to Africa's intellectual landscape. As I understood it, my job was all about changing this, in the name of gender equality.

The strategy that the AGI devised for radicalising public universities was rooted in bringing university and movement feminisms together in order to strengthen both. We have often referred to this as "linking theory with activism", but we know very well that research, theory and writing are also actions, and that action involves the mind as well as the body. A major task of activists is conscientisation, and this requires us to subvert the boundaries that alienate and fragment knowledge and the pedagogies that reproduce inequalities instead of transforming them.

Because of the academic organisation of knowledge into silos that separate mind (psychology) from body (biology, physiology, anatomy), from society (sociology), from politics (political science), from economics, from humanity (languages, art, music, theatre), feminist methodology embraces trans-disciplinary methodology, in order to subvert these academic disciplinary divisions.⁴ Gender oppression may discipline and pacify women, but radical gender analysis cannot be discipline-based, nor can it be pacified.

At a practical level, the AGI worked to convene women from numerous contexts, and to ignite radical conversations. These have taken place in real spaces, filling small rooms with African women's brains and bodies, pioneering uses of still-new e-technologies and creating collective spaces. Groups of visiting associates came first, followed by curriculum working groups, research groups, and by multi-media publishing activities designed to strengthen and re-politicise existing sites for gender and women's studies into fertile places for radical imagination and resistance. E-technology has allowed us to work

beyond bodies in the room, to reach far larger numbers, widen the range of institutions and locations, and to communicate in full colour, using virtual media and new uses of text. By bringing African women, not all of whom identify as feminist thinkers, and their ideas together – across disciplinary, institutional and geographic borders, our work has aimed to make the boundaries between research, pedagogy and activism porous, so that these arenas can become epistemologically coherent. Two core principles have informed all the AGI's work: first, the simple understanding of knowledge production as organic and people-centred; second, a respect for the generative and transformative power of collective processes.

The second paragraph of FA's editorial policy (see above: ii) addresses the practical challenge presented by our political goal of ensuring the journal could be accessed across the African continent:

To overcome the access and distribution challenges facing conventional academic publications, *Feminist Africa* deploys a dual dissemination strategy, using the Internet as a key tool for knowledge-sharing and communication, while making hard copies available to those based at African institutions.

We invested in both real and virtual publishing and dissemination. Nowadays we are questioned on this, but in 2002 we conducted a survey of Internet usage which informed our position. Even leaving issues of electricity and access to computers aside, we found that most African women were reliant on dial-up modems within insufficient band-width, and usage was largely limited to email.⁵ We take pride in the fact that we successfully sustained the two-track dissemination strategy until Issue 19 in 2014, when the lack of funding overcame it.

By the time I decided to leave the AGI, the South African “moment” was over. Zuma had displaced Mbeki at the helm of the ANC; the University of Cape Town had been reformed instead of transformed, and the AGI was being squeezed, despite the prodigious success of the Gender Studies Programmes that it established, and the effective raising of funding for transnational African research and training interventions. The AGI's vision of a continental hub for feminist teaching, research and publishing was irretrievably compromised when the university administration enforced a separation between the AGI's African research, curriculum-strengthening and publishing projects, and its teaching programme. In 2012, the AGI's teaching programme was hived off

to become a conventional department of gender and women's studies, and worse, the teaching faculty were no longer allowed to participate in AGI projects, of which FA was just one. This was to have grave implications for FA. There is a tragic irony that the AGI's transformative work has been impeded at a time of dramatic feminist resurgence, especially visible among a diverse and tech-savvy generation of feminist initiatives across the continent, including in South Africa. Here the #RhodesMustFall student protests began as an anti-colonial protest at UCT, but soon grew into a national mobilisation for the reduction of fees and student debt.

