Carolyn Cooper

Carolyn Cooper is a recently retired professor of literary and cultural studies who taught at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica for thirty-six years. In 1968, she was awarded the Jamaica Scholarship (Girls) to do her B.A. in English at Mona. On completion of the degree in 1971, she won a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) fellowship to do her MA at the University of Toronto. She received fellowships from the University of the West Indies and the University of Toronto to do her PhD, which she completed in 1977.

After teaching for five years at Atlantic Union College, a small private college in New England, Dr. Cooper returned to UWI in 1980. There she taught courses on Caribbean, African-American and African literature as well as popular culture. Her innovative course, “Reggae Poetry,” which is offered by the Department of Literatures in English, continues to attract students from across the faculties as well as international students.

In 1992, Professor Cooper conceived the International Reggae Studies Centre and provided intellectual leadership for this far-reaching enterprise for more than a decade since its institutionalisation at Mona in 1994 as the somewhat diminished Reggae Studies Unit. She initiated the annual Bob Marley Lecture in 1997 as well as a hugely popular series of talks by an array of reggae/dancehall artists, other industry experts and academics including Lady Saw, Buju Banton, Tony Rebel, Queen Ifrica, Luciano, Capleton, Ninjaman, Gentleman, Louise Frazer-Bennett, Jeremy Harding, Mikey Bennett, Brent Clough and Lez Henry.

The premier academic accomplishment of the Reggae Studies Unit is the establishment of an innovative, inter-disciplinary undergraduate degree programme in Entertainment and Cultural Enterprise Management. The brainchild of Kam-Au Amen, the first MA graduate in Cultural Studies at UWI, Mona, the degree remains one of the most popular in the Faculty of Humanities and Education.

In the 1980s, Professor Cooper was a member of the Women’s Studies Working Group at Mona which laid the foundation for the cross-campus Institute of Gender and Development Studies. As Campus Co-ordinator, she initiated the founding of the Association of Women’s Organisations of Jamaica (AWOJA).

A well-known media personality in Jamaica, Professor Cooper writes a weekly column for the Sunday Gleaner that she posts on her bilingual blog, “Jamaica Woman Tongue.” In the 1990s she wrote a bilingual column for the Jamaica Observer. She has appeared in several documentaries on Caribbean culture produced by a wide range of local and international media houses such as Television Jamaica, B. World Connection (Guadeloupe), Al Jazeera English TV, the BBC, National Public Radio (USA), the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and ARD TV (Germany). Professor Carolyn Cooper remains a public intellectual committed to widening debates on cultural politics beyond the walls of the university.
REFEREED ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS


BOOK CHAPTERS


“Meck West Indies Federate’: Celebrating the Arts of Regional Integration in the


PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES


“‘Mek Wi Talk Bout de Bottom a de Sea’: Mutabaruka's Submerged Poetics,” Caribbean Quarterly, 59.2 (June 2013): 113-121. Presented at the Inaugural Rastafari Studies Conference, UWI, Mona, August 2010

6th Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture, University of the West Indies, Mona, November 2012


“What the Backside All You Want?: Interrogating Rastafari in Derek Walcott’s *O Babylon!*” *Journal of West Indian Literature* 15.1 & 2 (November 2006) : 196-201.


**PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**


**EDITED SPECIAL ISSUES OF REFEREED JOURNALS**


**NON-REFEREED PUBLICATIONS**

**BOOK**


**BOOK CHAPTERS**


BOOK REVIEWS & FOREWORDS


**POPULAR PUBLICATIONS (SELECTED)**


“Punany Powah.” *Black Media Journal* [UK], No 2, Spring 2000, 50-52.


“Peter Tosh Interview.” Pulse Magazine, June, 1984: 12, 14-15, 32.

KEYNOTE/PLENARY LECTURES AT ACADEMIC CONFERENCES


• “‘We’re More Than a Beach, We’re a Country’: Exploring the Linkages between Tourism, Culture and the Creative Industries in a Caribbean context,” 2nd International Tourism Conference, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, January 2012

• “‘The Unity is Submarine’: Circuits of Culture in the ‘Transterritorial’ Caribbean,” 6th International Symposium of the Center for Caribbean Studies in Brazil (CECAB), University of Sao Luis, Maranhao, Brazil, November 2010

• “Cross Talk: Jamaican Popular Music and the Politics of Translation,” 21st Annual Conference of the New Literatures in English, Bayreuth University, May 2010

• “Reggae University’: Rototom Sunsplash and the Politics of Globalising Jamaican Popular Culture,” International Reggae Conference, University of the West Indies, Mona, February 2010

• “Burying Miss Lou: Contested Rites of Passage in Contemporary Jamaica,” Conference on Louise Bennett, University of the West Indies, Mona, January 2008
• “Dancehall Philosophy: Erotic Movement Shifting the Geography of Reason,” Annual Conference, Caribbean Philosophical Association, University of the West Indies, Mona, July 2007

• “Torrid Zones: Sexual Politics in Jamaican Dancehall Culture,” Annual Conference, British Forum for Ethnomusicology, Winchester University, March/April 2006

