

CONTENTS

Message from the Editor	1
Message from the President	6
Message from the Vice President	7
Message from the Local Organizing Committee	10
Message from the Language Sub-Editors	12
French	12
Spanish	14
Papiamentu	16
Virgin Islander	17
Graduate Student Corner	20
CSA Member Highlight	23
Scholarship in Sexualities	24
Caribbean Scholarship	26
Game Changer Initiative	27
New Book	29
Your Commentary	30
Special Announcements	33



CSA 2021

Identity Politics, Industry, Ecology and the Intelligent Economy in Caribbean Societies



May 31 to June 4, 2021 | The Pegasus Hotel
Georgetown, Guyana

The Official Newsletter of the Caribbean Studies Association - June 2020 Edition

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

CSA Statement on Systemic Racism and Violence

Without any equivocation, the [Executive Council](#) of the [Caribbean Studies Association](#) affirms that Black Lives Matter. We denounce institutionalized racism, white supremacy, police brutality, and the systemic social injustices that have led to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, and many other Black people in the United States and globally.



Meagan Sylvester

CSA partnership with US Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana

In celebration of Caribbean-American Heritage Month, the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) and the United States Embassy, Georgetown Guyana will jointly host a three-part webinar series entitled, "Caribbean-American connections, social justice and shared dreams". As you may know, June marks Caribbean-American Heritage Month in the USA. CSA also generally hosts its annual conference in June but was forced to postpone this year's conference due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Since the CSA 2020 conference was slated to be held in Georgetown Guyana the Embassy of the USA in Guyana has sought to partner with the CSA to fill this gap and simultaneously mark Caribbean-American Heritage. Although this webinar series does not replace the CSA conference for 2020, we hope that it will provide a forum for fruitful discussions for CSA members, friends and Caribbeanists from across the globe, particularly at this tumultuous time.

The following list outlines the three webinar titles and dates:

"Caribbean-American connections, social justice and shared dreams".

- 16 June 2020, 2.00 pm (EST) - Webinar 1: Caribbean – American cultural connections: cultural forms, cultural industries and social justice.
- 23 June 2020, 2.00 pm (EST) - Webinar 2: Caribbean contributions to race, gender, sexuality and social justice in the USA and the Caribbean.
- 30 June 2020, 2.00 pm (EST) - Webinar 3: The Caribbean diaspora's role in building just Caribbean and American futures.

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@CaribbeanSAssoc

Website: CaribbeanStudiesAssociation.org

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- Raymond Laureano
- Myriam Moise

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR cont'd



National Caribbean American Heritage Month



Webinar Series

"Caribbean-American Connections, Social Justice and Shared Dreams"



PANELISTS

June 16: Caribbean - American cultural connections: cultural forms, cultural industries and social justice:

- Meagan Sylvester - Senior Lecturer, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, Trinidad and Tobago
- Keisha Wiel - PhD Candidate in Anthropology, Temple University
- Dr. Chenzira Davis-Kahina - Director, V.I. Caribbean Cultural center, University of the Virgin Islands

June 23: Caribbean contributions to race, gender sexuality and social justice in the USA and the Caribbean:

- Dr. Angelique Nixon - Lecturer & Graduate Studies Coordinator, Institute for Gender & Development Studies, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago
- Prof. Carole Boyce-Davies - Professor of Africana Studies and English, Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University
- Prof. Linden Lewis - Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Bucknell University

June 30: The Caribbean diaspora's role in building just Caribbean and American future:

- Dr. Raymond Laureano - Researcher, Latin America Center of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies (University of Denver); the Institute of Caribbean Studies (University of Puerto Rico); and the Jesús T. Piñero Library & Social Research Center (Puerto Rico's Ana G. Méndez University)
- Dr. Joan Phillips - Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados
- Prof. Patsy Lewis - Visiting Professor, International and Public Affairs, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs; Interim Director, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), Brown University

Register today: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fc2m2nZZSKOwwrkywmQYA



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR cont'd

Interviewing the Caribbean (IC) – Call for Entries

In this month of June, The CSA celebrates with The Interviewing the Caribbean Journal, a publication under the auspices of The UWI Press at The University of the West Indies, Mon, Jamaica as it has issued a call for entries for its Winter 2020. The main theme of this issue is Caribbean Music and Musicians.

For this special issue Journal Founder and Editor Opal Palmer Adisa will be co-editing with Meagan Sylvester, CSA Newsletter Editor.



Opal Palmer Adisa



Meagan Sylvester

Interviewing the Caribbean – Call for Entries

Interviewing Caribbean (IC) is a creative peer-reviewed composition of poetry, non-fiction and the visual arts in all media that celebrates everything Caribbean. Founded by the exceptionally talented playwright, cultural activist and professor of gender studies Opal Palmer Adisa. The journal showcases Caribbean intellectuals, writers, artists, culture and artistic expressions at home and in the diaspora.



CALL FOR ENTRIES:

Interviewing the Caribbean - Winter 2020

Interviewing the Caribbean (IC) — seeks poems, stories, creative non-fiction, and visual art in all media that celebrate Caribbean life. Caribbean artists at home and in the Diaspora are invited to participate.

Topic for Winter 2020: Caribbean Music and Musicians (Co-edited with Meagan Sylvester)

Seeking poems, stories, articles that explore and examine all aspects of Caribbean music - mento, calypso, reggae, dancehall, bachata, merengue, palo, momba, denba, baithak, gana, bouyon, cadence-lypso, chutney, soca, compas, jing ping, parang, pichakaree, punta, ragga, reggaeton, salsa, and zouk; interviews of Caribbean Musicians at home and throughout the Diaspora. Send work that break boundaries, climb trees and dive deep to the bottom on the ocean floor.

Submission Guideline

Send work as an MS Word document or images as a TIF, 300 dpi (or higher) resolution to: interviewingthecaribbean@gmail.com

Works are accepted June 1–September 18, 2020.

Please include a 5-line bio (NO MORE), and a photo of contributor (TIF/300 resolution).

Categories and Eligibility

- Poetry
- Fiction
- Articles

All writing for IC should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in an MS Word (.doc) file. For poetry, submit 3-5 poems in a single document. For all other writing you may submit up to 2,500 words.

- **Visual Art (including photography)**

All images for IC should be submitted in TIF format (300 dpi or higher). You may submit 3-6 TIFs.

We only accept online submissions. Only submit, original and unpublished manuscripts. No previously published anywhere—including your personal website, blog, or social media.

IC will retain the rights to your work for 90 days after publication, after which rights revert to you. If the work you publish with us is used in the future in a collection or elsewhere, we would appreciate an acknowledgment as is customary. We try to respond as quickly as possible, but in general, allow 90 days.

We appreciate your feedback and suggestions, send comments to: interviewingthecaribbean@gmail.com

Please visit Facebook and join our page: www.facebook.com/interviewingthecaribbean

Founder/Editor:
Opal Palmer Adisa

Creative Director:
Shere Jones

Publisher:
The University of the West Indies Press



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR cont'd

Member Highlight - New Professorship

Prof. Carole Boyce Davies, CSA President 2015-2016, has been appointed the Frank H.T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters at Cornell University, effective 1 July, 2020, a professorship named after the 9th and longest serving president of Cornell.

As part of a celebrated and illustrious career, Carole Boyce-Davies has held distinguished professorships at a number of other universities such as the Herskovits Professorship at Northwestern University (2000) and was appointed to the Kwame Nkrumah Chair at the University of Ghana, Legon (2015). She has also been the recipient of The Franz Fanon Lifetime Achievement Award from the Caribbean Philosophical Association and the Distinguished Africanist Award from the New York State African Studies Association.



Read more in the Member Highlight segment.

Haitian poet commemorates George Floyd

The CSA takes this opportunity to share the perspective of the French Caribbean on the recent murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, following the deadly actions of four *former* Minneapolis police officers. We share the memory of George Floyd, expressed with the words of Haitian poet James Noël. The poem is entitled:

BLACK PRAYER

(To the memory of George Floyd)

Translated by Nathan H. Dize, Nashville

James Noël, born in 1978 in Haiti, is an award-winning writer and the author of fifteen books. A former Villa Medici fellow, his poems have been translated into several languages. Leader of the journal *IntranQu'illités*, he also edited *Éditions Points - Seuil*, an anthology of contemporary Haitian poetry bringing 73 poets together. In 2017, he published his first novel, *Belle merveille*, whose German translation the Internationaler Literaturpreis Prize from the KWW, Berlin in June 2020. Les Éditions Diable Vauvert published his latest book, *Brexit suivi de la migration des murs*.

About *IntranQu'illités*: <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/james-noel/blog/070520/intranquillites-manifeste-pour-un-nouveau-monde>

Your Commentary

Afua Cooper a Jamaican by birth who resides in Canada shares her commentary, "Canada, COVID and Police Brutality: The Experience of The Black Community".

Want to know more about the author, see below:

Professor Naa Afua Dadesen Cooper is Cross-appointed to: Depts. of History, and Sociology and Social Anthropology, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. As part of her wider portfolio, Cooper is Poet Laureate: Halifax Regional Municipality, Immediate Past President: Black Canadian Studies Association, Chair: Lord Dalhousie Scholarly Panel on Slavery and Race, Lead Author: *Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race* (2019), Founder: Dalhousie Black Faculty and Staff Caucus, Honouree: Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission Award for Contributions to Education, *The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Slavery in Canada, and the Burning of Old Montreal* (HarperCollins, and the University of Georgia Press).



La Pendaison d'Angelique (Les Editions de L'Homme)

<https://vimeo.com/22592082>

My Name is Phillis Wheatley: A Story of Slavery and Freedom

<http://blackhalifax.com/portfolio/15-ships-to-sierra-leone/>

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR cont'd



New Papiamento sub-editor

The CSA is pleased to introduce Dr. Antonio Carmona Baez as the new Papiamento sub-editor. Currently, he is the President of the University of St. Martin. Born in New York City, Antonio Carmona Báez is a Puerto Rican political scientist specialised in International Relations and the Political Economy of Development. In 1994, he received a BA from Middlebury College, Vermont, USA where he studied International Politics and Spanish and Latin American Literature. Thereafter, he pursued his graduate degree (MA) in International Relations at the University of Amsterdam. In 2002, he earned his doctorate degree from the same university in International Relations, upon having written his dissertation *Global Trends and the Remnants of Socialism: Socio-economic and Political Restructuring in Cuba*.

CSA Communications - You can find us at:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CaribbeanStudiesAssociation/

Website: www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org

Archived copies of our Newsletters at: www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/e-newsletter-archive/

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Tavis D. Jules

CSA Statement on Systemic Racism and Injustice

Without any equivocation, the [Executive Council](#) of the [Caribbean Studies Association](#) affirms that Black Lives Matter. We denounce institutionalized racism, white supremacy, police brutality, and the systemic social injustices that have led to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, and many other Black people in the United States and globally.