On a personal note, I was not drawn to UCT because it was an "already-liberated" campus. Clearly it was not. However, I had glimpsed the possibilities for transformative feminist work in the historically unique and invigorating political climate that was South Africa at the end of the 1990s. Brimming with pan-African sense of solidarity, I was interested to see if – as Mamphela Ramphele had once opined – the de-racialisation of South Africa could be facilitated by pan-Africanism. Almost two decades later, the deep-but-denied realities of xenophobia have shelved that possibility. In full transparency, I admit that I was also enticed away from Nigeria by the promise of 24/7 electricity, Internet access, and libraries stacked with books and journals. More seriously, who among us had not been gripped by the sight of Mandela walking out of prison beaming, with Winnie on his arm? Two years later, in 1996, my first visit to South Africa was to an embryonic AGI that was setting up its foundational Visiting Associates Programme.⁶ I was still breastfeeding the baby I took with me as hand-luggage, to join Hope Chigudu, Rose Mensah-Kutin, Ruth Meena, Athaliah Molokomme, and Nozipho January-Bardill, to design and implement a continent-wide selection process.⁷ As guests of the AGI, our small group also witnessed President Mandela install Mamphela Ramphele as the UCT Vice-Chancellor, the first black woman to hold such an office in South Africa. None of us will ever forget Madiba remarking that he would "not hide the special pleasure" he took in the fact that "she is a woman, and black!" Eish! How we ululated that day!⁸

What kept us going in an institution that implemented "transformation" by hurtling along a trajectory from white-colonial to global-neoliberal? The answer is simple. As feminists who believe liberation is possible, we were regularly re-fuelled and inspired by the hundreds of African women who came

through the AGI. Some of you came as visiting associates, others as workshop participants, as students, researchers, readers, writers, cyber-feminists and activists working in diverse spaces that were often *not* universities. Connecting the positive energy and brilliance of other African women unleashed a powerful force, and it was this that propelled us forward, emboldening us to pursue an upstream course.

I have no doubt that the success of the AGI and *Feminist Africa* itself is entirely due to the fact that we were able to channel this power – feminist and African – to take up residence in the university just as it came under pressure to transform. We drew rapidly growing numbers of students to the academic programme, but in contrast to university convention, we also drew colleagues from dozens of African countries, young activists and scholars, and older women who had spent decades being overworked and under-published in shamelessly patriarchal institutions that had been further debilitated by economic structural-adjustment programmes. Women would come to write, recuperate and reflect, consult with colleagues, participate in workshops, and use the UCT libraries and servers in the ensuing years. Our small team was also able to get around the continent, to be further inspired by working with colleagues in situ, in Accra, Dakar, Ibadan and Abuja, Harare, Gaborone, Windhoek, Maputo, Nairobi, Kampala, as well as various South African campuses, so that this power was renewed again and again.

A Journal of Our Own⁹

The insistence from the first issue was that each FA constituted a "curation" of genres – profiles, conversations, standpoints, formal articles (sometimes poems!) – this honoured the idea that an "academic article" is always and everywhere grounded in differently-articulated activisms. (Jane Bennett, personal communication, March 2017)

The design of FA has tried to reflect the principle of resisting the complete separation of academic from activist writing, so it has several sections that do not follow academic conventions requiring citation and cross-referencing to other academics. The "Standpoints" include argued opinions regarding feminist debates; the "Profiles" offered space for documenting feminist interventions in a variety of spaces; and the "In Conversation" section shared exchanges between FA and feminists engaged in diverse modes of kinds of

activism. We worked with an understanding that the best critical thinking and ideas were not necessarily expressed in an academic format, but still deserved to be honoured as radical intellectual production. The “Features” section was a space for more scholarly articles that required authors to engage with feminist theory and/or use gender analysis, to include citations, and were peer-reviewed. However, because we all knew what it meant to be kept out by the gatekeeping of many publications, we kept our own gate by making sure that every feature was reviewed by at least one African feminist, a commitment that added greatly to the building of intellectual community.

Every issue has its own story. Each had to be conceptualised and contributors and peer reviewers identified according to the subject matter. When we embarked on an issue, we had to improvise ways of soliciting contributions in a manageable way, find editorial assistance, and meet the costs of publication. In keeping with the principles of community, and to extend the areas of expertise, we constantly sought ways of involving others, and broadening the FA community of editors, contributors and reviewers as well as readers and users, which we were simultaneously working to build. While the first four Issues were edited in-house, Issue 5, “African Sexualities”, was the first to be collaboratively edited. The three features in this issue were drawn from Mapping Sexualities – possibly the first all-African-feminist research project on sexuality – through a three-way research and editorial collaboration with Takiwiwa Manuh for the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, and independent scholar, Charmaine Pereira. The features were drawn from the six research projects carried out by locally-based researchers in South Africa (two projects), Ghana (two projects), Nigeria, and Uganda.

