



CSA News

CaribbeanStudiesAssociation.org

The Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Studies Association



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Join/Renew Membership

Please join CSA if you are not a member or if you have not paid your dues for 2015. You may also make a donation to CSA - all donations go directly to our programs.

» [JOIN TODAY](#)
» [UPDATE MEMBER INFO.](#)

Issue: December 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

HAPPY HOLIDAYS CSA

As we come in to the holiday season and get ready for 2016, this comes to wish CSA members and all those reading our newsletter: Happy Holidays!



Carole Boyce-Davies

Whatever you celebrate, enjoy the moment, good company, friends. Celebrate life, love and just being in this world!

In Caribbean locations, people always make time for good food, music, happiness, taking time out from busy working responsibilities, hosting family and friends, socializing at work, shopping and finding that last item to make the season just right.

As global citizens, we are often happily or unhappily in some other location than the ones in which we began, sometimes missing family and situations in our places of origin but also enjoying new friends and the new family ties that we have created.

But let us also, even as we celebrate, remember those in pain, in our world full of contradictions and do whatever we can to make life better for others. Many still have not realized the fullness of their professional or personal goals, but are still working towards them. Many have had their lives or family members cut short through various forms of brutality or other tragic circumstances. Some of us have lost good friends along the way. Many will be engaged in continued struggles, incomplete decolonizations, unfinished business of access still at many universities; continuing struggles for the value of black lives which reveal the depths of the histories which have produced us as global people.

Still, we bring this year successfully to a close and get ready for CSA-Haiti, 2016.

Beginning in January, each issue of the newsletter will be dedicated to providing knowledge about Haitian intellectuals and ongoing information about our CSA-Haiti 2016 Conference.

Getting Ready for Haiti!

Carole Boyce-Davies
President, CSA-2015-2016

CALL FOR PAPERS

- [Afro-Cuban Artists: A Renaissance](#)
- [The American Literature Association Conference](#)
- [Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean Region](#)
- [Special Issue of Social & Economic Studies on Reparation](#)
- [Discourses from Latin America and the Caribbean: Current Concepts and Challenges](#)



My holiday gift to you: A Black woman in an often not seen Rubens 1616 "Adoration of the Magi" that I was fortunate to view last week in a private collection in Aventura, Florida).

Photo credit: Carole Boyce Davies

CSA CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

CSA-Haiti 2016 Conference Hotel is the brand new Marriott, Port au Prince.

Conferees can begin to book their rooms.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further details



FEATURED CSA MEMBER COLUMN

We have created a segment which features CSA Members past and present who are advancing Caribbean Studies in various locations and in various ways. Please feel free to submit a CSA exponent who you think should be featured and send us a one page summary of that person's accomplishments with an accompanying photograph.

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIRS



Marie-Jose Nzengou-Tayo



Angelique V. Nixon

Report from CSA 2016 Program Co-Chairs

As we indicated in our most recent message to you all submissions for the CSA 2016 conference are closed since November 17, 2015. This two-day extension was warranted because of a glitch in the system. We are now in the review process and we ask for your patience as our panel of reviewers, and us, will be going through the numerous submissions. In the meantime, you can still make some amendments to your submission up to **December 15, 2015**.

To do so, just log into the Abstract Submission /Amend page and proceed to your abstract details to make amendments if needed. Please be reminded that the new system has generated passwords for you associated with the email address used for CSA business. If you cannot find the email sent to you during the submission process, please "click don't know password" and it will be send to you via email. If you had any trouble with the submission process, we invite you to return to your submission and make any needed edits/additions as soon as possible.

Also, if you did not have a chance to include your abstract in a second language of the association, we urge you to add this into your submission. This would contribute to the efforts of the Committee for Translinguistic Exchange and Translation, which works to develop a culture of multilingualism within the association.

Please note that you will not be able to change the "topic" selected during the submission process. If you have second thoughts about your topic choice and would like to switch to another topic, please send us the information at program.chair@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org and we will move your abstract to your new chosen topic **before December 15, 2015**.