After each violent killing of unarmed Black people, there is often an outcry. However, enough is enough: words are not sufficient. We need substantive, thoughtful and consistent action. We call on global academic organizations such as CSA, and other professional communities to go on record condemning police brutality, racial prejudice, and systemic inequality, to critically investigate the numerous ways in which racism manifests itself within and is maintained by our institutions, and to find ways to apply pressure for reform through actions such as boycotts and divestments.

We also note the connection between systemic racism and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black communities. This is why we must all seize on this moment to focus our efforts on dismantling systems of oppression and inequality. We stand united with those who are protesting, and those who envision a more just and sustainable world in which everyone can live with dignity.

We welcome any suggestions for how CSA can play a part in this movement. If you would like to share ideas, please contact the CSA Secretariat at secretariat@caribbeanstudiesassociation.org

Additionally, please consider sharing the resources below:

- [10 Ways For Non-Black Academics to Value Black Lives](#)
- [15 Social Justice Organizations to Support](#)
- [26 ways to be in the struggle beyond the streets](#)
- [75 things white people can do to support racial justice](#)
- [Anti-Racism Resources](#)
- [31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#)
- [Resources for talking about race racism, and racialized violence with kids](#)
- [Scaffolded Anti-Racist Resources](#)

Tavis Jules
President CSA 2019-2020

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



Eris Schoburgh

TREAT US WITH RESPECT!

Fellow Members
Greetings!

Each of us, to varying degrees, should be expressing a sigh of relief as life transitions into a new normal that allows us time outside of our homes. Nevertheless, personal health and safety and that of family remain

our main priority.

The last few days have been quite painful for me and have prompted serious reflection on my part about the situation of people of African descent in the West. And the question I ponder is: *Why in a 21st century world are we still fighting to be treated with dignity and respect?* Perhaps the most profound acknowledgment is that at times the status of citizen – a legitimate member of a political community – offers little protection for the person of African descent, especially those with more melanin.

In May's edition of our Newsletter I raised the matter of the catalytic function of grassroots organizing/informal networks in the creation of the new economy in the post-COVID 19 era on the premise of an understandably weak show of force of these networks during the global pandemic, especially in our Region, and the vulnerabilities that have been exposed. I posited that: *Community organizing/informal networks have the potential to change local social and economic realities...* and that *grassroots organizing has proved to be the most agile in responding to social injustice and economic inequalities...* and that *these networks can take activities to scale effortlessly with the adoption of new media*. This position was shaped from an observation of the non-representation of particular groups in public services provision e.g. safe housing, potable water and to some extent good quality education. It seems now that the association I made between grassroots organizing/informal networks and improved welfare of a community/group might have been prescient.

For the ghastly murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis has illustrated that community organizing/informal networks are not methodologies that remain in the annals of history; they are relevant now and at any juncture that regimes of oppression and injustice are evident. In fact my intention was to continue the conversation by examining the role of formal structures like subnational govern-

ments as a critical dimension of the ecosystem of aggregation of interests in the new economy being constructed. But alas! It would be remiss of me as a woman of colour, and a political scientist by way of studies of history not to add my voice to the discourse about the relations of power that impact people of colour disproportionately negatively.

I must state clearly however, that the opinion expressed in this insert is solely mine and is not representative of the position of The Caribbean Studies Association.

George Floyd's murder is appalling but beyond that, it must be seen as symptomatic of a system designed to dehumanize people of African descent, in support of an economic model that has fueled capitalist expansion, but which accords no place for us. Our ancestors paid the price of their existence in a system of servitude; yet their offspring still face insurmountable obstacles in their attempts to participate in the economic outputs of these countries that benefited from the appropriation of resources from the African continent and from other countries that were colonized. Reason being, the emancipation project was not real. One cannot be emancipated with no means of livelihood. Thus the emancipation project was simply giving ex-slaves the option of deciding which 'master' to continue to serve. Lorna Goodison, The Poet Laureate of Jamaica says it best in ***Testimony of First of August Negroes: the Last to Be Set Free***

*I tell my friend Quasheba, stop up you ears with this beeswax,
so that the bantering song of all who get fi leave scotch free
don't mad we who still bind to cane piece. We who get left back
because spiteful Massa say: 'Emancipation is like an aged white
rum—so strong not every Negro can imbibe at one time, lest they
grow drunken and stagger'. So him water down freedom, share
it out little little and what left in a barrel bottom is fi me and you.*

Goodison's depiction of the concept of emancipation is spot-on. Today the 'master' has changed form but the goal remains the same – capitalist accumulation for the enjoyment of European descendants.

The pattern of oppression and exploitation of black people has continued even after three hundred years of a system of chattel slavery. And though many plantations are replaced by multinational corporations, and in a more global economy world megacities beckon the educated of small island states developing states (SIDs) like those in the Caribbean to come and enjoy 'a better life' which we

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT cont'd

do, on account of the unequal distribution of public goods that is our lot back home, which mirrors the hierarchy of access globally, economic emancipation still escapes a significant proportion of our people who are relegated largely to socio-geographic spaces in developed countries where public services provision is also unequally distributed. And those whose participation in the political economy of these countries are less encumbered, have described countless instances when they are forced to confront questions of *belongingness* on account of their ethnicity or their country of origin, in order to access some of these services.

One should not be alarmed by the fact that in a 21st century world, someone of a different race who is authorized to protect the 'system' of accumulation feels empowered to place his knee on a black man's neck and keep it there for nine minutes until his demise, in full view of onlookers. The use of the knee or any part of one's lower extremity is not accidental. No action taken by 'the guardians of the palace' is accidental. The use of the foot (knee) symbolizes a power play between dominant and dominated forces. And aside from the fact that the use of the knee to inflict such lethal force is the act of an evil mind, it was meant to make a statement about the *nothingness* of the black man/person in certain geographic, political, and socioeconomic spaces. Similarly, the actions taken by the government of the United Kingdom over a period of time to detain and deport persons who had **legitimate cause** to be in that country and which emerged as the Windrush Scandal of 2018, is another illustration of the perceived *nothingness* that is ascribed to people of African descent in developed nations of the West.

My point is this, people of African descent have never been permitted the luxury of relaxing in socio-geographic spaces that they helped to build through the sweat and tears of their ancestors and through their own contribution. We continue to be robbed of our earnings evidenced in the fact that persons have been deported from these countries with absolutely nothing. This is an immoral act. The *isms* of multiracial societies have contained the codes and symbols of racism, colourism, and classism that, along with micro aggression in relational exchanges have been constant companions of the black person's experience at home and abroad. Importantly codes and symbols are imperative to understanding one's placement in a political community. *Damn* the black person who doesn't understand them.

Current events suggest that the idea of *white is right and black must stand back* can no longer be countenanced. Bob's Marley's song **War** paraphrased here is appropriate:

*Until the philosophy
Which hold one race superior and another
Inferior
Is finally
And permanently
Discredited
And abandoned
Everywhere is war*

*That until there no longer
First class and second class citizens of any nation
Until the color of a man's skin
Is of no more significance than the color of his eyes
Me say war
That until the basic human rights
Are equally guaranteed to all
Without regard to race
Dis a war*

I am by no means suggesting violence as a solution. Rather I am recommending *war* on established ideas of change - a revolution in how we think about ourselves as a people and an economic group. We certainly cannot continue to contribute our labour and expertise and accept the kind of treatment that has been meted out to us. It is now nine (9) years since the United Nations has designated 2011 as the year of African Descendants. It is not abundantly clear to me how this designation has advanced our situation. Which means that we need to rethink what we are doing NOW to make our strategies relevant to OUR needs. And what seems relevant to me, is socio-economic empowerment of our people.

Which point takes me to the church as an institution of import in the lives of people of African descent: The church should feel a compulsion to adopt a new theology - a liberation theology - in light of recent events, to assist our people to see themselves as economic beings as much as they are spiritual beings, having the capacity for self-reliance and self-determination. For those churches that have begun the process of economic empowerment of our people by establishing and supporting start-ups - scale-up your efforts; for those churches that have not started - get with the programme.

It is an opportune moment as well for our own law enforcement agencies in the Region, to effect the necessary changes to the manner in which they interact with us. This is a call to action for policy makers to hasten the process of reform and abolish the vestiges of oppression that have carried over from the period of slavery.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT cont'd

No one should be denied a dignified *livity* because he/she is from a different country, a different part of town, a different race, a different class or a different gender. Such behaviors smack of barbarism and fly in the face of the constitutional provisions of a liberal democracy that many countries in the West claim they are. We will not be silent or adopt a non-action stance when our brothers and sisters are being killed simply because of the colour of their skin. For in the words of Claude McKay in his poem ***If We Must Die***

*If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursèd lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
O kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!*

For those countries, that have used their archaic laws to block procedures that enable integration of diverse interests into their societies... the message is clear...there is no equal citizenship. So if our people do not belong among you, then the reasonable action to take is to return the resources that you commandeered throughout the period of exploitation and compensate us for what you have stolen to permit us to build our own economies. You own nothing! Your economies have flourished on the resources of First Nations that you continue to marginalize individually and collectively by your malevolent schemes in fear of a reversal in the structure of power.

Pay us what you owe us! Reparations now...MUST be the call of people in the African Diaspora. The Reparations Project and a fundamental rethinking of the source of our power represent the essence of our freedom from oppression and our own sovereignty.

I sincerely hope that from henceforth all the persons of African descent who have suffered injustice everywhere and have lost their lives at evil's pleasure have not done so in vain.

Much Blessings.
Eris Schoburgh
Vice President CSA 2019-2020

MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The national situation in Guyana continues to remain uncertain. Both of the major issues that have been determining life in the country are still present and on-going. The number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase – as of June 4th 2020 there were 153 known cases in the country, compared to 93 cases on May 8th 2020. However, there was better news with regard to deaths from the disease – two additional deaths have been recorded since May 8th. There were 10 deaths between March 11th (when the first recorded death from the virus occurred) and May 8th 2020 (WHO data).

The Emergency Measures introduced to reduce the spread of the virus have been extended to 17th June 2020. This means that a curfew has continued to be in effect and non-essential businesses/services have continued to be closed. The restrictions on gatherings of various kinds (including weddings and funerals) have continued to be in force. Schools are still closed. The University of Guyana in its latest communication to staff, students, and the public, indicated that the University continues to be closed, and it is not envisaged that there will be a return to its physical campuses for the rest of the academic year (which ends on July 31st 2020).

Unfortunately, the political situation remains unsettled. A recount of the votes cast on Election Day March 2nd 2020 has been underway since May 6th under the supervision of a team assembled by the CARICOM Secretariat. The count was scheduled to last 25 days, but it has had to be extended by a few days. It should be completed by June 13th 2020.

The consequences of all the uncertainty have continued to be severe. Unemployment has risen as several sectors have been badly hit by the closure of the country's borders, and also by the closure of non-essential businesses. There has been a general slowdown across the country.