FA 16: *African Feminist Engagements with Film*, which came out eight years later, can also be traced back to the Mapping Sexualities research project.¹¹ Aware of the need for multimedia teaching in African institutions, I had invited film director Yaba Badoe to join the research team. This was because, many years earlier, we had discussed the witches’ camp in Gambaga, near Tamale in Northern Ghana. By that time, over one hundred women accused of witchcraft were living at Gambaga under the protection of a local chief, and hundreds were confined to other camps in the region.¹² It took over six years to complete the production of *The Witches of Gambaga*, partly because mobilising resources for independent, African-directed films poses its own challenges. To make

the documentary that began with Yaba's research, I drew on longstanding personal connections with Ghanaian feminists,¹³ and NETRIGHT (Network for Women's Rights). We were therefore able to identify community activists already challenging witchcraft accusations, whose work we wanted to support.¹⁴ *The Witches of Gambaga* was launched at the African Feminist Forum (AFF) in Dakar, 2010, and proceeded to win several international awards, including second place in the best documentary category at Africa's largest film festival, FESPACO. From an activist viewpoint, however, what mattered most was not the acclaim, but the fact that it was given multiple screenings on national television on Ghana, and clearly had an impact on public perceptions and responses. Yaba and I were eventually able to find the resources to travel back to Gambaga camp and screen it for the women, but that is another story. FA16 was therefore co-edited with Yaba Badoe and I, joined by the Ethiopian feminist filmmaker, Salem Mekuria.¹⁵

FA 12: *Land, Labour and Gendered Livelihoods*, co-edited by Dzodzi Tsikata and Dede-Esi Amanor-Wilks, was significant because it enabled FA to address previously neglected, yet hugely important, terrain. The editors state their intention to:

explore the interconnections among economic liberalisation policies, land and resource tenures, and labour relations in the structuring of gendered livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa.... *Feminist Africa* signals its recognition of the enormous significance of production systems and livelihoods, and the social relations undergirding these. (Tsikata and Amanor-Wilks, 2009: 1)

FA 12 came out of a three-way collaborative workshop held in Accra on 26–28 June 2008. Organised by the African Gender Institute, the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research of the University of Ghana, and the African Institute for Agrarian Studies, established by the late Sam Moyo in Harare, it brought together 23 researchers, activists, students, and policy makers working on land and livelihoods in nine countries across East, West and Southern Africa. Rightly critical of what they saw as the over-representation of matters of culture and sexuality in FA, on a continent where the vast majority of women are farmers, the Editors of this special issue underline the importance of:

developing a pan-African research agenda to rekindle interest in these issues of longstanding concern, which have been neglected by

contemporary efforts to develop African-centred feminist analysis on women's lives. (Tsikata and Amanor-Wilks, 2009: 1)

Dzodzi Tsikata and Dede-Esi Amanor-Wilks brought new field expertise and different networks which significantly expanded the scope of FA.

One last example of the complex processes that lay behind the conceptualisation of each Issue of FA can be seen in Issue 17: *Researching Sexuality with Young Women: Southern Africa*. Edited by Jane Bennett and Hope Chigudu, both experienced activists in this field, this issue published and disseminated material which arose out of a five-campus project to strengthen the leadership of young women in the challenging field of sexual health and reproductive rights.¹⁶ As the Editors note:

The project was based on previous work aimed at supporting African feminist writers, researchers and NGO activists in their understanding of the politics of sexuality and gender and in their deployment of different concepts, including that of SRHR,¹⁷ in their own work. We recognised the need to move into work directly engaging the young women who were so frequently the topics of discussion about gender-based violence, the impact of economic stress on options for sexuality, and the meaning of reproductive rights in politically troubled contexts. Because so much of this research assumes that it is poor, rural, or working-class women who should be the focus of exploration, we deliberately chose to work *with* (not "on") young women with largely lower-middle class backgrounds, on higher education campuses, and with very diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds (Bennett and Chigudu, 2012: 5-6. *Emphasis added*)

While the age and class profile of this project echoed that of many of our students (young, lower-middle and middle class, women and gender non-conforming), most of whom also have to do research and writing to graduate, it was important that this was also an African and feminist initiative, one that "foregrounds the research created with young women" in a journal that was, by this time, internationally recognised.