CSA MEMBER FEEDBACK

Good Day Colleagues,

Thanks for sharing another copy of the newsletter.

The suggestions by the President for multiplying the CSA membership are good ones. If the objective is to have a larger CSA in the hope of having greater impact, then that's fine. However, if the objective is to reach a larger audience, then the association could take a more direct, and immediate, path by providing some value to that wider audience. Two suggestions:

1. Sharing open-source articles published by CSA members. Members can circulate such articles through their social networks, which could have the dual impact of informing a wider audience AND encouraging membership in CSA.
2. CSA should consider engaging in regional development initiatives other than Haiti. There are all sorts of global trade arrangements, shifts in approaches to development strategies, and governance arrangements either taking place in the Caribbean or that have major implications for Caribbean development. I don't see CSA contributing to those debates.

Regards.
Lloyd Gardner

LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE CHAIR - Dr. Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis



As promised, this month's focus is on the presiding chair of the local organizing committee, Mme. Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis. After studying abroad and obtaining her degree in Economics from Queens College of the City University of New York,

Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis returned to Haiti in 1976. She served in the private sector at the Bank of Nova Scotia as Credit Officer, then as Deputy-Director for Administration and Human Resources at a Development Finance Corporation (SOFIHDES), and Deputy Director of the National Airport Authority.

She has always devoted special attention to education, access to information, culture and sustainable development. In 1986 she became a national trainer in a major literacy campaign. In 1991, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide called on her to serve as a member of his private cabinet. In 1995 she founded the *Fondation Connaissance et Liberté – FOKAL* (www.fokal.org), a member of the Open Society Foundations – Soros foundations' network, which she directed for thirteen years. In September 2008, Michèle Pierre-Louis became Prime Minister of Haiti, only the second woman to hold this position. While Prime Minister, Pierre-Louis also served as Minister of Justice and Public Security. Upon leaving office in November 2009, she resumed her activities at FOKAL as President, coordinating special projects related to Haiti's post-earthquake reconstruction efforts.

In addition to her various commitments, Michèle Pierre-Louis has pursued scholarly interests. Since 1989, she has been a board member of "*Chemins Critiques*," an academic journal, in which she published several articles on politics, economics, arts and culture. She has also contributed to several books and academic journals, and teaches at the Université Quisqueya.

In 2010, Michèle Pierre-Louis became a member of the International Commission Against the Death Penalty, based in Spain (www.icdp.org), having been nominated by Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the then Prime Minister of Spain. She is also the Chair of an Independent Expert Group for the Least Developed Countries under the auspices of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) based in the United Kingdom. In 2014, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon nominated her as a member of a High Level Panel on a Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries. For the past three years, (2013, 2014 and 2015), she has served as a member jury for the WISE Award on education under the auspices of the Qatar Foundation.

She has received several awards and distinctions in her career among which a "Doctorate Honoris Causa" in Humanities from Saint Michael College, Vermont in 2004 and more recently (December 2014), a second one from the University of San Francisco. In 2010, she was a Resident Fellow at Harvard University Kennedy School of Government/Institute of Politics during the Fall semester.

CSA MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: Recent Publications

Beginning January, 2016, we will be creating a page to identify recent publications in Caribbean Studies by CSA members. Please send us the full bibliographic reference for your publications each month and we will carry them in our newsletter and website. Send to:

newseditor@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org

As always, for all program-related inquiries or suggestions, please contact us directly at: program.chair@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org.

*Marie-José Nzengou-Tayo
Angelique V. Nixon
Program Chairs, CSA 2015-2016*

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Happy End of Year greetings to you all!

The Caribbean Studies Association takes this opportunity to wish all of our members - Happy Holidays!