Español

La situación nacional en Guyana sigue siendo incierta. Los dos problemas principales que han determinado la vida en el país todavía están presentes y en curso. El número de casos de COVID-19 continúa aumentando: a partir del 4 de junio de 2020 había 153 casos conocidos en el país, en comparación con 93 casos el 8 de mayo de 2020. Sin embargo, hubo mejores noticias con respecto a las muertes por la enfermedad: dos más. Se han registrado muertes desde el 8 de mayo. Hubo 10 muertes entre el 11 de marzo (cuando ocurrió la primera muerte registrada por el virus) y el 8 de mayo de 2020 (datos de la OMS).

Las medidas de emergencia introducidas para reducir la propagación del virus se han extendido hasta el 17 de junio de 2020. Esto significa que se sigue aplicando el toque de queda y se continúan cerrando las empresas / servicios no esenciales. Las restricciones a las reuniones de diversos tipos (incluidas bodas y funerales) han seguido vigentes. Las escuelas aún están cerradas. La Universidad de Guyana, en su última comunicación con el personal, los estudiantes y el público, indicó que la Universidad continúa cerrada, y no se prevé que habrá un regreso a sus campus físicos durante el resto del año académico (que finaliza el 31 de julio de 2020).

Lamentablemente, la situación política sigue sin resolverse. Un recuento de los votos emitidos el día de las elecciones del 2 de marzo de 2020 ha estado en marcha desde el 6 de mayo bajo la supervisión de un equipo reunido por la Secretaría de CARICOM. El conteo estaba programado para durar 25 días, pero tuvo que extenderse unos días. Debería completarse antes del 13 de junio de 2020.

Las consecuencias de toda la incertidumbre han seguido siendo graves. El desempleo ha aumentado a medida que varios sectores se han visto gravemente afectados por el cierre de las fronteras del país, y también por el cierre de negocios no esenciales. Ha habido una desaceleración general en todo el país.

Français

La situation nationale au Guyana reste incertaine. Les deux problèmes majeurs qui ont déterminé la vie dans le pays sont toujours présents et en cours. Le nombre de cas de COVID-19 continue d'augmenter - au 4 juin 2020, il y avait 153 cas connus dans le pays, contre 93 cas le 8 mai 2020. Cependant, il y avait de meilleures nouvelles concernant les décès dus à la maladie - deux autres des décès ont été enregistrés depuis le 8 mai. Il y a eu 10 décès entre le 11 mars (lorsque le premier décès enregistré du virus s'est produit) et le 8 mai 2020 (données OMS).

Les mesures d'urgence introduites pour réduire la propagation du virus ont été prolongées jusqu'au 17 juin 2020. Cela signifie qu'un couvre-feu a continué d'être en vigueur et que les entreprises / services non essentiels ont continué à être fermés. Les restrictions sur les rassemblements de toutes sortes (y compris les mariages et les funérailles) sont toujours en vigueur. Les écoles sont toujours fermées. L'Université du Guyana, dans sa dernière communication au personnel, aux étudiants et au public, a indiqué que l'Université continue d'être fermée, et il n'est pas prévu qu'il y aura un retour sur ses campus physiques pour le reste de l'année universitaire (qui prend fin le 31 juillet 2020).

MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE cont'd

Lamentablemente, la situación política sigue sin resolverse. Un recuento de los votos emitidos el día de las elecciones del 2 de marzo de 2020 ha estado en marcha desde el 6 de mayo bajo la supervisión de un equipo reunido por la Secretaría de CARICOM. El conteo estaba programado para durar 25 días, pero tuvo que extenderse unos días. Debería completarse antes del 13 de junio de 2020.

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MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS

Français

À la mémoire de George Floyd



Ce mois-ci, mon entrée dans notre lettre d'informations se fera le relais des mots du poète haïtien, James Noël, qui nous livre sa « Prière Noire » à la mémoire de George Floyd disparu le 25 mai 2020 lors de l'interpellation meurtrière de quatre *anciens* policiers de Minneapolis dans le Minnesota.

James Noël, né en Haïti en 1978, est l'auteur d'une quinzaine d'ouvrages et le récipiendaire de multiples prix. Ancien pensionnaire de la villa Médicis, ses poèmes ont été traduits dans plusieurs langues. Il est aussi cofondateur de la revue *IntranQu'illités*, et a dirigé la réalisation d'une anthologie de poésie haïtienne contemporaine rassemblant 73 poètes vivants, dans la collection de poche Points, Seuil. En 2017, il publie son premier roman, *Belle merveille*, dont la version traduite en allemand a reçu l'*Internationaler Literaturpreis*, le prix de littérature contemporaine traduite, en juin 2020. Les Éditions Diable Vauvert publient son dernier ouvrage, *Brexit, suivi de la migration des murs* en mars 2020.

Au sujet d'*IntranQu'illités* : <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/james-noel/blog/070520/intranquillites-manifeste-pour-un-nouveau-monde>

Instagram: [jamesnoel_9](#)

PRIÈRE NOIRE

(à la mémoire de George Floyd)

Seigneur pardonne-moi
je suis presque athée
j'adresse ma prière noire
à tous ceux qui prient
dans les mosquées
dans les églises
les monastères
les temples vaudous
j'adresse ma prière noire

à toutes celles qui prient
et qui pleurent
des larmes noires
à force de prier au petit jour
une prière debout
qui ne se plie pas
aux règles du jeu
qui ne se soumet pas
au catéchisme de l'horloge
une prière qui cible
les genoux du policier
celui qui a pris
le cou de Floyd
comme point d'appui
une prière debout
un chant gospel
qui vise les genoux
les froids genoux du policier
celui qui a pris
le cou de Floyd
comme point d'appui
Dépêche-toi Seigneur
je suis presque athée
Faites que ce dernier
Ne puisse plus marcher

English

In Memory of George Floyd

This month, I have decided to use my newsletter entry to pass on the words of Haitian poet, James Noël, who delivers his "Black Prayer" in loving memory of George Floyd who died on May 25, 2020, following the deadly actions of four *former* Minneapolis police officers.

James Noël, born in 1978 in Haiti, is an award-winning writer and the author of fifteen books. A former Villa Medici fellow, his poems have been translated into several languages. Leader of the journal *IntranQu'illités*, he also edited *Éditions Points - Seuil*, an anthology of contemporary Haitian poetry bringing 73 poets together. In 2017, he published his first novel, *Belle merveille*, whose German translation the Internationaler Literaturpreis Prize from the KWW, Berlin in June 2020. Les Éditions Diable Vauvert published his latest book, *Brexit suivi de la migration des murs*.

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

About IntranQu'ilités: <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/james-noel/blog/070520/intranquillites-manifeste-pour-un-nouveau-monde>
Instagram: *jamesnoel_9*

BLACK PRAYER

(To the memory of George Floyd)

Translated by Nathan H. Dize, Nashville

Lord forgive me
I'm almost an atheist
I address my black prayer
to all those praying
in the mosques
in the churches
in the monasteries
in the Vodou temples
I address my black prayer
to the women who pray
and those who cry
black tears
through the early morning prayer
a standing prayer
that does not bend
to the rules of engagement
that does not submit
to the catechism of the clock
a prayer that targets
the knees of the police officer
the one who took
Floyd's neck
as a fulcrum
a standing prayer
a gospel song
that aims for the knees
the cold knees of the police officer
that took
Floyd's neck
as a fulcrum
Hurry Lord
I'm almost an atheist
Act so that this man
Can no longer walk

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

Español



Jorge Lefevre Tavárez



Gabriela Quijano

En los tiempos de la pandemia: activismo en Puerto Rico

[Esta es la segunda columna de la serie *En los tiempos de la pandemia: manejo, respuestas y alternativas a la crisis en Puerto Rico, República Dominicana y las diásporas.*]

El manejo de la pandemia que se vive Puerto Rico desde marzo ha tenido dos efectos sobre el activismo en la isla: por un lado, debido a las medidas necesarias para prevenir el virus – y a las medidas represivas que el gobierno impone –, las manifestaciones tradicionales se han reducido de manera dramática; por otro lado, la ineptitud del gobierno en manejar *otra* emergencia y los reiterados escándalos de corrupción han aumentado el desprestigio de la población hacia el gobierno, tornándose necesario continuar la protesta pero bajo formas creativas. De la misma manera que la lógica de la ganancia ha buscado transformarse para impulsar sus proyectos, la resistencia se ha reinventado. Esta columna esboza algunas de estas tendencias.

Las primeras protestas giraron en torno al mal manejo de la crisis. El 15 de abril, una diversidad de organizaciones llevaron a cabo una protesta frente a la estación del canal televisivo público exigiendo el aumento en las pruebas del COVID-19. La mayoría de las personas manifestándose permanecían en sus carros cantando consignas. En las semanas que siguen, se vieron numerosas manifestaciones, aunque más pequeñas, denunciando una serie de temas: el mal pago de las empleadas de la salud, la falta de protocolos de prevención del virus para empleados públicos y la inactividad de los comedores escolares.

De camino al 1ero de mayo, Día internacional de las trabajadoras, el movimiento obrero discutió durante varias semanas cómo actuar. La pregunta controversial fue la de si hacer o no una manifestación en caravana. Finalmente, se optó por diversificar las actividades: videos y proclamas se irán subiendo a las redes a lo largo del 1ero de mayo, a la vez que se convocaron distintas rutas para llevar a cabo caravanas y desafiar el toque de queda. La conmemoración, poco reseñada por la prensa, fue exitosa tanto en participación como por la unidad del movimiento obrero.

Hay que destacar que, a tono con lo que se ha visto en estos años, el movimiento feminista ha sido de los más activos y creativos durante este periodo. Formó parte de la convocatoria de la protesta del 15 de abril, y ha mantenido un nivel reiterado de activismo durante este periodo. Aunque también llevaron a cabo protestas en formas de caravana desde temprano, y hubo una manifestación a favor de una reapertura organizada de las playas, reconocemos una iniciativa reciente de este sector: la “Alacena feminista”. Bajo el lema “dona lo que puedas, llévate lo que necesites”, la Coalición 8 de marzo – que agrupa una diversidad de organizaciones feministas y de la comunidad LGBTQ+ – autogestionó en una de las avenidas principales de la capital un espacio para donar materiales, agua y comida, y donde personas necesitadas llevasen lo que necesitaran. Aunque las donaciones son abiertas y continuas, cada semana una organización distinta “adopta” y se encarga de la alacena y refuerza el elemento feminista de la protesta, enfatizando que el COVID-19 es solo “uno de los virus” enfrentados, pues también se encara el hambre, el desempleo y el machismo.