The three examples hint at the complex negotiations, relational practices and networks that lay behind each and every issue. In other words, there was never a single story, and every issue was an experiment, an adventure in uncertainty, until the upload button was pressed, and we could breathe, even as the next issue was already in our heads.¹⁸

Shifting terrain

What can we learn from FA's experience over the last decade and a half of feminist African intellectual struggle? Our existence raises a number of issues around the meaning of the university, and how we understand feminist knowledge work in Africa.

The first of these is to reconsider if feminist scholarship can realistically be pursued in Africa's universities. Our collective experience is that this has never been easy. However, with several million of the next generation being trained in these institutions, it is imperative that we do not leave this terrain. How can we make feminist scholarship more possible on the African continent today? After all, as various other feminist scholars have done, we were able to carry out the FA work in the shifting cracks and crevices of an institution that had its own problems. There is irony in the fact that the claustrophobic discomfort of working under the shadow of the then-still-standing statue of Cecil Rhodes pushed the AGI to do work that lived largely *outside* our home institution, in order to develop intellectual resources that enhanced teaching *inside* it.¹⁹ Feedback from colleagues confirms that teaching and research were enriched and radicalised on other African campuses too.

Second, there are the problems of resource hunger that have only intensified; so, as is the case for feminist organising in all spheres, we have to find new ways of mobilising resources, of making it possible to give at least some of our labour to the pursuit of the interests and agendas we so clearly define and articulate.

Third, and related, is we have become more aware of the contradictions of our heavy reliance on unpaid, informalised labour, because this reflects the institutional privilege of the highly-skilled minority (like ourselves) who have been able to find ways to participate in the work that is so liberating, and still put bread on the table. It is with hindsight and grey hair that I can only now see the sheer amount of meticulous, time-consuming, multi-skilled work that editing and publishing FA required, and how much this demanded of our editors and writers. The level of editorial work was especially intense because we sought to redress the fact that many contributors had never had the opportunity to be editorially supported by peers, and cultivate what it means to work through the multiple revisions that are required to produce writing that is legible across multiple contexts. However, this capacity-strengthening work raised its own dilemmas. In pushing others to carry out such an

enormous amount of invisible, unpaid labour, were we not reproducing the key exploitative features of “women’s work”? Perhaps a certain level of denial was expedient for us. I compare it to the labour of child-bearing in the sense that, if women remembered how hard and painful it was, not many would ever have more than one child! So it was with each issue of FA. Jane Bennett and I will forever appreciate all those who worked with us to take on and share the laborious work of editing FA, without which we may never have grown FA beyond the “single issue” phenomenon that is a feature of African contexts. The labour question must be reflected upon, particularly as formal employment collapses further into informal and consultancy-based work.

Deep desires lie behind all feminist labour. Each time an issue came out, those who worked on it felt hugely gratified. I will refrain from getting poetic about what it means to touch the recycled paper and smell the printer’s ink as one leafs through pages full of feminism that is African. Or to read material which speaks through the layers of our multiple identities. Or the delight at watching, sometimes joining, Hilda Ferguson, Karen Flowers and Wardah Daniels, the AGI’s indefatigable administrators, stuff copies into envelopes addressed to destinations that stretched from Cape Town to... to other feminists all over the continent! It was a radical kind of pleasure, not less or more than the joys that accrue from awarding degree certificates to unimaginably beautiful students, many of them “women and black”. As the #RhodesMustFall protests on the UCT campus so vividly reminded us, there is still much work to be done, perhaps especially in places that are wilfully “still not ready” for radical, pan-African thinking, or the people that might bring it forth.