At this celebratory time of year we want to encourage you to take time out to celebrate yourself and take time for self-care. See this online article entitled "70 ways for self-care"

<http://www.abundancetapestry.com/70-ways-for-self-care/> As an academic discipline, self care is explained as any necessary human regulatory function which is under individual control, deliberate and self-initiated. (For further information see Alexander Segall and Jay Goldstein (1998). "Exploring the Correlates of Self Provided Health Care Behaviour". In Coburn, David; D'Arcy, Alex; Torrance, George Murray. *Health and Canadian Society: Sociological Perspectives*. University of Toronto Press. pp. 279–280).



Meagan Sylvester

As the year comes to an end, another one approaches! Whatever your brilliant plans for 2016, we urge you to keep close at hand the particulars about our 2016 conference where we will convene in Haiti. Check out the website <http://www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org> Our theme next year will be "Caribbean Global Movements : People, Ideas, Culture, Art and Economic Sustainability" and one of our many expected wins from this conference will be to distill myriad ideas on the intersectionality between the global and the local.

Feedback! Feedback! Feedback! We love hearing from you! Please feel free to email the Newsletter Editor directly at newseditor@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org to share your views, comments and the good news of your academic success with us.

Meagan Sylvester
Newsletter Editor
Caribbean Studies Association

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS

Nouvèl (Martinican French Creole)

Labad ka fété kawant-névan indépandans-li

Apwé an lon dominasyon anglé, Lababad trapé lindépandans-li le 30 novanm 1966. Missié Errol Barrow ki fondé politik-li «Democratic Labour Party » koté 1955. I dirijé péyi-ï kòm Prèmyé Minis ant 1961 à 1966. Pou popilasyon Lababad, sé missié Barrow ki mennen péyi-a vè chimin lindépandans. Pandan manda-ï, i rivé mété an plas sistèm sékirité sosyal épi an sistèm édikatif gwatui. Asou plan économik-la, sektè touristik-la dévolopé épi divini pwèmyé aktivité ekonomik di péyi-a. Lindistri kann a sik ka dékliné.



Hélène Zamor

An nou palé di sé événman kiltirel. Ni an lo aktivité ka pasé mwa novanm. Sé animatè radyo ka jwé mizik lokal kon Spouse, Calypso, Raggasoca épi dòt mizik di péyi-a. Bon mizik Spouse di Jacky Opel et des Draytons II ka tonbé. Sé pli jèn ka kouté Soca : Gabby, Red Pastic Bag, John King, Spice, Alison Hinds, Square One, Krossfyah, Bigie Irie épi Rihanna. Mé, mizik pa sèl bagay Babadyen enmen : téyat, dans, ar kilinè/vizuèl. Pwèmyé Festival kiltirel NIFCA (National Independence Festival of Creative Arts) koumansé épi missié Arden Clarke épi madanm-li Jeannette Layne-Clarke an 1973. Objektif-yo sé té mété sé mété artist lokal an valè. Byen ki yo mò, festival NIFCA ka kontinué épi sant kiltirel di Lababad (National Cultural Foundation). Existans institisyon ka viré a twa déseni. Sé li ki organizé gwan événman kon Crop Over, Soca Royale, NIFCA Gala. Lè 22 novembre 2015, gala NIFCA klotiré festival-la. Gala tala ka fèt gymnaz Sir Garfield Sobers chak lanné. Piblik vini wouè talan sé ti-manmay-la épi sé adilt-la. Ni an ti-fi yo ka kryé Tahira Gibbons ki anko an fwa impresyoné piblik-la épi piès de téyat-li intitilé «Who Mr Sargassum think he is » ? (Pou ki sa

Missié Sargasse ka pwan kò-ï ?).

Tou kon NIFCA, festival Gastronomi, di vin épi wonm (Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival) ka fèt mwa novanm tou. Lanné tala, ni an lo Barbadyen ki vi évènman tala. Sé té an lokazyon pou yo di manjé bon manjé épi bwè divi épi wonm. Mwen ka fini artik mwen épi sa ka pasé dèmen 30 novanm. Kè ni an défilé asou hipodròm Garrison Savannah. Sé présizéman koté tala ki Missié Errol Barrow épi larèn Elizabeth II wè drapo barbadyen an lévé lé 30 novanm 1966.