Justo al terminar esta columna, el asesinato de George Floyd en Minneapolis volcó al movimiento antiracista a las calles de las ciudades principales de los Estados Unidos. Allí, la diáspora caribeña ha encontrado un lugar para manifestarse. Pero lo cierto es que el impacto ha repercutido más allá de las fronteras nacionales estadounidenses. La intensidad de aquel movimiento se ha trasladado a la isla, también, y se une al descontento producido por nuevas leyes aprobadas que representan un retroceso en derechos democráticos y civiles. Muy probablemente comenzará otra etapa en el activismo durante la pandemia. Nos queda examinar cómo los lazos afectivos entre allá y acá inspirarán una vez más la creatividad política en el Caribe.

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

English

[This is the second column of the series *En los tiempos de la pandemia: manejo, respuestas y alternativas a la crisis en Puerto Rico, República Dominicana y las diásporas*.]

The pandemic in Puerto Rico has had two distinct effects over activism: on one hand, due to the necessary measures to prevent the spread of the virus – and the repressive measures that the government imposes on its people –, traditional protests have significantly decreased; on the other, the ineptitude of the government in managing this emergency, along with the news of corruption scandals one after the other, have increased the people's discontent and mistrust of the government, which in turn has made it necessary to continue protests under creative forms. Similarly to the way in which the logic of profit has found a way to reproduce itself under these circumstances, protests have been reinventing themselves. This column traces some of these tendencies.

The first protests developed around the mismanaging of the crisis itself. On April 15, a diverse group of organizations led a protest across the public television company's headquarters, demanding the state to purchase and conduct more COVID-19 tests. Most of the protesters stayed in their cars while chanting. During the weeks that followed, numerous protests of smaller size were held for similar demands: the poor pay of health workers, the lack of a safety protocol for public employees, and the interruption of school meal plans.

On the weeks heading to May 1st, the International Workers' Day, the labor movement discussed how to act and commemorate the event. The controversy at hand was whether or not to hold a manifestation as a "caravan," with the participants in their cars following a specific route together at a given time, with the accompanying chanting and honking. At the end, it was decided to organize diverse activities: videos to be uploaded to social media, as well as different routes for caravans to defy the curfew in place. The commemoration, mainly ignored by the press, was a success both in the amount of participants and in the unity shown by the workers movement.

It is important to highlight that, as seen during the last years, the feminist movement has been the most active and creative during this period. It organized and participated in many of the protests, including that of April 15, and has maintained a high level of activism. Although they also held caravans since early on, and there was an important protest claiming the safe opening of the beaches, we

will underline one recent initiative: the "Alacena feminista", or the "Feminist Cupboard". Under the slogan "donate what you can, take what you need", the Coalición 8 de marzo (March 8 Coalition) – which brings together different feminist and LGBT+ organizations – coordinated a space to donate food, water and cleaning materials at one of the main avenues of the capital for people in need to collect what they needed. Although donations are continuous, each week a different organization "adopts" the Alacena and reinforces the feminist struggle by emphasizing that the COVID-19 is "just one of the virus" we face as a society, for we must also fight hunger, unemployment and sexism.

Just as the writing of this column came to a close, the assassination of George Floyd in Minneapolis gave ignition to antiracist protests in different cities of the United States. There, the Caribbean diaspora has been close to the claims of the protests and ignited struggles back on the island by mixing the large discontent with the worsening of civil and democratic rights through already approved legislation. It is probable that a new period of activism during the pandemic is about to start. We must wait and see how the affective ties between "here" and "there" will inspire one more the creative political forces of the Caribbean.



MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd



Antonio Carmona Báez

Papiamentu

The CSA is pleased to introduce Dr. Antonio Carmona Baez as the new Papiamentu sub-editor

Currently serves as the President of the University of Saint Martin (USM).

Born in New York City, Anto-

nio Carmona Báez is a Puerto Rican political scientist specialised in International Relations and the Political Economy of Development. In 1994, he received a BA from Middlebury College, Vermont, USA where he studied International Politics and Spanish and Latin American Literature. Thereafter, he pursued his graduate degree (MA) in International Relations at the University of Amsterdam. In 2002, he earned his doctorate degree from the same university in International Relations, upon having written his dissertation *Global Trends and the Remnants of Socialism: Socio-economic and Political Restructuring in Cuba*.

At the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) in Río Piedras, Carmona Báez taught at the faculties of Social Science and the College of General Studies, where together with his colleagues developed the country's first African Studies programme – *Afrodescendencia en Puerto Rico y el Caribe*. While teaching Comparative Politics at Río Piedras, he served as an OAS election observer for the 2005 general elections in the Republic of Suriname. At UPR Bayamón, he taught general social sciences and research methodology. At the University of Amsterdam, he taught at the departments of Political Science, International Development Studies and the Graduate School of Social Sciences. He has served as Communication Officer and Researcher at the Amsterdam-based Transnational Institute, a progressive think-tank dedicated to studying sustainable and democratic policy alternatives. At The Hague, he worked as a political analyst and consultant for Latin American embassies. In 2015, he coordinated the first Caribbean-wide expert meeting on drug policies, attended by diplomats, dignitaries, grassroots activists and lawmakers, in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Antonio Carmona Báez is author of *State Resistance to Globalisation in Cuba* (Pluto, 2004), and various articles, chapters and contributions concerning political economy, public policy, the condition of labour in the Caribbean and Decolonial thought. In 2014, he co-

published "Sexual Self-determination in Cuba and the Epistemic Decolonial Turn" (Sexualities), which deals with state policies in sex education, gender identity and institutional attention to sexual diversity. Currently, his research interests concern post-hurricane disaster reconstruction and public policy in Puerto Rico and the non-independent Caribbean, especially in the areas of urban development, energy and sustainable agriculture. Forthcoming publications (2018) include the English translation of Anton de Kom's *We Slaves of Suriname* (Pluto) and a peer reviewed co-edited volume entitled *Smash the Pillars: Decoloniality and the Imaginary of Colour in the Dutch Kingdom* (Lexington).

In the political sphere, Carmona Báez has been involved in labour organising and for four years has served as National Coordinator of Organisation for the Puerto Rican Association of University of Professors (APPU), by which he lead a successful campaign to guarantee health benefits for adjunct faculty in 2007. In Puerto Rico's 2016 general elections, he ran for the mayor's office of San Juan for the Working People's Party, serving as the capital city's first self-identified Black candidate.

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd



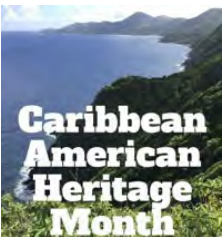
Virgin Islander

Virgin Reflections of Global Protests, Vigils and Civil Unrest

The global community has survived a multiplicity of trials, tribulations, disasters, regularly televised brutal acts of terrorism complimented with a global health pandemic dismantling frail and dysfunctional elements of our shared humanity. #JusticeCulture is urgently essential for humanity to survive to thrive in these engaging and challenging time. The televised assassinations, murders, lynchings and fire burning protests of 2020 are parallel to civil unrest and systemic racism of the 1950's, 1960's and beyond.

"We wish to invoke the memory of Marcus and Martin to bring to the islands' young African Americans, here to breathe before returning to the mainland fight for dignity. We owe it to Martin, to Marcus, to Malcolm, and to Marley; and to all the ruptured minds of Minneapolis. This is our cause. Every university that stands for freedom, justice, and the celebration of human dignity must stand up like a gorilla for justice for George. Minneapolis is just another place where our eyes have detected evil, beyond hate, that has erupted from the depth of hell." (Sir Hilary Beckles: 2020)

June is annually observed as *Caribbean American Heritage Month* in recognition of the contributions, tribulations, achievements, diversity, equity and inclusion of exceptional work of persons of Caribbean ancestry in America. <http://www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org/> In February 2005, US House of Congress Resolution 71-formally established June as *Caribbean American Heritage Month* <https://www.congress.gov/bill/109th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/71/text>



Caribbean American Heritage Month is an occasion for persons of Caribbean American ancestry to respectfully reaffirm their multi-cultural and multiethnic ties with the people, traditions and heritage throughout the Caribbean Americas. 2020 has been marked

with citizen unrest, rebellion and organized interactions demanding equitable justice and restorative humanity.



Chenzira Davis Kahina

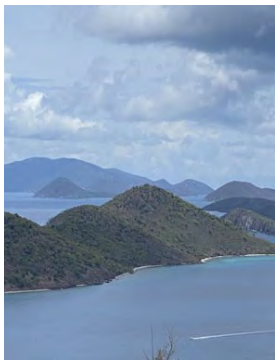
"The people of the Caribbean region recognize therefore that the struggle against anti-Black racism in our Hemisphere is an inter-related one, and that we in the Caribbean are as invested in the USA, Brazilian, Colombian or Canadian components of that struggle, as these nations are invested in our Caribbean component of the struggle...Thus, whenever we witness or become aware of even isolated or random acts of anti-Black racism anywhere in our Hemisphere, we cringe and recoil in anguish, for we know that failure to uphold the dignity and worth of the black person in any one nation imperils the entire hemispheric mission." David omisiong, Citizen of Barbados ©June 2020

Parallel to the Black Power Movements of the 1960's and the 2020 #BlackLivesMatter movement protesting systemic racism and socioeconomic rape, VI Caribbean native daughter Dr. Marva Sprauve Browne, co-founder of the VI Free Beach Movement (1970) stated:

"We are not saying we want whites off the islands. We're saying that our shorelines, coral reefs and similarly our beautiful sandy beaches are major natural resources and they must be kept available for the free, unrestrained use by all the people of these islands. We're glad to share them with tourists, but we will no longer stand for tourists, hotels, or condominiums fencing off our beaches for their own private use." (Sprauve-Browne:1970)

By May 1971, the VI Legislature passed *The Open Shoreline Act (Bill No. 4849)* into law to ensure the public secured the right to use, access and enjoy the shorelines and beaches throughout the entire

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd



Virgin Islands. May observances of Caribbean American Heritage Month sustain and strengthen VI Caribbean quests for decolonization, diversity, equity, reparatory justice, sustainable social governance, and more.

Español

Reflexiones vírgenes de protestas globales, vigiliyas y disturbios civiles

La comunidad global ha sobrevivido a una multiplicidad de juicios, tribulaciones, desastres, actos de terrorismo brutales televisados regularmente complementados con una pandemia de salud global que desmantela elementos frágiles y disfuncionales de nuestra humanidad compartida. #JusticeCulture es urgentemente esencial para que la humanidad sobreviva y prospere en estos tiempos atractivos y desafiantes. Los asesinatos televisados, los asesinatos, los linchamientos y las protestas de incendios en 2020 son paralelos a los disturbios civiles y al racismo sistémico de los años cincuenta, sesenta y más allá.

