

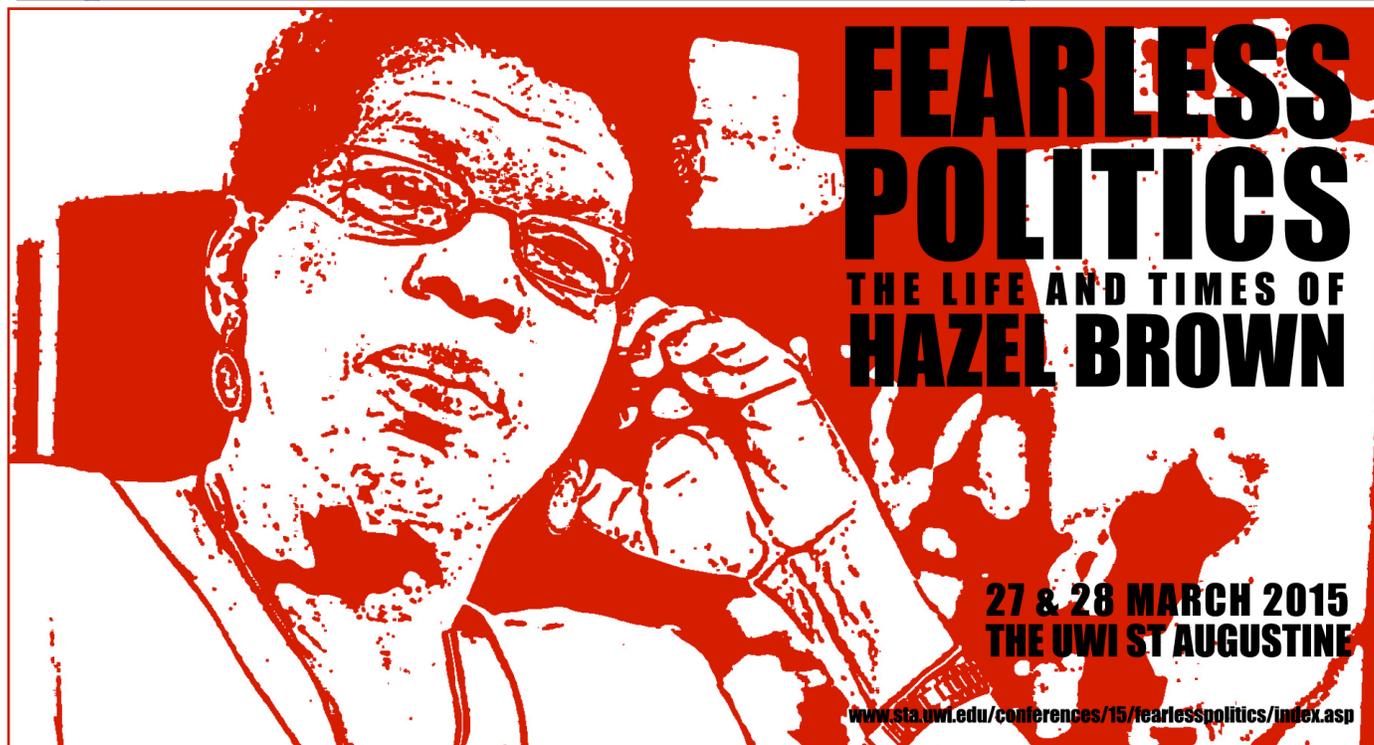
FEARLESS POLITICS

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF HAZEL BROWN



Friday 27th and Saturday 28th March, 2015

Teaching and Learning Complex | The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus



AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

- To discuss lessons learnt from the life of Hazel Brown toward new forms of social justice organising
- To discuss the current state of the women's movement and the way forward given the present national and global climate
- To engage in an intergenerational conversation about politics in the feminist and women's organizing modes of challenging power structures

THEMATIC AREAS

Women's Health and Reproductive Justice

(Cancer, Breastfeeding, HIV and AIDS)

Politics: "Why Women? Why Politics?"

(50/50, Local Government, Women's Manifesto, Women's Caucuses, CIWIL, Put a Woman)

Community and Culture

(Diego Martin Co-op, HATT, Consumer Rights, East Side Plaza; Baby Doll, Mas, Calypso)

Advocacy

(CEDAW, Gender Policy, Women and ICT, Food Sovereignty: Solar Cooking, Grow Box, Mango Festival)

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Citizens who wish to honour and learn from the lives and politics of civic leaders such as Hazel Brown.