Je ne conclurai pas cet article sans dire qu'un défilé a lieu à l'hippodrome de Garrison Savannah. C'est précisément à cet endroit que la Reine Elizabeth II et le Premier Ministre Errol Barrow ont vu se dresser le drapeau barbadien le 30 novembre 1966.

Helene Zamor
French & Martinican Creole Language Sub-editor
CSA Newsletter

Español

CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO EN EL CARIBE, POLÍTICAS PARA LA MITIGACIÓN Y LA ADAPTACIÓN es el tema que ocupa este año a la Cátedra de Estudios del Caribe “Norman Girvan” que en coauspicio con el Instituto de Relaciones Internacionales “Raúl Roa García” (ISRI, CUBA) inaugurarán la IX Conferencia Internacional de Estudios Caribeños “Cambio Climático en el Caribe: Políticas para la adaptación y la mitigación” en La Habana, Cuba, del 7 al 11 de diciembre de 2015 y cuya inauguración oficial está prevista para el martes 8 de diciembre a las 3:00 p.m. en el Aula Magna de la Universidad de La Habana.



Vilma Diaz

Este año el cónclave se inicia con un momento especial. El Acto de imposición de la Medalla de la Amistad *post mortem* al Dr. Norman Paul Girvan, distinción que otorga el Consejo de Estado de la República de Cuba. Con esta acción y desarrollo de la conferencia, la Cátedra se propone dar continuidad, en el marco de la jornada Cuba-CARICOM, a los eventos que anualmente ha organizado cada diciembre desde su creación en el 2004. Como en años anteriores el evento será una excelente oportunidad para discutir e intercambiar ideas que contribuyan a la búsqueda de un mejor futuro para la región caribeña. Por eso, este año centra su atención en uno de los grandes desafíos actuales para el desarrollo integral y sustentable de las sociedades en el Caribe.

El cambio climático tiene efectos significativos en las actividades económicas, el bienestar de la población y los ecosistemas. La evidencia disponible actualmente sugiere que es prácticamente inevitable un aumento de 2°C de temperatura durante la primera mitad de este siglo, con sus consecuentes impactos climáticos adicionales. En este sentido, el Caribe durante este siglo deberá reconocer la importancia de adaptarse a las nuevas condiciones climáticas a modo de reducir los impactos climáticos y buscar, al mismo tiempo, transitar a una senda de desarrollo sostenible. La región enfrenta diversos riesgos, que deben ser administrados de forma apropiada para alcanzar un desarrollo sostenible durante la primera parte de este siglo en curso. Estos incluyen, el riesgo de crecimiento económico asociado a un “boom” exportador de materias primas que conlleva un ritmo de explotación de los recursos naturales que plantea un peligro para la sostenibilidad a largo plazo. A ello agregamos el daño colateral del crecimiento económico actual que implica una demanda creciente de energía, alimentos, materias primas o incluso presiones adicionales sobre el medio ambiente. Asimismo, las condiciones sociales, determinadas por la amplia proporción de población con alta vulnerabilidad puede poner en contingencia a este segmento de la población que implica la posibilidad real de regresar a condiciones de pobreza.

A estos temas estará dedicada este año la conferencia, saludamos dicha iniciativa y esperamos que sus resultados ayuden en el desarrollo de políticas que mitiguen el inevitable impacto ambiental.