"Deseamos invocar el recuerdo de Marcus y Martin para traer a los jóvenes afroamericanos de las islas, aquí para respirar antes de regresar a la lucha continental por la dignidad. Se lo debemos a Martin, a Marcus, a Malcolm y a Marley; y a todas las mentes rotas de Minneapolis. Esta es nuestra causa. Toda universidad que defienda la libertad, la justicia y la celebración de la dignidad humana debe defenderse como un gorila por la justicia para George. Minneapolis es solo otro lugar donde nuestros ojos han detectado el mal, más allá del odio, que ha estallado desde las profundidades del infierno." (Sir Hilary Beckles: 2020)

Junio se observa anualmente como el Mes de la Herencia del Caribe Americano en reconocimiento de las contribuciones, tribulaciones, logros, diversidad, equidad e inclusión del trabajo excepcional de personas de ascendencia caribeña en América. <http://www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org/> En febrero de 2005, la Resolución 71 de la Cámara de Congresos de los Estados Unidos estableció formalmente junio como el Mes de la Herencia del Caribe Americano <https://www.congress.gov/bill/109th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/71/texto>

El Mes del Patrimonio Americano del Caribe es una ocasión para que las personas de ascendencia caribeña estadounidense reafirmen respetuosamente sus lazos multiculturales y multiétnicos con la gente, las tradiciones y el patrimonio en todo el Caribe de América. 2020 ha estado marcado por el descontento ciudadano, la rebelión y las interacciones organizadas que exigen justicia equitativa y humanidad restaurativa.

"La gente de la región del Caribe reconoce, por lo tanto, que la lucha contra el racismo anti-negro en nuestro hemisferio está interrelacionada, y que nosotros en el Caribe estamos tan comprometidos con los componentes de esa lucha en Estados Unidos, Brasil, Colombia o Canadá, a medida que estas naciones invierten en nuestro componente caribeño de la lucha ... Por lo tanto, cada vez que somos testigos o nos damos cuenta de actos aislados o aleatorios de racismo anti-negro en cualquier parte de nuestro hemisferio, nos avergonzamos y retrocedemos angustiados, porque sabemos que no defender la dignidad y el valor de la persona negra en cualquier nación pone en peligro toda la misión hemisférica". David Comissiong, ciudadano de Barbados © junio 2020

Paralelamente a los Movimientos del Poder Negro de los años 1960 y 2020, el movimiento #BlackLivesMatter que protesta por el racismo sistémico y la violación socioeconómica, la VI hija nativa del Caribe, la Dra. Marva Sprauve Browne, cofundadora del VI Movimiento Free Beach (1970) declaró:

"No estamos diciendo que queremos blancos fuera de las islas. Estamos diciendo que nuestras costas, arrecifes de coral y, de manera similar, nuestras hermosas playas de arena son recursos naturales importantes y deben mantenerse disponibles para el uso gratuito y sin restricciones de todas las personas de estas islas. Nos complace compartirlos con los turistas, pero ya no defenderemos a los turistas, hoteles o condominios que cercan nuestras playas para su propio uso privado". (Sprauve-Browne: 1970)

En mayo de 1971, la VI Legislatura aprobó la Ley de Costa Abierta (Proyecto de Ley N° 4849) para garantizar que el público garantizara el derecho de usar, acceder y disfrutar de las costas y playas en todas las Islas Vírgenes. Las celebraciones de mayo del Mes del Patrimonio Americano del Caribe mantienen y fortalecen las VI misiones del Caribe para descolonización, diversidad, equidad, justicia reparadora, gobernanza social sostenible y más.

MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

Français

Reflets vierges des protestations mondiales, des vigiles et des troubles civils

La communauté mondiale a survécu à une multiplicité d'épreuves, de tribulations, de catastrophes, d'actes de terrorisme brutaux régulièrement télévisés complimentés par une pandémie de santé mondiale démantelant les éléments fragiles et dysfonctionnels de notre humanité commune. #JusticeCulture est urgent pour que l'humanité survive afin de prospérer en ces temps engageants et difficiles. Les assassinats télévisés, les meurtres, les lynchages et les protestations contre les incendies de 2020 sont parallèles aux troubles civils et au racisme systémique des années 50, 60 et au-delà.

«Nous souhaitons invoquer la mémoire de Marcus et Martin pour amener les jeunes Afro-Américains des îles, ici pour respirer avant de retourner au continent pour lutter pour la dignité. Nous le devons à Martin, à Marcus, à Malcolm et à Marley; et à tous les esprits rompus de Minneapolis. Telle est notre cause. Chaque université qui défend la liberté, la justice et la célébration de la dignité humaine doit se lever comme un gorille pour la justice de George. Minneapolis n'est qu'un autre endroit où nos yeux ont détecté le mal, au-delà de la haine, qui a éclaté du plus profond de l'enfer. " (Sir Hilary Beckles: 2020)

Le mois de juin est célébré chaque année comme le mois du patrimoine des Caraïbes américaines en reconnaissance des contributions, des tribulations, des réalisations, de la diversité, de l'équité et de l'inclusion du travail exceptionnel de personnes d'ascendance caribéenne en Amérique. <http://www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org/> En février 2005, la résolution 71 de la Chambre des congrès des États-Unis a officiellement établi le mois de juin comme Mois du patrimoine des Caraïbes américaines <https://www.congress.gov/bills/109/congress/house-concurrent-resolution/71/text>

Le Mois du patrimoine caribéen américain est l'occasion pour les personnes d'ascendance caribéenne américaine de réaffirmer respectueusement leurs liens multiculturels et multiethniques avec les peuples, les traditions et le patrimoine des Caraïbes caribéens. 2020 a été marquée par des troubles citoyens, une rébellion et des interactions organisées exigeant une justice équitable et une humanité réparatrice.

«Les habitants de la région des Caraïbes reconnaissent donc que la lutte contre le racisme anti-noir dans notre hémisphère est inter-

dépendante et que nous, dans les Caraïbes, sommes investis aux États-Unis, au Brésil, en Colombie ou au Canada dans cette lutte, alors que ces nations sont investies dans notre composante caribéenne de la lutte ... Ainsi, chaque fois que nous assistons à des actes de racisme anti-noirs, même isolés ou aléatoires, n'importe où dans notre hémisphère, nous nous recroquevillons et reculons d'angoisse, car nous savons que l'échec de défendre la dignité et la valeur de la personne noire dans une nation en péril toute la mission hémisphérique. " David Comissiong, citoyen de la Barbade © juin 2020

Parallèlement aux mouvements Black Power des années 1960 et 2020 #BlackLivesMatter pour protester contre le racisme systémique et le viol socio-économique, la fille originaire des Caraïbes VI, le Dr Marva Sprauve Browne, co-fondatrice du VI Free Beach Movement (1970) a déclaré:

«Nous ne disons pas que nous voulons des blancs au large des îles. Nous disons que nos rivages, nos récifs coralliens et, de même, nos belles plages de sable sont des ressources naturelles majeures et doivent être disponibles pour une utilisation gratuite et sans restriction par tous les habitants de ces îles. Nous sommes heureux de les partager avec les touristes, mais nous ne défendrons plus les touristes, les hôtels ou les copropriétés clôturant nos plages pour leur propre usage privé. " (Sprauve-Browne: 1970)

En mai 1971, la VI législature a promulgué la loi sur le littoral ouvert (projet de loi n ° 4849) pour garantir au public le droit d'utiliser, d'accéder et de profiter des rivages et des plages de l'ensemble des îles Vierges. Mai les célébrations du Mois du patrimoine américain et des Caraïbes soutiennent et renforcent VI Quêtes des Caraïbes pour décolonisation, diversité, équité, justice réparatrice, gouvernance sociale durable, etc.

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER



Omar Ramadan-Santiago

Experiencing Ramadan during a Global Pandemic

When I was asked to write a piece about experiencing Ramadan during the COVID-19 pandemic, I initially rejected the offer thinking I wasn't the best candidate. As the reality of the pandemic and resulting requirement for social distancing sank in,

Muslims around the world came to the realization that this Ramadan would be very different from previous years. For many Muslims, the month of Ramadan is a time of not only spiritual but also communal bonding. For me, however, I expected this to be like any other, mainly because I'm very used to observing Ramadan alone.

I didn't always fast alone. I was raised Muslim and at a young age I begged my father to start fasting with him. Initially it was just the two of us but my mother, who is Catholic, eventually started fasting with us in solidarity. It wasn't until my junior year in college when I studied abroad for a semester in Egypt (my father's home country) that I first experienced what it was like to observe Ramadan within a larger community (aka. a group over three). Not only was I closer to my relatives, but I befriended a number of other American students, some of whom were also Muslim. I never had Muslim friends before them. We attended numerous *iftaar* dinners almost daily, even if we had thrown them together at the last minute. We prayed side-by-side on Fridays, for *tarawih*, and most notably for *Laylat al-Qadr* (The Night of Power) at the *Amr ibn al-As* Mosque in Cairo. Since I was finally living close enough to my extended family, I was able to attend our large Eid celebrations for the first time.

After graduating college, I began fasting alone. Even when I moved back home, I was the only one fasting in our household since due to health reasons my parents had to stop (a particularly difficult decision for my father). With each move (back home, out of state, out of the country, back home to New Jersey), I never bothered to search for another Muslim community similar to the one I had in college. I had become so accustomed to not having one.

When friends started asking how I was going to handle Ramadan while social distancing, I explained matter-of-factly that it was probably going to feel like most Ramadans past. I did, however, notice how others were struggling with the reality of Ramadan

during a pandemic, lamenting the loss of the communal experience, and yearning for the various gatherings, dinners, events, prayers, and celebrations. I understood their sadness but didn't feel it myself since I was used to my regular routine of Ramadan solitude.

About a week into Ramadan 2020, I had an unfamiliar impulse to treat this one differently. I decided, almost on a whim, to read the *Qur'an* in its entirety for the first time in my life. Although I don't have the space to properly explain what that experience was like, I will say completing our Holy Book left me with a sense of accomplishment, relief, and even joy. I don't feel particularly 'stronger' in my faith; I think a more appropriate way to phrase it is I feel more 'comfortable' in it. I used this time as an opportunity to get to know Islam a bit better and am thankful for it. While this Ramadan has understandably been one of the most challenging and perhaps even lonely for many, for me... it was the most reassuring.

Español

Experimentando el Ramadán durante una pandemia global

Cuando me pidieron que escribiera un artículo sobre experimentar el Ramadán durante la pandemia de COVID-19, inicialmente rechacé la oferta pensando que no era el mejor candidato. A medida que la realidad de la pandemia y el requisito resultante de distanciamiento social se hundieron, los musulmanes de todo el mundo se dieron cuenta de que este Ramadán sería muy diferente de los años anteriores. Para muchos musulmanes, el mes de Ramadán es una época no solo de unión espiritual sino también comunitaria. Para mí, sin embargo, esperaba que esto fuera como cualquier otro, principalmente porque estoy muy acostumbrado a observar el Ramadán solo.