We are often asked why we have not taken the path of other internationally acclaimed academic feminist journals in the West. *Meridians*, *Feminist Review*, *Signs*, *Agenda*, *Jenda!* and others are now the property of corporate publishing houses who pay some of the editorial assistance costs and can guarantee production. The truth is that several leading houses *have* expressed interest in adding FA to the long list of accredited academic journals they publish, but we have always resisted. Our reasoning lies in the founding mission and purpose of FA. To be acquired by a large corporate house requires us to abandon the very things that motivated us to create FA in the first place. The principle of open-access resource is one. Collective ownership is another. And we would have to purchase out-of-reach subscriptions, or

be affiliated to universities that can afford them. There is discussion to be had over the fact that by remaining free and open access we have retained political and intellectual freedom, but remained precarious. In concrete terms, this translates into FA being able to insist on a particular definition of *peer* review, to mean review by feminist peers, African where possible, because we prefer to keep our own gate, instead of being subjected to the gatekeeping of others. These lie at the centre of insisting on “a journal of our own”, surely worth defending?

FA’s fate has been inexorably linked to that of the AGI, itself in permanent struggle with the contradictions of working from within larger, patriarchal structures that, as noted above, are still not ready for us. One question for further consideration is whether powerful, feminist intellectual work can still occur in universities, and if so, under what conditions? If we conclude that it cannot, or that what can be done is insufficient, then we must ask ourselves: What kinds of arrangement must we co-create to engage in powerful, potentially transformative, feminist intellectual work?

We – Jane Bennett, myself, and other FA editors – plan to throw this question out again to the complex and argumentative and brilliant and trans-generational community that now forms the readership and support-network of *Feminist Africa*. Issue 22, motivated by the creative and powerful energy renewed at the AFF in Harare 2016 and appropriately produced in partnership with the African Women’s Development Fund, will be the last for the next two years. In the forthcoming months, we plan collective conversations through which we hope to formulate a fresh, re-grounded engagement with the future of feminist intellectual writing on the continent. Your participation will be the lifeblood for this re-birthing, so please stay on our listserv. Knowing that each issue of FA is READ, by the very people we yearn for as sisters, allies, neighbours and interlocutors, has made every proofreading and every e-challenged communication possible, and more important, deeply treasured.

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Endnotes

- 1 Paulo Freire, the Brazilian Marxist and radical educator, uses this term. The Marxist term “praxis” can also be used.
- 2 *Southern African Feminist Review* (SAFERE), edited by Patricia MacFadden at SARIPS in Harare, was the first scholarly journal to include “feminist” in its name.
- 3 The workshop title was “Gender and Women’s Studies in African Contexts”.
- 4 This is not the same thing as “interdisciplinary”, which refers to bringing existing disciplines together, in the same way that “transnational” is not the same as “international”.
- 5 Conducted by Jenny Radloff, one of the AGI’s early staff and a pioneer cyber-feminist and member of the Gender in Africa Information Network (GAIN). Jenny edited FA 18: e-spaces, e-politics.
- 6 Funded for several years by the Rockefeller Foundation.
- 7 We were hosted by Michelle Friedman, then an AGI programme officer.
- 8 We also attended a hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that was dedicated to women – because South African feminists had demanded it.
- 9 Virginia Woolf’s 1929 essay on women intellectuals was titled “A Room of One’s Own”.
- 10 Former National Convenor of the Initiative for Women’s Studies in Nigeria.
- 11 I had initially imagined producing a series of six films on the different projects, to facilitate better education and activism on the very challenging politics and cultures of sexuality in African contexts.
- 12 In fact there were several such camps in which hundreds more ostracised women, most of them elderly, were in refuge from their communities.
- 13 Dzodzi Tsikata and Rose Mensah-Kutin.
- 14 Gladys Laraba, Ken Addae, Fatima Alhassan.
- 15 I worked with Salem Mekuria on another film project intended to explore the gender politics of Sharia in Northern Nigeria in 2012, ten years after the charges of *zina* discussed in Pereira’s study in FA 5 (2005). However, the funding challenges and, later, the deterioration of the Boko Haram conflict meant that the project was never completed.

- 16 Participants came from the Universities of Zimbabwe, Botswana, Witwatersrand, Namibia and Cape Town.
- 17 Sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- 18 Issues always took much longer than planned, often several months. Finding time and space to write seriously, or to edit, continues to be an immense challenge for most of us throughout our careers, in or outside educational institutions.
- 19 We saw the AGI as subsidising the institution by raising large grants, as well as making a significant and transformative intervention that informed teaching African gender studies on the continent and globally, but the institution always saw this the other way round.

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