Vilma Diaz
Spanish Language Sub-editor
CSA Newsletter

Français

La Barbade commémore son quarante-neuvième anniversaire d'indépendance

Après une longue période de colonisation anglaise, la Barbade est devenue indépendante en 1966. Monsieur Errol Barrow, fondateur du parti «Democratic Labour Party» en 1955, est devenu Premier Ministre de la Barbade de 1961 à 1966. Pour les Barbadiens, c'est Errol Barrow qui a conduit le pays vers



Hélène Zamor

l'indépendance. Durant son mandat, il a introduit la sécurité sociale et un système scolaire gratuit à tous les niveaux (primaire, secondaire et tertiaire). Sur le plan économique, le secteur touristique s'est développé et s'est imposé au fil du temps alors que l'industrie sucrière a progressivement perdu de son essor. Aujourd'hui, le tourisme demeure la principale activité économique de la Barbade.

Parlons un peu des manifestations culturelles se déroulant annuellement au mois de novembre à la Barbade. Les animateurs des stations de radio n'hésitent pas à retourner dans le temps pour permettre aux Barbadiens de savourer à nouveau leur Spouge, Calypso, Raggasoca et d'autres genres musicaux qu'ils connaissent. Par exemple, les anciennes générations apprécient le Spouge de Jacky Opel et des Draytons II. Les plus jeunes ne se lassent pas d'entendre les icônes du Soca et de RNB: Gabby, Red Pastic Bag, John King, Spice, Alison Hinds, Square One, Krossfyah, Bigie Irie and Rihanna. Cependant, la musique n'est pas le seul domaine auquel s'intéressent les Barbadiens. Le théâtre, la danse, les arts culinaires, littéraires et visuels ont aussi leur grande importance. Les concerts religieux sont organisés. Le festival de NIFCA (National Independence Festival of Creative Arts) a été créé par Arden Clarke et son épouse Jeannette Layne-Clarke en 1973. L'objectif de ces deux pionniers était de permettre aux artistes locaux de se mettre en valeur. L'organisation de NIFCA est prise en charge par le centre culturel de la Barbade (National Cultural Foundation). Cette institution dont l'existence remonte à trois décennies s'occupe de mettre en place divers événements culturels de grande envergure tels que le Crop Over, Soca Royale, NIFCA Gala. Le 22 novembre 2015, le gala de NIFCA a clôturé le festival. Ce gala se déroule tous les ans au gymnase de Sir Garfield Sobers^[1]. Les Barbadiens sont venus découvrir et apprécier le talent des écoliers et des adultes. La petite Tahira Gibbons a encore une fois impressionné le public avec sa pièce de théâtre intitulée «Who Mr Sargassum think he is » ? (Monsieur Sargasse se prend pour qui ?).

Tout comme NIFCA, le festival de la Gastronomie, du Vin et du Rhum (Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival) continue de se dérouler annuellement au mois de novembre. Cette année, de nombreux Barbadiens n'ont pas manqué cette occasion pour déguster de bons mets et de boire du vin et du rhum. Je ne conclurai pas cet article sans dire qu'un défilé aura lieu demain^[2] à l'hippodrome de Garrison Savannah. C'est précisément à cet endroit que la Reine Elizabeth II et le Premier Ministre Errol Barrow ont vu se dresser le drapeau barbadien le 30 novembre 1966.

[\[1\]](#) Ancien joueur de Cricket

[\[2\]](#) Lundi 30 novembre 2015

Helene Zamor
French & Martinican Creole Language Sub-editor
CSA Newsletter

Papiamentu

E tópiko di Zwarte Piet a bira un suheto disputá den e delaster añanan ku e krelementu did protestanan tur aña. Ounke tabata tin protestanan kaba kontra e figura di Zwarte Piet, den e ultimo añanan un konsiencia di e aspektonan rasista di Zwarte Piet a subi. Pero pa wak kritikamente e oposishon kontra Zwarte Piet, nos tambe mester tene kuenta di e ròl komplasiente di e hulandes den kolonialismo. E dos suhetonan ta mará huntu i Zwarte Piet no por i no mester sin e kontekto ei.



Guido M. Rojer, Jr.

