



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF THE  
WEST INDIES

35TH WEST INDIAN CONFERENCE

# ARCHIVING WEST INDIAN LITERATURE & CULTURE

# Presentation Abstracts

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Hosted by the Department of Literatures in English

### **The Archivist and the Poet: Louise Bennett and the Sound of the Folk**

Rex Nettleford once said of Louise Bennett that she was a “poet of utterance”, and indeed, to hear Bennett’s voice is to immediately understand the source of her power and popularity. For years, however, scholars and critics had to rely on memory, hearsay and reviews of her performances or turn to her prolific writings in their studies of her relationship to Jamaica’s literary production and cultural politics. The recently digitized audio collection drawn from the Louise Bennett Fonds at the McMaster University Library will reinsert Bennett’s voice into these ongoing conversations. This sound archive holds an array of interviews and performances and as such, deepens our understanding of her contribution. If, as Brathwaite suggested, “the noise that it makes is part of the meaning”, her voice itself must be understood as a tool of decolonization and feminist critique. This paper will introduce this sonic archive as a source for decolonizing histories. It will also consider some of Bennett’s own archival practices: as a collector and subsequent vocalizer of Jamaican folk songs and stories in the 1950s and 60s, she contributed to the creation and performance of a sounded Jamaica. In the context of postcolonial struggles over inclusion and citizenship, the place of the “folk” was a source of contention. Bennett’s career ensured that these debates pivoted around sound.

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### **Virtual Diaspora: Live from the Reading Room Correspondence**

In Carole Boyce Davies’ pivotal text, *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject*, Davies proposes that the writings of Black woman be viewed as a series of boundary crossings, and not as a fixed, geographical, ethnically or nationally bound category of writing. I extend this proposition, and propose that the writings not only cross the boundaries of diaspora, but also space, time, and memory while activating the archive through the use of web 2.0 technology via blogging and podcasting. I employ this theory via Live From the Reading Room: Correspondence, a podcast series that aims to share interesting and engaging letters written by or to key historical figures from the African Diaspora. Each episode highlights a letter from popular collections housed in the [Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture](#), New York Public Library. This presentation will explore the ways in which the podcast series stands at the creative intersections of sound, text, and visual tropes that allow listeners to navigate the work and writings of our intellectual and artistic foremothers and forefathers, free of secondary (and tertiary) interrogations via various interpretations of primary source documents found within our collections. In turn, listeners are able to engage a multifaceted view of Black genius, creativity, ingenuity, and the personal lives of (some) of the twentieth and twenty first century’s leading figures of the African Diaspora.

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### **Safeguarding the Future of the Past: West Indian Literary Archives in Transition**

It has long been recognised that the Anglophone Caribbean has generated an extraordinary level and quality of literary outputs across the twentieth century given its relative size. Yet the celebrated presence of contemporary Caribbean writing within the global literary scene masks a real knowledge deficit and significant gaps in the archives. This paper will address some ways in which literary scholars might act collectively to meet the pressing need to pay attention to Caribbean literary heritage. It will also think about what the future shape of its literary past might be if we are to safeguard the fuller histories of writers and writings across this region? Finally, I will highlight some of the questions that archives – both real and imagined – can help us to ask about West Indian literature as a tradition and some challenges for recovery research.

Alison Donnell, University of Reading UK, I would like to use Prezi or PowerPoint  
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### **Politicised Archives: Re-visiting Nanny’s Saga**

What the archives don’t (and cannot) say is just what we have been saying: that Nanny was a Queen Mother; they therefore fail to give her respect, [..]

Despite the value of archival projects on Nanny of the Maroons, they destabilise epistemological boundaries of oral/written, truth/falsehood, thus warranting critical interrogation. This politics of history necessarily intertwines with the literary, creating gaps in the narrative and complicating the archival process. For eminent Caribbean poet and historian Kamau Brathwaite, Nanny’s blurred subjectivity can be traced from nineteenth century speculations to “the ideology of buttocks.” Though a revisionist Nanny is embodied in the literary projects of Caribbean authors from Louise Bennett, Vic Reid, Lorna Goodison, Aduko Onuora to Michelle Cliff, the larger questions arising from archival fetishization of Nanny are yet to be considered. Critical interrogation of Nanny’s “saga” can provide lessons for the future, as Caribbean scholars recognise the value of contemporary archival projects but refrain from glamourisation, and instead, challenge the power dynamics that historically infiltrate cultural production within the region.