No siempre ayunaba solo. Fui criada como musulmana y desde muy joven le rogué a mi padre que comenzara a ayunar con él. Inicialmente solo éramos nosotros dos, pero mi madre, que es católica, finalmente comenzó a ayunar con nosotros en solidaridad. No fue hasta mi tercer año en la universidad cuando estudié en el extranjero durante un semestre en Egipto (el país de origen de mi padre) que experimenté por primera vez lo que era observar el Ramadán dentro de una comunidad más grande (también conocido como un grupo de más de tres). No solo estaba más cerca de mis parientes, sino que me hice amigo de varios otros estudiantes estadounidenses, algunos de los cuales también eran musulmanes. Nunca tuve amigos musulmanes antes que ellos. Asistimos a

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER cont'd

numerosas cenas de iftaar casi a diario, incluso si las habíamos juntado en el último minuto. Oramos lado a lado los viernes, por tarawih, y más notablemente por Laylat al-Qadr (La noche del poder) en la Mezquita Amr ibn al-As en El Cairo. Como finalmente vivía lo suficientemente cerca de mi familia extendida, pude asistir a nuestras grandes celebraciones de Eid por primera vez.

Después de graduarme de la universidad, comencé a ayunar solo. Incluso cuando me mudé de regreso a casa, era el único que ayunaba en nuestro hogar ya que por razones de salud mis padres tuvieron que dejar (una decisión particularmente difícil para mi padre). Con cada mudanza (de regreso a casa, fuera del estado, fuera del país, de regreso a Nueva Jersey), nunca me molesté en buscar otra comunidad musulmana similar a la que tenía en la universidad. Me había acostumbrado tanto a no tener uno.

Cuando los amigos comenzaron a preguntarme cómo iba a manejar el Ramadán mientras me distanciaba socialmente, le expliqué con toda seguridad que probablemente se sentiría como si la mayoría de los Ramadán hubieran pasado. Sin embargo, noté cómo otros luchaban con la realidad del Ramadán durante una pandemia, lamentando la pérdida de la experiencia comunitaria y anhelando las diversas reuniones, cenas, eventos, oraciones y celebraciones. Comprendí su tristeza, pero no la sentí, ya que estaba acostumbrado a mi rutina habitual de soledad en el Ramadán.

Aproximadamente una semana después del Ramadán 2020, tuve un impulso desconocido para tratarlo de manera diferente. Decidí, casi por capricho, leer el Corán en su totalidad por primera vez en mi vida. Aunque no tengo el espacio para explicar adecuadamente cómo fue esa experiencia, diré que completar nuestro Libro Sagrado me dejó con una sensación de logro, alivio e incluso alegría. No me siento particularmente "más fuerte" en mi fe; Creo que una forma más apropiada de expresarlo es que me siento más "cómodo" en él. Aproveché este tiempo como una oportunidad para conocer el Islam un poco mejor y estoy agradecido por ello. Si bien este Ramadán ha sido comprensiblemente uno de los más desafiantes y quizás incluso solitario para muchos, para mí ... fue el más tranquilizador.

Français

Vivre le Ramadan pendant une pandémie mondiale

Quand on m'a demandé d'écrire un article sur l'expérience du Ramadan pendant la pandémie de COVID-19, j'ai d'abord rejeté l'offre en pensant que je n'étais pas le meilleur candidat. Alors que la ré-

alité de la pandémie et l'exigence de distanciation sociale qui en résultait s'enfonçaient, les musulmans du monde entier ont réalisé que ce Ramadan serait très différent des années précédentes. Pour de nombreux musulmans, le mois de Ramadan est un moment de lien non seulement spirituel mais aussi communautaire. Pour moi, cependant, je m'attendais à ce que ce soit comme un autre, principalement parce que je suis très habitué à observer le Ramadan seul.

Je n'ai pas toujours jeûné seul. J'ai été élevé musulman et à un jeune âge, j'ai supplié mon père de commencer à jeûner avec lui. Au départ, nous n'étions que deux, mais ma mère, qui est catholique, a finalement commencé à jeûner avec solidarité. Ce n'est qu'à ma première année à l'université, lorsque j'ai étudié à l'étranger pour un semestre en Égypte (le pays d'origine de mon père), que j'ai d'abord expérimenté ce que c'était que d'observer le Ramadan dans une communauté plus large (alias un groupe de plus de trois). Non seulement j'étais plus proche de mes proches, mais je me suis lié d'amitié avec un certain nombre d'autres étudiants américains, dont certains étaient également musulmans. Je n'ai jamais eu d'amis musulmans avant eux. Nous avons assisté à de nombreux dîners iftaar presque tous les jours, même si nous les avons réunis à la dernière minute. Nous avons prié côte à côte le vendredi, pour tarawih, et plus particulièrement pour Laylat al-Qadr (La nuit du pouvoir) à la mosquée Amr ibn al-As au Caire. Comme je vivais enfin assez près de ma famille élargie, j'ai pu assister à nos grandes célébrations de l'Aïd pour la première fois.

Après mes études universitaires, j'ai commencé à jeûner seul. Même quand je suis rentré chez moi, j'étais le seul à jeûner dans notre foyer car pour des raisons de santé mes parents ont dû arrêter (une décision particulièrement difficile pour mon père). À chaque déménagement (chez moi, hors de l'État, hors du pays, chez moi dans le New Jersey), je n'ai jamais pris la peine de chercher une autre communauté musulmane similaire à celle que j'avais au collège. Je m'étais tellement habitué à ne pas en avoir.

Lorsque des amis ont commencé à me demander comment j'allais gérer le Ramadan pendant la distanciation sociale, j'ai expliqué sans détour que cela allait probablement ressembler à la plupart des Ramadans du passé. J'ai cependant remarqué comment d'autres luttent avec la réalité du Ramadan pendant une pandémie, déplorant la perte de l'expérience communautaire et aspirant aux divers rassemblements, dîners, événements, prières et célébrations. J'ai compris leur tristesse mais je ne l'ai pas ressentie moi-même depuis que j'étais habituée à ma routine régulière de solitude du Ramadan.

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER cont'd

Environ une semaine après le Ramadan 2020, j'avais une impulsion inconnue pour traiter celui-ci différemment. J'ai décidé, presque sur un coup de tête, de lire le Coran dans son intégralité pour la première fois de ma vie. Bien que je n'aie pas l'espace pour expliquer correctement à quoi ressemblait cette expérience, je dirai que terminer notre livre saint m'a laissé un sentiment d'accomplissement, de soulagement et même de joie. Je ne me sens pas particulièrement «plus fort» dans ma foi; Je pense qu'une façon plus appropriée de l'exprimer est de me sentir plus à l'aise. J'ai utilisé ce temps comme une occasion de mieux connaître l'Islam et j'en suis reconnaissant. Bien que ce Ramadan ait été naturellement l'un des plus difficiles et peut-être même solitaire pour beaucoup, pour moi... c'était le plus rassurant.

CSA MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



Prof. Carole Boyce Davies, CSA President 2015-2016, has been appointed the Frank H.T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters at Cornell University, effective 1 July, 2020, a professorship named after the 9th and longest serving president of Cornell whose leadership is described as follows:

"During his tenure as president the percentage of minority students grew from 8 percent in 1977 to 28 percent in 1994. The number of women and minority members of the faculty more than doubled. In the final years of his presidency a capital campaign raised \$1.5 billion. In 1995 the building that houses what was then known as the Cornell Theory Center was named Frank H. T. Rhodes Hall. Cornell also has a professorship honoring Rhodes; Frank H.T. Rhodes Class of '56 University Professors are appointed to three-year terms. In 2010, the University also created new postgraduate student fellowships named after Rhodes to

support students committed to the field of public interest law, and enable them to gain in-depth experience in work on behalf of the poor, the elderly, the homeless, and those deprived of civil rights."

According to former Cornell graduate student Dr. Siga Jagne, now Commissioner of Gender of ECOWAS: "As President of the African Students Association, he invited me to the special dinners and meetings he had with Cornell donors so we could have one on one discussions on our needs and the importance of diversity at Cornell. He supported the setting up of the Institute for African Development at Cornell and I worked there when it was finally set-up.

The last holder of the chair was a Nobel Laureate which prompted Emeritus Africana Professor of History, Robert Harris, to say "you are following in the footsteps of such distinguished Cornell faculty as Nobel Laureate Roald Hoffman a prior holder of the chair."

Carole Boyce-Davies has held distinguished professorships at a number of other universities such as the Herskovits Professorship at Northwestern University (2000) and was appointed to the Kwame Nkrumah Chair at the University of Ghana, Legon (2015). She has also been the recipient of The Franz Fanon Lifetime Achievement Award from the Caribbean Philosophical Association and the Distinguished Africanist Award from the New York State African Studies Association.

The author of the prize-winning *Left of Karl Marx. The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (2008) and the classic *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (1994) and *Caribbean Spaces. Escape Routes from Twilight Zones* (2013) which was long-listed for the OCM-BOCAS Prize, dealing with the issue of transnational migration and the internationalizing of Caribbean culture. A bi-lingual children's story *Walking/An Awaan* (2016/2017) recaptures the adventures of a typical walking character in the Caribbean. In addition to over a hundred journal essays, articles and encyclopedia entries, Dr. Boyce Davies has also published thirteen critical editions on African, African Diaspora and Caribbean literature and culture including the 3-volume *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora* (2008). Her new project is a study of Black Women and Political leadership in the African Diaspora to be published by Lexington Books of Rowman and Littlefield in 2021.

SCHOLARSHIP IN SEXUALITIES



David Tenorio

At the 2019 Encuentro organized by New York University's Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics in Mexico City, Cuban performance artist Carlos Martiel staged his *Acknowledgment*,¹ a powerful solo performance that brings to light the invisible Blackness buried under Mexico's *mestizo* nationalism. In the wake of the numerous protests following the brutal killing of 46-year-old George

Floyd by Minneapolis policemen on May 25, 2020, I would like to touch on the affective veil that masks our coloniality of sexual desire regarding Black bodies, as well as to highlight the insufficiencies of liberal societies in addressing an uncomfortable truth: the daily killings, both materially and symbolically, of Black bodies. In *Afromodernidades* (<https://afromodernidades.wordpress.com>), Cuban intellectual Alberto Abreu Arcia explains that his identity as a Black homosexual not only rests at the intersection of various social categories, such as race, socioeconomic status, and gender, etc., but also at the limits of sexuality. More than creating an abstract category of identity, Abreu Arcia is tracing the structures of feeling, borrowing Stuart Hall's notion, through which Black erotics in Cuba, and certainly in other parts of the Caribbean, occupy a liminal space. This liminality, in turn, responds to an unrehearsed dance between emotion, materiality, violence, and historical stigmatization. The unproblematic representation of Black sexuality in the Western cultural canon, including the nationalist cultural projects in the Caribbean, has resorted to various strategies, including hypersexualization, exocitization, objectification, and erasure, among others.