Activists in areas such as women's health, consumer rights, community organizing, politics and transformational leadership, culture and mas, domestic workers' rights, environmental conservation and transnational feminist organizing.

Students of all ages who wish to know more about strategies and struggles for social justice.

Artists and cultural workers interested in art and social transformation

Women, men, girls and boys whose dream for our world is greater equality, justice, sustainability, cooperation and peace.

Biography

Hazel Brown has spent most of her adult life as a consumer and women's affairs advocate because of her strong belief that citizens should speak-up on decisions which affect their lives. She is also motivated by the conviction that democracy is strengthened in a society where citizens participate actively in the decision-making process.

Over the years Ms. Brown has been involved in several voluntary social action groups. She is a member of the Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago (HATT). HATT was established in 1971 to generate public interest and awareness of the power of consumer action and to provide reliable consumer information, investigate consumer complaints, ensure consumer protection and educate consumers about their rights.

An outspoken advocate of women's rights, Ms. Brown was a founding member of the Network of NGO's of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women, a comprehensive national umbrella organization formed in 1985 to present the position of women in Trinidad and Tobago at the End of Decade Conference in Nairobi. The Network is an advocate and support for women's organisations in Trinidad and Tobago and is part of many regional and international networks of women.

She is the main driver of the Network's 'put a woman' project. This project aims to prepare women and young persons to participate in the local government and national elections processes, and at the same time prepare the environment, of a predominantly male governmental process, for their acceptance in greater numbers. This is in keeping with the mandate of the Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs Meeting who in Trinidad and Tobago in November 1996 agreed to work towards the acceleration of gender integration in politics at national and local levels. In this context they also recommended a target of 30% of women in decision-

making in the political public and private sectors by 2005.

The 'put a woman' project also aims to strengthen the networking and build capacity of Caribbean women working towards this goal.

She is the former Secretary General of the Commonwealth Women's Network, linking women in fifty-two Commonwealth countries.

In her drive to make a contribution to Trinidad and Tobago society, Ms. Brown has continued to initiate and be active in a number of community-oriented projects. She served as Board member and Chair of the Diego Martin Consumer Co-operative the only surviving consumer cooperative of those started in the seventies.

Ms. Brown was also a founder of the Telephone Users Group which was formed to generate public interest, collate information and represent consumers at the telephone rate hearings in 1971. In subsequent utility hearings for electricity and telephone rate increases Ms. Brown was able to mobilize and motivate a significant number of subscribers to participate in the hearings. Ms. Brown's contention was that these increased rates would place an unfair burden on poor and low-income groups, especially in the case of electricity. As a result there were changes in the electricity and water rate structures and fair rate increases.

Since 1992 Ms. Brown has been involved in the experimentation and promotion of Solar Box Cooking in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana as a practical convenient way for people of all ages to use a safe, non-polluting renewable energy source which is widely available. The project, which teaches how to build and use solar box cookers, was presented as a success story at the 1994 SIDS Conferences in Barbados. This project was recently awarded a grant by BP Trinidad to develop a model solar cooker for commercial production and job creation in Trinidad and Tobago.

She was also responsible for coordinating the Trinidad and Tobago NGO participation in several UN Conferences. In 1994 Ms. Brown was appointed Coordinator for Caribbean Region Preparatory Process Project for the World Summit for Social Development. This project was designed to increase awareness among NGOs about the core issue of the Summit ensuring adequate responsible and informed Caribbean NGO representation and participation at the Prep Coms and the Summit itself. It successfully promoted NGO representation as part of Government delegates and building consensus among Caribbean delegates on the priorities for action on the Core Issues.

She was also responsible for Trinidad and Tobago NGO participation in the 1995 Beijing UN Women's Conference as well as the follow up Beijing+5 in New York in 2000, where she was part of a vibrant Caribbean Women caucus and the 1996 Habitat Conference in Istanbul, Turkey. She recently participated in the Beijing+10 meeting in New York.

This Caribbean work was recognised by the UNDP system by an award in 2000.

Ms. Brown is at present the Coordinator (a voluntary elected position) of the Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women.

A nineteen-year cancer survivor she is also an advocate and support for many cancer patients. She was recently honoured by the Guyana Cancer Society for her work in support of Guyanese cancer patients, mainly women, who come to Trinidad for treatment.

Ms Brown is one of the first graduates of the Cipriani Labour College in 1969 and is the mother of four grown children and a grandmother of seven.

Ref: <http://www.ciwil.org/storage/Hazel.html>