• “From Beowulf to Bounty Killa: Or How I Ended Up Studying Slackness,” Annual Conference on West Indian Literature, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, March 2006

• “Pleasure in the Word: Remembering Why We Got Into Literature Programming Etc. in the First Place,” British Council Seminar, “Animating Literature,” University of the West Indies, Mona, July 2005


INVITED CONFERENCE/SYMPOSIUM/SEMINAR PAPERS

• “'Magic In Kingston Town': Urban Roots of Creative Jamaica”, Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University, September 2016

• “Rebel Music”: Bob Marley’s Rhythms of Resistance”, Colloquium on Cultural Diversity in the Caribbean, Casa de las Americas, Havana, May 18-22, 2015

• “Looking For Hot Sex (and Romance): African/Black Diaspora Studies and the Humanities”, Colloquium on the African and Black Diaspora: The State of the Field and Future Directions”, Depaul University, May 2014


• “Skin-bleaching: Contested Identities in Contemporary Jamaica,” 1st International Scientific Conference, “Dying to be Beautiful?": Body Image, Eating Disorders and Health in the Caribbean,” University of the West Indies, Mona, Western Jamaica Campus, January 2012


“An Envoy From/To An Outpost: Loosely Talking Theory In the Creole/Anglophone Caribbean,” Conference on Post-Colonial Theory, Princeton University, September 2005

“‘Self Searching for Substance’: The Politics of Style in Earl Lovelace’s *A Brief Conversion and Other Stories,*” Earl Lovelace 70th Birthday Conference, UWI, St. Augustine, July 2005

“It’s A African Ting’: Rituals of Remembering in Jamaican Dancehall Culture,” Pan-African Bookfest, Fort Lauderdale, April 23, 2005

“In Another Key: Discordant Female Voices in the Caribbean Literary Canon,” Symposium on “Women and Others,” University of Alabama, March 2005

“Erotic Disguise: Un/dressing the Body in Jamaican Dancehall Culture,” Third Annual Graduate Student Conference, “Dance Under Construction,” University of California’s Departments of Dance, UC Davis, April 2001


“‘Lick Samba’: Cultural Synergies Between Brazil and Jamaica,” Jamaica Promotions (JAMPRO) Symposium on “Cultural Synergies and Business Opportunities between Brazil and Jamaica: The Case of Music and Book Publishing,” Kingston, May 2000

“Border Clash: The Politics of Location in Jamaican Dancehall Culture,”
Conference on “Transitional Identities,” Johannes Gutenberg-Universitat, Mainz, Germany, April 2000


- “Contested Identities in Contemporary Caribbean Literature: Erna Brodber’s Louisiana,” The Humanities Institute, State University of New York, Stony Brook, March 1998


- “Globalization, Transnationalization and Regional Particularities: A Jamaican Perspective,” Canadian Council of Area Studies Learned Societies Conference, Ottawa, November 1994


- “‘The Great Man Can No Longer Just Get Up and Go’: Jamaica Kincaid, Christopher Columbus and the Paralysis of Patriarchy,” The “Encounter of Worlds” Conference, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine/Government of Trinidad and Tobago, January 1992


OTHER CONFERENCE/SYMPOSIUM/SEMINAR PAPERS (SELECTED)
“Dem Naa Go Tired Fi See Bob Marley Face: Imagining the Legend In the International Reggae Poster Contest”, 34th annual West Indian Literature Conference, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, October 1-3, 2015. First presented at the 3rd International Reggae conference, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, February 2015


“Dancehall Fictions: Macka Diamond’s ‘Roots’ Novels,” 29th Annual West Indian Literature Conference, UWI, Mona, April 2010

“Emancipate Yourselves From Mental Slavery:’ The Genesis and Institutionalisation of the International Reggae Studies Centre at the University of the West Indies,” Ford Foundation Consultation on “The State of Cultural Enterprises in the Caribbean,” Port of Spain, Trinidad, June 2000


PUBLIC LECTURES (SELECTED)

- “‘Disguise Up De English Language’: Louise Bennett’s Anansi Poetics”, 2016-2017 Michael Baptista Lecture, Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC), York University, November 2016

- “‘Mek Wi Talk Bout di Bottom of the Sea’: Submerged Narratives in Caribbean Literature and Popular Culture”, James R. Johnston Distinguished Lecture, Dalhousie University, October 2016. An abbreviated version also presented as a keynote lecture at the 35th annual West Indian Literature Conference, Jamaica, October 2016

  An earlier version presented as a keynote lecture at the 5th Graduate Student Conference, Department of English, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, March 2014

- “Sound Clash: ‘Slackness’ Versus ‘Culture’ In the Dancehall”, Festival of Fort-de-France, Martinique, July 12, 2015

- “Louise Bennett: Dat Cunny Jamma Oman”, 8th annual Louise Bennett-Coverley Reading Festival, Fort Lauderdale, February 2015.