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### **“Who Is Mr Brown?”: Jamaican Legends and The Archiving of National Memory**

When stories of a haunting gain infamy and become nationally told tales that rise to the forefront of a nation’s consciousness, are these public discourses about supposedly real paranormal events associated with national longings? In other words, what can an interrogation of the archive of nationally acknowledged hauntings and other supernatural performances expose about a country’s communal anxieties? This presentation explores allegedly factual reports of supernatural incidents that have acquired national renown in Jamaica, particularly the story of a fugitive coffin on wheels that supposedly navigated its way through Kingston in 1970, piloted by three crows perched on top. This alleged incident resulted in tremendous panic in and around Kingston. According to newspaper reports, these rumours lured thousands of Jamaicans out of schools and offices as they lined the streets in an effort to catch a glimpse of this bizarre sight. This and other very tall tales have lodged themselves so securely in the Jamaican national archive of legends that they are consistently being passed from one generation to the next. My presentation seeks to identify critical approaches to these legends.

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### **"Staging Prophetic History"**

This analysis considers the ways in which the theatrical stage can become an ever-changing historical archive. I specifically analyze the dramatization of the historical Revivalist prophet, Alexander Bedward in Louis Marriott's 1960 Jamaican play *Bedward*. Louis Marriott, like most Jamaicans, had only heard of Alexander Bedward as a "figure of ridicule" until he stumbled across conflicting narratives of the Revivalist preacher in archived newspapers at the Kingston West Indian Reference Library (138). To this day, Bedward is usually remembered as the lunatic preacher who broke his leg when he tried to fly to heaven. Inspired by the written archive, interviews with a small group of surviving Bedwardites in August Town in 1957, and his own fictional machinations, Marriott's playscript *Bedward* (originally produced as a radio drama *The Shepherd*) presents the prophet's legacy as a story of religious zealotry, anti-African prejudice, and overwhelming charismatic authority. The dramatized Bedward is a complex character; he is a rigidly principled, idealistic, and egomaniacal prophet who eventually prophesies to his dispossessed followers that there will be an imminent and catastrophic eschatological event. The protagonist repeatedly claims he is the black messiah destined to initiate the eschatological event that will destroy the white oppressors (and the black Jamaicans who support them) and ultimately lead to his faithful followers' collective salvation. Marriott's decision to dramatize this story— to present a time-bending narrative within the temporal constraints of live theater — amplifies the paradoxical nature of prophetic temporalities. What would it mean to stage an historical account of an impossible future? In the analysis that follows, I demonstrate how the text's narrative insists on the impossibility of Bedward's prophetic future by illustrating the necessary "failure" of Bedward's millennialist project, along with the state's impetus to contain and delegitimize Bedward's charismatic authority when it becomes threatening. I then argue that the dramatic form of the text re-presents that same narrative of failure as a continuous messianic event, repeatedly performing Blanchot's "nonetheless." This ongoing theatrical enactment of messianic prophecy, I conclude, allows us to re-imagine Bedward's prophecy through an African-derived temporal framework, which challenges the notion of chronological finitude upon which a failure narrative must rely.

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### **More Than Metaphor: Representations of Hansen's Disease in Contemporary Island Fiction**

My paper is a comparative study focusing on the representation of Hansen's disease (leprosy) in Caribbean and Hawaiian fiction. Key texts include Kei Miller's *The Last Warner Woman*, Tiphonie Yanique's "How To Escape From A Leper Colony," Lawrence Scott's *Night Calypso*, Lois Yamanaka's *Blu's Hanging*, Alan Brenner's *Molokai*, and Kiana Davenport's *Shark Dialogues*. An analysis of these pieces reveals how writers engage the idea of leprosy and represent the age-old stigma surrounding the disease, sometime refuting it, sometimes endorsing it.

This study refutes reductive readings of leprosy as metaphor, and, instead, promotes depictions of Hansen's disease patients that recognize the humanity and dignity for those affected by the disease.

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### **Social Media Archives and Uninhibited Access: Following Marlon James and Staceyann Chin Online**

Out of Print, One Archive? Drawing on a few ideas from Jacques Derrida's *Archive Fever*, I will discuss the implications of what it means to archive a text or cultural artifact, which align with themes relevant to Caribbean literary scholarship, such as analyzing how authors focus on the past in order to represent and organize thoughts about the present. This theoretical stance is applicable to conventional Caribbean digital archives such as the Digital Library of the Caribbean, and Caribbean literary journals and blogs. Social media in particular opens up new possibilities for what a Caribbean archive is, and does, for authors and their audience. As we engage the post-human future of Caribbean Literatures and Cultures, we may view how Marlon James' Facebook page and Staceyann Chin's "Livingroom Protest" Youtube series create a radical space of instant archival production and technological reproduction through textual and audio/visual media platforms. With the digital world dismantling the conventions of the relationship between authors and audience, one wonders if today's social media access will become tomorrow's "Caribbean Lit."