E vershon moderno di Zwarte Piet a wòrdú introdudí dor di "Sint Nicolaas en Zijn Knecht", un buki di Jan Shenckman publiká den e aña 1850. E karakterisashon di Zwarte Piet a kambia duranti e añanan pa su forma presente minstral ku ta representá un persona blanku ku su kara pintá pretu, su lepnan pintá kòrá, un peluka di Afro di krùl, rènchi orea, i un bistí bieu ku ta parse ku e ta di era di Renaissance. Su apariensia ta karakterístiko di imagen stereotípiko di hende desendiente Afrikano. Ounke e aspektonan visual di Sinterklaas i Zwarte Piet a kambia duranti e añanan, e imagen aki ta esun ku a keda konstant.

Loke ta e kambio mas krítiko ta e storia patras di Sinteklaas i Zwarte Piet. Mayoria di hende ku ta pa Zwarte Piet (inkluí e organisadónan di e fiesta) ta preferá pa usa e storia ku Zwarte Piet a bai den e chiminea promé. Dor di eseí, su kuero a bira pretu dor di e shinishi di e chiminea. Pero no tin niun splikashon pa di kon su paña a keda limpi, su lepnan a bira kòrá,

òf kon su kabei a kambia mágicamente fei kabei fini pa un di krùl. Ademas, nan a tambe kambia ku e no ta trese un basura ku un saku di kus pa hiba e mala mucha Spaña. Enbes di eseí, e ta duna mangel i e ta baila prèt i kanta kantika pa sigurá ku e muchanan ta keda kontentu. E ta un manipulashon inherentemente i peligroso pa kambia un karakter ku tabata siniestro pa un karakter ku ta mustra mas djòli. Enbes di eksaminá kon e representashon ta afektá hende, e boluntat pa bai asina leu pa kambia su konduktá (no su apariensia) pa laga mucha sinti mas felis p'é ta mustra kon pervasivo supremesia blanku ta. Apoyadónan di Zwarte Piet ta usa esaki pa mustra kon "mucha ta stima Zwarte Piet", un karakter ku tabata spanta mucha, pa oumentá e idea ku Zwarte Piet ta djis un parti di un fiesta pa mucha, e no ta un karikatura rasista.

Tambe, loke ta falta den e kombersashon ta e insistensia pa lubidá e pasado. Michel-Rolph Trouillot ta sugerí ku historia, hopi bes dor di bista blanku, ta wòrdú kontá dor di punto di bista oropeo mientras na e mes un tempu ta wòrdú laga afó e perspectiva di hende di koló (1995: 6-8). Na e manera aki, e memoria kolektivo i e doló di nan ekperensiá ta wòrdú hasi inválido ora nan purba di splika e orígen rasismo struktural di Zwarte Piet. Dor di esaki, e tambe ta difisil pa desmantelá e legado di kolonialismo. E ta bira mas kreibel ora tin un insistensia di un par di hende desendiente Afrikano (i otro hende di koló) ta kompletamente aseptá i asta promové Zwarte Piet. Esaki ta evidente den Aruba ku Kòrsou su partisipashon den e *intocht* òf yegada di Sinterklaas. Riba e islanaan, hende di koló ta skohe pa pinta nan kara pretu i reforsá papiamentu figurativonan di komplisidat. E presentashon, manifestá den un mentalidat kolonial, ta fortalesé e noshon ku si hende pretu ta bon ku e representashon, no tin niun daño berdat den e presentashon.

Ounke tin un konsiensa di sklabitut i su efektuá riba e islanaan, no tabata tin un diskushon grandi tokanti rasismo den e Reino Hulandes i kon e la manifestá den e reino. Dor di esaki, e representashon di Zwarte Piet mas tanto no ta wòrdú retá pa dékada (ku e eksepshon di un pokó hende vocal). Esaki a kuminsa kambia den e añanan resien dor di e protestanan ku ta bira mas grandi kada aña na Hulanda Asta Kòrsou tabata tin su promé protesta ofisial den e simannan ku a pasa. Segun e protestanan aki ta sigi krese, e ta tempu pa kuminsa wak kritikamente kon rasismo structural ta funshoná den e Reino Hulandes i kuminsa analísá i kibra e noshon ku rasismo ta un konsepto stranhero (na Mèrka so) i e representashon di Zwarte Piet ta un di hopi maneranan ku opreshon ta persistente ainda na Hulanda.

