

Education for All: Challenging Orthodoxies and Fostering Inclusion

This one-day conference will review current trends in education and development, inspired by the work and life of the work of the late Professor Lalage Bown, and explore her legacy. During the day a new edited collection, *Adult Education and Social Justice – International Perspectives*, will be launched.

The Council for Education in the Commonwealth is delighted to be partnering with the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the Centre for Research and Development in Adult and Lifelong Learning, University of Glasgow and Somerville College, University of Oxford, to deliver this important event.

Venue: Somerville College, University of Oxford.

Date: 4th April 2024 - from 1100 to 1900

Themes to be addressed:

- **Adult and continuing education:** This session provides a retrospective and prospective analysis of adult and lifelong learning, both in sub-Saharan Africa and in the UK. It will consider traditions from the past and how these may shape future directions for the field with an eye towards contemporary global challenges such as climate change, forced migration and artificial intelligence.
- **The education of girls and women:** The education of girls and women: the last fifty years have seen a marked improvement in literacy levels and access to education by girls and women. However, globally, the picture is very varied. Where are the gaps and who is at most risk? What are the barriers and where might our actions need to be focused?
- **Decolonising education:** The legacy of colonialism continues to impact upon knowledge & learning across the world and at all levels. There have always been some critical thinkers who had voiced concerns; however, in recent years a much deeper understanding has been emerging. What are the concerns? Where are the challenges? What action is required? Who needs to be involved?
- **African writers in English:** Many first readers of *Two Centuries of African English* (1973) had little notion that the history of written English in the African continent long pre-dated the new generation of emerging writers such as Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka. In this session we ask if recognition of memoir, autobiography and documentation in the story of African literature had lasting influence, leading to a rethinking of African history itself. Where is African writing today and whence might it be heading? Has it fully freed itself of dependency on European models?

These issues will be addressed by academics, researchers and other top-flight specialists. There will be round table discussions and opportunities for contributions from the floor.

Professor Lalage Bown first worked in West Africa in 1949, after graduating from Somerville College. Over the next 30 years she held academic posts at universities in Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia and Kenya. She was Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Lagos. In the UK her various positions included University of Edinburgh; Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex; and Director, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow. Professor Bown had a great interest in African writing and produced the first anthology of African writers in English, *Two Centuries of African English*. She was known by her West African university colleagues as the 'mother of African adult education', due to her commitment to adult education 'as a tool for empowerment'. Lalage Bown was a champion of education of girls and women, was a great advocate of the role of museums and heritage in education and with a love for African fashion – her collection is in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Registration: The event will go live on the Eventbrite website in January, with booking details and a programme with speakers and sessions. An 'early bird' discount will be on offer with other discounts for Council for Education in the Commonwealth members and all students. Accommodation, if required, will be available at Somerville College.

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