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Contents

Preface	vii
<i>Contributors</i>	ix
Introduction	1
Putting Women on the Agenda <i>Jacklyn Cock</i>	27
Putting Women into the Constitution <i>Christina Murray and Catherine O'Regan</i>	33
Theories of Equality: Some Thoughts for South Africa <i>Linda Zama</i>	57
Women and the Elephant: The Need to Redress Gender Oppression <i>Frene Ginwala</i>	62
Promoting Gender Equality in South Africa <i>Brigitte Mabandla</i>	75
The ANC Constitutional Guidelines in Process: A Feminist Reading <i>Dorothy Driver</i>	82
Capitalising on African Strengths: Women, Welfare and the Law <i>Sandra Burman</i>	103

Women's Rights and the Family in Traditional and Customary Law <i>Thandabantu Nhlapo</i>	111
The Family in South African Politics: Conceptualising Progressive Change <i>Nolulamo N Gwagwa</i>	124
A Critical Discussion of the Law on Rape in Namibia <i>Dianne Hubbard</i>	134
Working Against Violence Against Women: Recommendations from Rape Crisis (Cape Town) <i>Desirée Hansson</i>	180
Paying for Stolen Kisses? The Law and Sexual Harassment in South Africa <i>Carla Sutherland</i>	194
Women and Reproductive Rights <i>Helen Rees</i>	209
Women and Law in Post-independence Zimbabwe: Experiences and Lessons <i>Mary Maboreke</i>	217
Namibian Independence <i>Bience Gawanas</i>	248
Gender Equality under the Botswana Constitution <i>Unity Dow</i>	256
Women and Equality Rights in Canada: Sobering Reflections, Impossible Choices <i>Elizabeth A Sheehy</i>	262
Appendix 1	277
Appendix 2	282
Appendix 3	286

Preface

The contributions to this book originated as papers presented at a conference entitled *Putting Women on the Agenda*, organised by Lawyers for Human Rights, and held at the University of the Witwatersrand during Johannesburg in November 1990.

Some of the papers appear in the form in which they were presented at the conference; others have been revised by the authors to include some of the discussion that occurred at the conference itself. The length and style of the papers varies greatly. However, that should not detract from the importance of this collection. Rather, it should be seen in the context of the various debates and discussions taking place in South and Southern Africa about feminism, women and law, and the constitutional dispensation.

Many more people participated in presentations at the conference than are represented here, and their contributions should be acknowledged regardless of the fact that they did not prepare formal papers.

This book is not addressed specifically to lawyers, to academics, or to women alone. The current debate to formulate policies on gender issues involves everyone. But first and foremost, this contribution hopes to empower women to participate in all the crucial aspects of the transformation of South Africa.

It is hoped that these essays will be used as a basis for discussion and education in analysing the complexities of gender, race and class in the South African context. They should be seen as a contribution to the putting of women on the agenda for change.

Thanks is due to DANIDA (Denmark), the Canadian Embassy, the French Embassy, and Lawyers for Human Rights, who provided the financial support necessary to organise the conference; and to Interfund, which assisted in meeting the costs of publishing these essays.

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Johannesburg

Contributors

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UNITY DOW practises law in Gaborone, Botswana. Recently, she successfully challenged the citizenship laws of Botswana, forcing legislators to give equal citizenship rights to women and children. She is presently setting up a human rights centre in Gaborone.

DOROTHY DRIVER is a senior lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Cape Town. Besides the contribution in this volume, and a previous essay on women and the ANC, she has published essays on South African women writers, and was recently awarded the Pringle Prize for Literary Articles for "Woman" as Sign in the South African Colonial Enterprise', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 1, 1988, pp1-20. Her book on Pauline Smith is forthcoming from David Philip Publishers.

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DIANNE HUBBARD received her law degree from Harvard Law School. Her publications include *Crisis in Crossroads: A Report on Human Rights in South Africa*, published by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights in New York. She is presently a legal researcher in Namibia and is involved in a number of projects relating to women and the law. She is a member of Women's Solidarity, an activist women's organisation in Windhoek.

BRIGITTE MABANDLA, who holds a law degree from the University of Zambia, is a member of the constitutional committee of the African National Congress and the convenor of a sub-committee on gender and children. She is presently a human rights research officer in the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape, focusing on gender in constitution making and researching the legal status of children in South Africa.

MARY MABOREKE teaches in the Faculty of Law at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare. She completed her MPhil in Zimbabwe, in association with the University of Oslo, on a study of custody and maintenance and their effects on women. She teaches Women's Law, amongst other courses, and is a member of the Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Project.

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HELEN REES is a medical practitioner in Johannesburg, the women's health representative of the National Medical and Dental Association, and a lecturer in Family Medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand. She serves on the board of the Women's Health Project and is a regular contributor to *Speak* magazine.

ELIZABETH SHEEHY is an associate professor of Law at the University of Ottawa, Canada, where she teaches Criminal Law and Women and the Law. She is co-editor of the *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* and is on the Board of Directors of Lawyers Against Apartheid (Ottawa). She has written extensively on women and the law, and her article 'Canadian Judges and the Law of Rape: Should the Charter Insulate Bias?' was awarded the Marion Porter prize for the most significant feminist research article in 1990.

CARLA SUTHERLAND is a researcher for the Committee of Enquiry into Sexual Harassment at the University of Cape Town. This committee, established in 1990, was the first of its kind in Southern Africa. As such she is recognised as one of the experts in this field in South Africa.

LINDA ZAMA is a practising human rights attorney in Durban, and a member of several organisations and commissions. She is secretary of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, and works with grassroots organisations on issues affecting human rights.