English Translation

The topic of Zwarte Piet has become a highly contested subject over the past few years with protests growing yearly. Although there have been protests against the blackface figure in previous decades, the last few years has really seen a surge in awareness of the racist aspects that Zwarte Piet embodies. But in order to critically view the opposition to Zwarte Piet, the complicit role of the Dutch in colonialism must also be taken into account. These two issues are inextricably linked and Zwarte Piet cannot and should not be devoid of that context.

The modern version of Zwarte Piet was first introduced through Jan Shenckman's book published in 1850 entitled "Sint Nicolaas en Zijn Knecht". The characterization of Zwarte Piet changed over the years to his current minstrel form depicting a white person in blackface, with red lips, a curly Afro wig, earrings, and an antiquated outfit reminiscent of the Renaissance era. In short, his appearance is characteristic of the stereotypical images of people of African descent. Although the visual aspects of Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet have changed over the years, this imagery is the one that has remained constant.

What has been the most critical change is the backstory. Most proponents (including organizers of the event) prefer to use the story of Zwarte Piet coming down the chimney first therefore his blackened skin is the result of the ashes in the chimney. This does not account for his clean clothes, his red lips, or how his hair magically changes to a curlier texture. Moreover, he no longer carries a broom and a burlap sack to take the naughty kids to Spain. Instead, he gives out candy and performs silly dances and songs to ensure happiness in the children. There is something inherently manipulative and dangerous about changing a formerly sinister character to appear intrinsically light hearted. Rather than examining the effects that the depiction has, the willingness to go to great lengths to change his demeanor (not his appearance) in order to make children like the character more is telling of how pervasive white supremacy is. Proponents use this notion to purport that "children love Zwarte Piet", a formerly hated and feared character, in order to bolster their platform that Zwarte Piet is a harmless part of a children's party, not a racist caricature.

What also is lacking in the conversation is the insistence on erasing the past. Michel-Rolph Trouillot suggests that history, often through the white gaze, is often told through Westernized accounts while simultaneously leaving out the perspectives of people of color (1995: 6-8). In this sense, their collective memories and pain often becomes invalidated as they try to explain the roots of structural racism in such a controversial character as Zwarte Piet. Through this, the legacy of colonialism is also hard to dismantle. This lays credibility to

the insistence of a number of people of African descent (and other people of color) who wholeheartedly accept and even promote Zwarte Piet. This is evident in Aruba and Curaçao's participation in Sinterklaas's intocht or arrival. Here, people of color choose to blacken their faces and reinforce tropes of black complicity. This performance, manifested in a colonial mentality, strengthens ideas that if Black people are fine with this depiction, then there is no real harm in it being performed.

While there is an awareness of slavery and its effects on the islands, there hasn't been a critical discussion in the Kingdom of the Netherlands on racism and how it is manifested within the kingdom. This, in turn, allowed for depictions of Zwarte Piet to go mostly unchallenged (with exception of a vocal few) for decades. In recent years this has changed with protests growing bigger every year in the Netherlands and Curaçao having its first official protest in the past few weeks. As these protests continue, it is also time to begin to critically look at structural racism within the Kingdom of the Netherlands and start to deconstruct the idea that racism is mainly a foreign concept (primarily in America) and that the depiction of Zwarte Piet is one of the many ways that oppression in the Netherlands is still persistent.

Guido M. Rojer, Jr.
Dutch and Papiamentu Language Sub-editor
CSA Newsletter

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER

This month we have the third contribution in our inspiring feature series on graduate students and their work. If you're a grad student who'd like to contribute please reach me at lrpragg@yorku.ca.

