

# Shirley Ardener

Nominated by David Zeitlyn, Professor of Social Anthropology



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Shirley Ardener (Shirley G. Ardener) is a pioneer of research on women (doing women's studies more-or-less *avant la lettre*) and a committed researcher working with Bakweri people in Cameroon since the 1950s, initially with Edwin Ardener.

She published an important analysis of forms of credit (Rotating credit associations) that has been influential on subsequent work on the informal economy and microcredit systems: see *Rotating savings and credit association*. Her work as editor has seen the publication of many key texts such as *Perceiving Women*, 1975. This collection also includes her essay *Sexual Insult and Female Militancy* a foundational text demonstrating how the personal can be made deeply political. (This was cited in *Anlu* (Cameroon)).

She helped found and was the founding director of the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research on Women (CCCRW) at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford informally since 1973, formally since 1983 (Davies and Waldren 2007: 252). The CCCRW has now become the International Gender Studies Centre (IGS) based at Lady Margret Hall, Oxford.

She was the minute taker at the meeting that Dag Hammarskjöld had in Cameroon in the run up to independence in Cameroon on 2 Jan 1959.

## Distinctions:

Welcome Medal for Anthropology in 1962

OBE 1991

## Selected publications:

*Perceiving Women* (editor and contributor), Berg Publications, 1975

*Defining Females* (editor and contributor), Berg, 1978

*Women and Space; ground rules and social maps* (editor and contributor), Berg, 1981

*The Incorporated Wife* (co-ed and contributor) Berg, 1984

*Visibility and Power, Essays on Women in Society and Development* (co-editor, and contributor) OUP India, 1986

*Persons and Powers of Women* (ed. and contributor), Berg, 1992

*Women and Missions*, co-editor, Berg, 1993

*Bilingual Women*, co-editor, Berg, 1994

*Money-Go-Rounds; women's use of rotating savings and credit associations* (co-ed. and contributor), 1995

*Kingdom on Mount Cameroon* (annotated edition of papers by E. Ardener) Berghahn Books, 1996

*Swedish Ventures in Cameroon; trade and travel; people and politics, 1883-1923*, annotated edition of Knutson's memoirs. Berghahn Books, 2002

*Changing Sex and Bending Gender* (co-editor, and contributor) Berghahn Books, 2005

*Professional Identities; Policy and Practice in Business and Bureaucracy* (co-editor) Berghahn Books, 2007

*War and Women Across Continents...* (co-editor and contributor), Berghahn Books 2016

*Diversifying Portraiture  
in Anthropology*