Martiel's performance, in this sense, grapples with the historical invisibility that holds a paradoxical relation to Black bodies. Colonial expansionism along with the advent of modernity in the Caribbean were the direct results of Black slavery. Not surprisingly, the edification of modern society, and by that, I mean nation-states formed by a set of laws, institutions, and systems, is founded on principles of racial and ethnic inferiority. Abreu Arcia further argues that the gay culture is extremely Eurocentric (i.e. male-dominated, classists, and white), making it even harder for Black bodies to become legitimate actors in the process of knowledge production, but also in the defining their own sexual desire. From plantations to pride parades, passing through universities, such progress regarding sexuality has been made possible by the eradication of Black

bodies. As we continue to mourn the death of George Floyd in the middle of a global pandemic, let's also remember whose bodies, desires, and archives remain, and the costs that Black communities have historically borne for us to believe in the illusion of sexual freedom.

¹ <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/encuentro-2019-about/itemlist/tag/encuentro%202019.html?start=20>

Español

En el Encuentro 2019 organizado por el Instituto Hemisférico de Performance y Política de la Universidad de Nueva York en la Ciudad de México, el artista cubano Carlos Martiel presentó su *Reconocimiento*,¹ un poderoso performance que pone en evidencia la negritud aplastada bajo el nacionalismo mestizo de México. A raíz de las numerosas protestas en respuesta al brutal asesinato de George Floyd, de 46 años, a manos de la policía de Minneapolis el pasado 25 de mayo, me gustaría tocar la fibra afectiva que enmascara nuestra colonialidad del deseo sexual con respecto a los cuerpos negros, así como resaltar las insuficiencias de las sociedades liberales al abordar una verdad incómoda: la desaparición constante, tanto en términos materiales como simbólicos, de cuerpos negros. En su plataforma virtual *Afromodernidades* (<https://afromodernidades.wordpress.com>), el intelectual cubano Alberto Abreu Arcia explica que su identidad como homosexual negro no solo descansa en la intersección de varias categorías sociales, como la raza, el nivel socioeconómico y el género, etc., pero también en los límites de la sexualidad. Más allá de crear una categoría abstracta de su propia identidad, Abreu Arcia está trazando las estructuras afectivas, haciendo eco de la noción de Stuart Hall, a través de las cuales el afro-erotismo en Cuba, y ciertamente en otras partes del Caribe, ocupa un espacio liminal. Esta liminalidad, a su vez, responde a una danza riesgosa entre emoción, materialidad, violencia y estigmatización histórica. La representación acrítica de la sexualidad negra en el canon cultural occidental, incluidos ahí los proyectos culturales nacionalistas del Caribe, ha recurrido a varias estrategias, que, por mencionar solo algunas, van de la hipersexualización, a la exocitización, la objetivación y la borrada del cuerpo de la negritud.

El performance de Martiel, en este sentido, lidia con la invisibilidad histórica que mantiene una paradoja en relación con el cuerpo negro. El expansionismo colonial junto con el advenimiento de la modernidad en el Caribe fueron los resultados directos de la esclavitud. No es sorprendente que la edificación de la sociedad moderna, y con eso, me refiero a los estados-nación formados por un conjunto

SCHOLARSHIP IN SEXUALITIES cont'd

de leyes, instituciones y sistemas, se base en principios de inferioridad racial y étnica. Abreu Arcia argumenta, asimismo, que la cultura gay es extremadamente eurocéntrica (es decir, dominada por hombres, clasistas y blancos), lo que dificulta aún más que los cuerpos negros se conviertan en actores legítimos en el proceso de producción de conocimiento, pero también en la definición de su propio deseo sexual. Desde las plantaciones hasta los desfiles del orgullo gay, pasando por las universidades, la erradicación de los cuerpos negros ha hecho posible ese progreso en materia de sexualidad. A medida que seguimos el duelo de la muerte de George Floyd en medio de una pandemia global, mantengamos en la memoria aquellos cuerpos, deseos y archivos que permanecen, así como los costos que las comunidades negras han asumido históricamente para que creamos en la ilusión de la libertad sexual.

¹ <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/encuentro-2019-about/itemlist/tag/encuentro%202019.html?start=20>

Français

At the 2019 Encuentro organized by New York University's Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics in Mexico City, Cuban performance artist Carlos Martiel staged his *Acknowledgment*,¹ a powerful solo performance that brings to light the invisible Blackness buried under Mexico's *mestizo* nationalism. In the wake of the numerous protests following the brutal killing of 46-year-old George Floyd by Minneapolis policemen on May 25, 2020, I would like to touch on the affective veil that masks our coloniality of sexual desire regarding Black bodies, as well as to highlight the insufficiencies of liberal societies in addressing an uncomfortable truth: the daily killings, both materially and symbolically, of Black bodies. In *Afromodernidades* (<https://afromodernidades.wordpress.com>), Cuban intellectual Alberto Abreu Arcia explains that his identity as a Black homosexual not only rests at the intersection of various social categories, such as race, socioeconomic status, and gender, etc., but also at the limits of sexuality. More than creating an abstract category of identity, Abreu Arcia is tracing the structures of feeling, borrowing Stuart Hall's notion, through which Black erotics in Cuba, and certainly in other parts of the Caribbean, occupy a liminal space. This liminality, in turn, responds to an unrehearsed dance between emotion, materiality, violence, and historical stigmatization. The unproblematic representation of Black sexuality in the Western cultural canon, including the nationalist cultural projects in the Caribbean, has resorted to various strategies, including hypersexualization, exocitization, objectification, and erasure, among others.

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Photo/Foto: Alexei Taylor

CARIBBEAN SCHOLARSHIP

My name is Carol Rannie and I am a fourth-year clinical psychology doctoral student at William James College. I am currently recruiting participants for my doctoral project.

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of differences in acculturation/adjustment levels between parents and their emerging adult children from the children's point of view for immigrants of Afro-Caribbean/Black descent from former British colonies on the psychological well-being of the emerging adult children.

You are invited to participate in an online survey about you and your parents' adjustment to living in the United States (U.S.). The survey should take approximately 30 minutes and your feedback will be kept completely confidential.

You may participate in the study if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are between ages 18-29 years.
2. You and your parent(s) are of Afro-Caribbean/Black descent from former British colonies.
3. You are a U.S. permanent resident or citizen who migrated to the U.S. at age eight years or younger OR
4. You were born in the U.S., but your parent(s) are U.S. permanent residents or citizens of Afro-Caribbean/Black descent from former British colonies.

Your parent(s) are U.S. permanent residents or citizens of Afro-Caribbean/Black descent and immigrated to the U.S. from Caribbean countries (former British colonies) five years or more ago.

If you are interested in completing the survey, please click on the link provided below:

https://williamjames.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9NwuR53GlnpT4Vf

Once you have completed the survey, you will be entered in a raffle to win one of four \$50 VISA gift cards. Please send your email address to the researcher (listed below) to be entered in the raffle. Your name is not required to enter the raffle, winners will be contacted via the email address used to enter the raffle.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at carol_rannie@williamjames.edu.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Carol Rannie, M.A.
Doctoral Student in Clinical Psychology
William James College
Newton, MA

GAME CHANGER INITIATIVE

National Caribbean American Heritage Month Webinar Series

**U.S. Embassy Guyana in collaboration with Caribbean Studies Association
celebrate National Caribbean American Heritage Month with a webinar series under the theme:
“Caribbean-American Connections, Social Justice and Shared Dreams”**

When: June 16, June 23 & June 30 at 2:00 pm EST

Register to attend: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fc2m2nZZSKC0wwrkywmQYA

- **June 16:** Caribbean – American cultural connections: cultural forms, cultural industries and social justice.
- **June 23:** Caribbean contributions to race, gender, sexuality and social justice in the USA and the Caribbean.
- **June 30:** The Caribbean diaspora’s role in building just Caribbean and American futures.

PANELISTS

June 16: Caribbean – American cultural connections: cultural forms, cultural industries and social justice:

- Meagan Sylvester – Senior Lecturer, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, Trinidad and Tobago
- Keisha Wiel – PhD Candidate in Anthropology, Temple University
- Dr. Chenzira Davis-Kahina- Director, V.I. Caribbean Cultural center, University of the Virgin Islands

June 23: Caribbean contributions to race, gender sexuality and social justice in the USA and the Caribbean:

- Dr. Angelique Nixon – Lecturer & Graduate Studies Coordinator, Institute for Gender & Development Studies, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago
- Prof. Carole Boyce-Davies – Professor of Africana Studies and English, Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University
- Prof. Linden Lewis – Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Bucknell University

June 30: The Caribbean diaspora’s role in building just Caribbean and American future:

- Dr. Raymond Laureano – Researcher, Latin America Center of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies (University of Denver); the Institute of Caribbean Studies (University of Puerto Rico); and the
- Jesús T. Piñero Library & Social Research Center (Puerto Rico’s Ana G. Méndez University)
- Dr. Joan Phillips – Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados
- Prof. Patsy Lewis – Visiting Professor, International and Public Affairs, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs; Interim Director, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), Brown University

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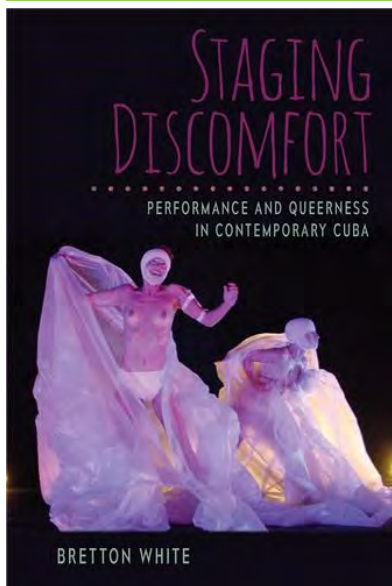
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NEW BOOK



Staging Discomfort: Performance and Queerness in Contemporary Cuba

This visionary volume examines how queer bodies are theatrically represented on the Cuban stage in ways that challenge one of the state's primary revolutionary tools, the categorization and homogenization of individuals. Bretton White critically analyzes contemporary performances that upset traditional under-

standings of performer and spectator, as well as what constitutes the ideal Cuban citizenry.

Following the 1959 revolution, nonconformists were monitored and reported by local committees and punished or reformed by the government. Censorship was rampant, and Cuban art suffered as the state tried to control the national message. Through the lens of queer theory, White explores how the body has been central to the state's fear-based marginalization of gay life and looks at the ways these theatrical performances defuse that fear. She highlights the revolutionary model of masculinity and the role it plays in excluding people based upon visible queer difference. White finds that, through experimental performances of sexuality, actors create connections with audiences to evoke shared feelings of discomfort, intimacy, shame, longing, frustration, and failure, which echo the prevalence of these feelings in other Cuban spaces. By performing queerness, these plays question the state's narrative of heteronormativity and empower citizens to negotiate alternative understandings of Cuban identity.