My name is Kaneesha Cherelle Parsard. I was born to recent immigrants from Jamaica in Queens, New York and grew up on Long Island. Currently, I am a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies and African American Studies and a certificate candidate in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Yale University.

My dissertation, "Improper Dwelling: Space, Sexuality, and Colonial Modernity in the British West Indies, 1838-1962," examines three dwelling spaces in which formerly enslaved African and indentured Indian laborers mixed: the landscape and new settlements of the post-emancipation period, the barrack yard of the 1920s and 1930s, and the house in the pre-independence period. I read literary and visual forms in conversation with historical documents to consider these natural and built environments from the standpoint of the working people who inhabited and shaped them through their labor. These spaces are "anti-picturesque," I argue, because they are disorderly: the landscape is overgrown, the dwellings are comprised of scrap materials, and their residents subsist on informal economies.



Lauren Pragg

These scholarly interests grew out of a desire to think critically about relations between Africans and Indians, the interdependence of slavery and indentureship in the Caribbean—and how these legacies manifest in social space at a particular historical moment.

Outside of my academic work, I am at my best when I am creative—I write poetry—and taking care of myself. Previously, I taught in culturally relevant youth programs in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and New Haven, Connecticut and organized against campus sexual assault. My partner is also a graduate student and we leave our evenings and weekends free for exercise, movies, and reading and talking about left politics and feminism. I also love to cook and bake with my loved ones. Recently, my mother and I stumbled upon a delicate balance of all-purpose, coconut, and tapioca flours that makes excellent fried dumplings!

Finally, CSA has been a critical part of my development. I first attended the meetings in Barbados and Curaçao as an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania. At that time, I traveled and presented with a cohort of other Penn undergraduates, many of whom are my closest friends. The atmosphere of the meeting was intimate yet open, encouraging faculty, graduate students, artists, and activists to engage common questions. Since my undergraduate years, I have attended the meetings in Grenada and Mexico, meeting new mentors and friends along the way. Looking forward to learning from you all in Haiti this coming year!

Lauren Pragg

FEATURED CSA MEMBER

DR. CLAIRE ALICIA NELSON - FOUNDER OF CARIBBEAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Dr. Claire Nelson is the architect of the successful Campaign to declare June as National Caribbean American Heritage Month in the U.S. and the visionary behind such flagship events as the White House Caribbean American Community Briefings; the Annual Legislative Forum on Capitol Hill; Invest Caribbean; and the Caribbean American Heritage Awards.



Dr. Claire Nelson

She has achieved these major accomplishments for the Caribbean Diaspora in the U.S. as founder and President of the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS). Under her leadership the non-profit community think/do-tank, founded in 1993, has become known as the leading Caribbean American advocacy group in Washington DC, and has succeeded in placing the Caribbean American agenda on the national policy stage. More recently, ICS has launched Ignite Caribbean: Let All Ideas Contend as a space for gathering emerging thought leaders and inter-generational dialogue on the future of the Caribbean.

Dr. Claire A. Nelson is also the Ideation Leader of The Futures Forum, which employs the disciplines of strategic foresight and sustainability engineering to effect sustainable design, planning and management of projects and policies across a variety of sectors.

Dr. Nelson has enjoyed over thirty years career in international development, and was the trailblazer for placing the topic of social exclusion due to race and ethnicity on the agenda of the Washington international finance institutions. She pioneered the IDB's work on development with equity and as a result of her pioneering leadership, was honored with the prestigious Ortiz Mena Award at the Inter-American Development Bank in 2010.

Dr. Nelson holds a Bachelors and Masters in Industrial Engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo and Purdue University, and a Doctorate in Engineering Management from the George Washington University, and is an inductee in several Engineering Honor Societies. She was named an Outstanding Alumni of Purdue University School of Industrial Engineering in 2013. A winner of several awards and honors, Dr. Nelson has received several commendations for leadership in the US Congressional Record and was named a WHITE HOUSE CHAMPION OF CHANGE in 2012.

Contributed by Carole Boyce-Davies