- “‘Mek West Indies Federate’: Celebrating the Arts of Regional Integration in the Poetry of Louise Bennett,” Independence Lecture, Embassy of Jamaica, Washington, D.C., August 2010


- “Celebrating the Arts of Regional Integration in the Poetry of Louise Bennett and Derek Walcott.” The Inaugural Cherrie Orr Memorial Lecture, hosted by the Jamaica/St. Lucia Community, Castries, St. Lucia, June 2006

- “Sweet and Sour Sauce: Sexual Politics in Jamaican Dancehall Culture.”

- “‘Mi No Talk Like Foreigner’: Mother Tongue and Body Language in Jamaican Dancehall Culture.” 2005-2006 Presidential Lecture Series, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York, September 2005
- “Dancehall Culture in Jamaica,” International Week, Dillard University, New Orleans, April 2005
- “Rhythms of Resistance: The Role of Music in Caribbean Consciousness,” Annual Emancipation Lecture, Broward County Libraries Division, Fort Lauderdale, August 2004
- “Erotic Disguise: (Un)dressing the Body in Jamaican Dancehall Culture,” The Annual Walter Rodney Lecture, Centre for Caribbean Studies, Warwick University, November 2002
- “‘Write it Dung Inna Yu Rememberance’: Living the Legacy of Paul Bogle Today,” The Annual Paul Bogle Lecture, hosted by the Paul Bogle Foundation, St. Thomas, October 2002
- “Politics and Poetry in the Creole/Anglophone Caribbean,” The Ottilie Stafford Poetry Collection Lecture Series, Atlantic Union College, October 1999
- “Sexual Politics in Jamaican Popular Culture,” University of the South Pacific, Fiji, October 1993
- “Institutionalising Women’s Studies at the University of the West Indies,” University of Papua New Guinea, November 1993

- “Identity Politics in Jamaican Popular Music,” University of Papua New
Guinea, November 1993

- Lecture tour of Australian universities (Queensland, Adelaide, Perth, Sydney, Melbourne), on *Noises in the Blood*: November 1993

- “Jamaican Popular Culture,” Hiroshima Peace University, Japan, November 1993


- “Afro-Jamaican Folklore Elements in Contemporary Jamaican Literature: Louise Bennett and Erna Brodber,” Fall Lecture Series, Center for Afro-American Studies, & the Center for the Study of Women and the Women’s Studies Program, University of California (Los Angeles) November 1985

**ACADEMIC AWARDS**

1999  
Mona Academic Research Fellowship; A Research Assistant, supervised by the primary fellow, was appointed to undertake the work on the project, “Jamaican Popular Music: Oral History and Curriculum Development.” Award extended for the 2003-2004 academic year and the research done by the primary fellow.

1996  
Visiting Scholar, Center for African-American Studies, Institute of American Cultures, University of California, Los Angeles, January-June

1993  
Fellow, Salzburg Seminar, “Literature as a Political Force,” Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, Austria, July

1992  

1991  
Ford Foundation Visiting Scholar, “Africana Studies within the African Diaspora,” Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University, October

1991  
British Council Grant to present a paper at the *Motherlands* Symposium, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London University, September
1988-89  British Council Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship, to complete *Noises in the Blood*, Centre for West African Studies, Birmingham University, U.K.


1982  Commonwealth Foundation Fellowship to present a paper, “The Rhetoric of Politics,” at the Ibadan African Literature Conference, Ibadan University, Nigeria

INTER/NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

MEMBERSHIP ON INTER/NATIONAL BOARDS

2006-07  Member, Board of Directors, Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO)

2006-  Member, Board of Directors, Development Partners and Management International Limited, Kingston

2014  Chief Judge (Non-Fiction), The BOCAS Literary Festival, Trinidad and Tobago

2005-10  Member of the Orientation Committee for the Third World Festival of Black Arts, held in Dakar, Senegal in 2010

2004  Member, International Organising Committee 1st Conference of African Intellectuals and the Diaspora Dakar, hosted by the African Union

2001-06  Member, Board of Directors, The Calabash International Literary Festival, Jamaica

2012-  Member, Copyright Working Group, Jamaica Intellectual Property Office, Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Government of Jamaica

2001  Member, University of the West Indies Vice-Chancellor’s Task Force advising on the UN Conference on Racism

2000-2001  Member, Steering Committee of the Museum for the Development of Popular Jamaican Music, Institute of Jamaica
2000-01 Member, National Steering Committee UNCTAD/WIPO Music Industry Project, Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Technology, Government of Jamaica

1994-95 Chair, Advisory Committee, the Jamaica Music Awards

1992 Member, Panel of Judges, the Guyana Prize for Literature, Georgetown, Guyana

1989-90 Member, Panel of Judges, The Commonwealth Prize for Fiction, Canada-Caribbean Division, Guelph University, Ontario, Canada

1983-84 Member, Panel of Judges, Literary Competition, Jamaica Cultural Development Commission

MEMBERSHIP ON EDITORIAL BOARDS

2014- Member, Advisory Board, The Black Scholar

2004-06 Associate Editor, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies Routledge

1999- Regional Editor (Caribbean), Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies, Routledge

1994-96 Contributing Editor, Caribbean Studies Newsletter Caribbean Studies Association