"This volume not only creates a corpus of works staged by some of contemporary Cuba's most innovative and challenging theater practitioners but also shows how theatrical performance can create experiences and ephemeral communities that allow audience members to imagine 'queer,' alternative understandings of Cuban identity." - Camilla Stevens, author of *Family and Identity in Contemporary Cuban and Puerto Rican Drama*

"At the intersection of aesthetics and politics, this book suggests that non-normative instances of proximity to the human body as presented in contemporary Cuban theater offer productive sources of contestation within and against a political project that has defined itself in terms of virility, austerity, and discipline." - Guillermina De Ferrari, author of *Community and Culture in Post-Soviet Cuba*

To request a review copy, email marketing@upress.ufl.edu.

YOUR COMMENTARY



Canada, COVID, and Police Brutality: The Experience of the Black Community

by Afua Cooper

Protests are sweeping across the United States due to the public murder of African American George Floyd

by Minneapolis police. Cities have risen up in response. The federal government and US states and municipalities have responded with tremendous use of force to shut down demonstrations and silence protestors thereby, denying them their First Amendment rights. In my country, one response to the “Floyd Rebellion” is to ask “[Could it happen here in Canada?](#)” This question not only underlines Canada’s feigned innocence and ignorance but also its hypocrisy. Police brutality against Blacks happens here—over and over again.

On the international stage, Canada is seen as a site of goodness, politeness, and mercy. As a place where slavery did not exist and racism and anti-Blackness do not occur. Canada is often contrasted to the US, with its racism, police brutality, and cruelty toward Blacks that has its roots in slavery. When Ontario’s Premier [Doug Ford](#) noted that race relations in Canada and the US are like “night and day” and that he hopes the US can “straighten out its problems,” he epitomised how Canada continues to ignore its deep-seated structural racism. Ford’s denial of Canada’s anti-Black racism renders our experience of it invisible, whereas police killings constitute part of a steady diet fed to Black Canadians. As I write this, demonstrations against anti-Black racism in Canada are also happening across our country. Yet, these events are rarely noticed, internationally, even though Canada’s historical and contemporary treatment of its Black citizens parallels that of the US.

Canada’s history includes the same institutionalized enslavement of Africans, beginning with its pre-Confederation French and British colonial regimes. Yet slavery has been excised from its historical chronicles and erased from its memory. After legal emancipation in 1834, the shadow of slavery continued to loom over Black lives as Whites re-inscribed an established social order based on White supremacy and Black inferiority. Canada’s racial hierarchy manifested itself in segregated communities, schools, churches, cemeteries, and places of entertainment. In some jurisdictions, Black people were denied the franchise because of the colour of their skin. They likewise faced restricted employment opportunities and were targets of police harassment and unjust court decisions.

Blacks attempting to migrate to Canada faced restrictions from the time it became a country, in 1867, to when its Whites-only policy was lifted in 1962. During that century, Canada re-invented itself as a “White man’s country” and denied racialized people the right to entry. A 1911 federal government order-in-council effectively halted the migration of Black people to Canada. This ended in 1962 but only due to international pressure.

Today, Canada still lives within the shadow of slavery, with its logic of Black inferiority, Black marginalization, and the denial of Black experience and pain. Nowhere is this more evident than in the manifestations of the COVID-19 crisis and in Black people’s often-fatal interactions with police. A disproportionate number of health workers are racialized, Blacks in particular. Personal support workers in long-term care facilities are particularly vulnerable. In Toronto, so far, five of the six Personal Support Workers (PSWs) who died from the virus were African Canadian. [Leonard Rodriguez](#) was one such worker. Before he died, he told his wife that the caregivers where he worked did not receive adequate personal protective equipment. He purchased his own. The lack of adequate PPE directly contributed to Rodriguez’s death. Black people are over-represented among COVID-19 fatalities, but as Canada does not collect race-based data, it’s difficult to know for certain what this number is.

Many other occupations in which Blacks and other minorities make up most the workforce are also deemed “essential services,” including janitorial, transportation, postal, sanitation, food delivery, courier, grocery and supermarket work, and meat packers and seasonal migrant farm labourers. These workers are at greater risk of infection and many have died. Alberta’s Cargill meat packing plant is a case in point. Cargill largely employs minority workers and experienced one of North America’s largest outbreaks of COVID-19, with up to 1500 cases. The spread to others is unknown.



Black Lives Matter, Anti-racism rally in Vancouver, 31 May 2020

YOUR COMMENTARY cont'd

The issue of police interaction with Black community members, much of it fatal for the Black people involved, has been a sore point for decades. Police killings of Black men, in particular, have now become normalized. In the past 40-plus years, young Black men, in major Canadian municipalities, have been shot or beaten to death. Toronto is a case in point: in 1976, Toronto police gunned down [Albert Johnson](#), who was mentally ill. Two years later, Toronto police shot and killed Buddy Evans, age 24. In 1988, [Lester Donaldson](#) and Michael Wade Lawson lost their lives to Toronto police. Donaldson suffered from schizophrenia, Lawson was 17 years old. In 1989, 23-year-old [Sophia Cook](#) was shot and wounded by Toronto police. Other police killings in the Toronto area include the 1990 killing of 16-year-old Marlon Neal and the 1991 killings of 22-year-old Raymond Lawrence and 21-year-old Ian Clifford Coley. Similar killings have occurred in cities across the country. The police have used the same excuse: they thought the victim had a weapon and they felt threatened. In every case, the cops were exonerated, and even if they were charged, these charges were eventually dropped.

Since 2000, many African Canadian men and women have lost their lives in police encounters. Among them, [Jermaine Carby](#), Andrew Loku, Reyald Jardine-Douglas, [Duane Christian](#), O'Brien Christopher-Reid, Ian Pryce, Nicholas Gibbs, Alex Wettlaufer, Jean-Pierre Bony, Eric Osawe, Frank Antony Berry, and [Junior Alexander Manon](#), died in police in jurisdictions across Canada. Police beat [Abdirahman Abdi](#) to death in front of his apartment building. D'Andre Campbell was shot and killed in a public park. And on May 27 two days after George Floyd died, [Regis Korchinski-Paquet](#), a young Torontonion woman, who was suffering a mental-health episode, "fell" from a 24-storey balcony after her mother called police for help. Once they arrived, they insisted on being left alone with her. Shortly afterward, Regis called out, "Help me Mom, please help me." A few moments later, her lifeless body was found on the ground.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation recently analysed data on fatal police encounters with civilians between 2000 and 2017. Researchers revealed that, in Toronto, while Black people make up 8.3 percent of the city's population, Black men are over-represented in fatal police encounters: close to 40 percent of the 52 persons killed by police during that time. But Canadian jurisdictions don't keep race-based data, so the racial identities of many persons killed by police remain unknown. We do know that many of these men and women had been mentally ill. Reyald Jardine-Douglas, Michael Eligon, Andrew Loku, and Regis Korchinski-Paquet are just a few.

Protests and demonstrations followed each of these deaths. In 1990, the Black Action Defence Committee's consistent agitation

against police brutality led to the creation of the Special Investigations Unit of Ontario, a civilian watchdog tasked with addressing police shootings and sexual misconduct. Yet the atrocities continue. Black Canadians are also vastly over-represented in police street checks, racial profiling or "stop and frisk" statistics, particularly in larger municipalities. A recent *Toronto Star* report notes that an elite police squad, working under the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy, stops predominantly non-White people without "reasonable and probable grounds to do so, and demands identification like the South African police used to do under Apartheid." This operation has documented over one million individuals in a draconian phenomenon called *Known to the police*.

In 2019, the [Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission](#) examined Halifax Regional Police street-check data for 2006 to 2017. It noted that Black men are 9.2 times more likely than White men to appear in Halifax street-check statistics even though they represent only 1.8% of Halifax's population. The Black female street-check rate (519 per 1,000) is greater than the rate for White males (481 per 1,000).

Street checks have far-reaching impacts. They affect employment opportunities for Black people and have led to injuries and lost lives. Street checks led to the killings of Jermaine Carby, Junior Alexander Manon, and the wounding of Sophia Cook. This carding treats Blacks like second-class citizens and has antecedents in Black codes, pass laws, slave laws, and sundown laws—statutes designed to regulate and control Black bodies during and after slavery. It racially profiles Black people and contravenes their rights under Canada's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

In 2017, the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and its Mission to Canada released its investigative report on Black life in Canada. The Report notes that Black Canadians suffer disproportionately from racial profiling, police arrest, incarceration, death from interactions with police who use lethal force, poor health outcomes (high rates of cancer, poor mental health, hypertension, and diabetes), and lack of access to education, employment opportunities and safe, adequate housing. Blacks are also over-represented in child welfare agencies, high school drop-out rates, and are more likely to experience spatial segregation and environmental racism. The UN Report also observed that Black Canadians are the most highly targeted group in Canada when it comes to hate crimes. In 2013, fully 44% of the hate crimes reported to the federal government were directed toward Black individuals.

YOUR COMMENTARY cont'd

Anti-Black racism is deeply embedded within Canadian institutions at every level and is manifested in policies and practices that negatively affect the quality of life and life opportunities of African Canadians. The UN Report notes that Black people are among Canada's poorest as their poverty rate "is more than three times the average for Whites." The UN Working Group points to the roots of anti-Black racism today as originating in the enslavement of Africans in Canada and the ensuing segregation. It issued a wide-ranging set of recommendations to address almost every aspect of Black life in Canada, placing the onus for carrying them out on our federal government. Five recommendations directly bear on the issues discussed here: The UN recommends that the government i) apologize for slavery and consider reparations for historical injustices; ii) discontinue the practice of street checks and other forms of racial profiling; iii) address anti-Black racism in the criminal justice system; iv) collect data that is disaggregated by race, colour, ethnic background, and national origins; and v) create a national department of African Canadian Affairs to represent the interests of African Canadians.

The federal government has yet to respond to the UN Working Group's recommendations. When journalists recently asked Prime Minister Justin Trudeau why he has not addressed the dire condition of Black life in Canada by responding to the Report, he replied, "We will continue to work with the Black community on the things we need to do." The fact is, there is no "continue" as Trudeau has not even begun to respond to the Report. This shows that Canada's prime minister does not see Black people's issues or anti-Black racism as important even though the UN clearly delineated these issues. This failure is a continuation of the trampling of Black people's human rights and a cover up of African Canadians' traumatic history at the hands of Whites.

Canada's government can do much to ameliorate the racial issues that the UN Report pointed out. For starters, it has jurisdiction over much of the criminal justice system. In the past two decades, the number Black people incarcerated in federal prisons has increased by 70%, whereas Blacks make up less than 3% of Canada's population. With the stroke of a pen, the prime minister could abolish racial profiling, halt the massive incarceration of Black people and make better use of these expenditures by investing in the amelioration of Black communities as articulated by National Democratic Party leader [Jagmeet Singh](#).

Multiculturalism is a cornerstone of Canada's constitution. Theoretically, within this multicultural frame, all racial, ethnic, and reli-

gious groups are "equal before and under the law, and have the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination." Yet, Canada's history of slavery has been swept under the rug, its anti-Black racism continues to be denied, and African Canadians remain second-class citizens.

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