Note: Internet access, or at least a computer with an overhead projector will be useful for this presentation. Thank you.

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### **Archives of the Caribbean - showcasing the creative argument for humanity**

As an artist, I understand that 'access to a globalized Caribbean literary and cultural archive' will generate new critical approaches, providing opportunity and threat in equal measure. I also believe that through disproportionate levels of mental health in the UK, future research will evidence links between 'The Body Culture' and 'Memory', as one aspect of archiving the condition of the Caribbean Diaspora. People are literally holding stories, which can provide value to others. Unlocking and capitalising that intellectual property is an immediate challenge, however the solution lies in the application of such knowledge.

African Violet...Hybrid of Circumstance a painting in a book, where each 'picture-sculpture' represents a moment in the journey from Africa to the UK, facilitating better understanding the roots and routes of the UK resident African Diaspora. The narrative rotates around the personified figure of "African Violet", but also includes other sculptured personalities such as "Mademoiselle Haiti", "Grandma Jamaica" and "Great Aunt Britannia"

The inadequate humanitarian response of the contemporary refugee crisis is uncoupled from the monologue on world history. Caribbean archives have much to teach the world about its 'legacy' of global inaction and should be at the forefront of this global conversation. America through Hollywood has succeeded in re-writing history through the cameras' lens, Europe, through its golden age of literature and art and maintaining a narrative which is this monologue. With an effective reimagining of existing content through technology, 'Caribbean Archives' can showcase themselves creatively to a world which is increasingly more and more visually focused.

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### **Embodied Archives of Independence: Stuart Hall and Rex Nettleford**

Born on February 3, 1932 and 1933 respectively, Jamaican intellectuals Stuart Hall and Rex Nettleford received Rhodes Scholarships to Oxford, and are rightly thought of as founding figures of British and Jamaican cultural studies. For these generational cohorts, colonialism was

an intimately lived structure. Refusing its ideological trappings, Hall argues, provided the context for making men of this generation, who lead the nation into independence. But to what extent did these gendered refusals challenge or reproduce colonialism's intimate structures and socialization of desire? I explore these questions through a reading of Hall's and Nettleford's retrospective self-narrations about their own intellectual formations, what I call an "embodied archive of independence." Their accounts disclose a similar sense of unbelonging in the spaces they made home (London and Kingston), which then served as a catalyst to their intellectual and political orientations. Unbelonging also reveals the limits of their refusal. Comparatively reading Hall and Nettleford's "embodied archives," this conference paper simultaneously theorizes an archive of feelings, independence and masculinities.

The ability to play film clip—which will be on my flash drive.

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#### **Reflections on Archiving the Early History of Film in Jamaica**

Despite the recent emergence of 'postcolonial cinema historiography' (Ponzanesi and Waller 2012), the history of film in the Caribbean during the early twentieth century has remained largely unexposed. The reason for this gap in research is partly ascribed to the lack of archival sources. Not only are many films shot in the Caribbean in that period unknown to the public, when they are known, they have most of the times, and certainly before the 1930s, not survived the test of time. In addition, until recently newspaper archives in the Caribbean often offered inaccessible, fragmented or entirely unavailable information. However, with the current expansion of visual and digital archives, both in the Caribbean and elsewhere, the opportunities for collecting (the bits and pieces of) the history of film in the Caribbean expanding as well.

In this paper I will reflect on my archival research on Jamaica's early film history, which culminated in a PhD thesis in 2013 and is currently under revision for publication as a book. I will share my experiences searching, collecting and evaluating the primary sources of my research (i.e. historical films and newspapers), which were to be found in many places, and often in the corners and crevices, of the internet. In so doing, I will discuss some of the opportunities and challenges of the use of online and digital archives for the study of Caribbean film and popular culture in the early twentieth century.

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#### **"Archiving the Conference 1981-2016: Institutional Memory and West Indian Literary Celebration"**

At the conclusion of the 2015 conference hosted by the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, it became clear that many of the younger/newer scholars present had very little knowledge of the origins and initial aims of the annual event. In an effort to redress this imbalance and to chart the developments in literary and critical debates and developments in the region since the first conference in 1981, my presentation will focus on the circumstances which led to the founding of the conference and the themes and topics it has covered over the thirty five years since that first small gathering at University of the Virgin Islands. Utilizing interviews, conference programmes, posters and publications such as selected papers and special issues of the *Journal of West Indian Literature*, with images and sound recordings where available, I attempt to sketch some of the highlights, controversies, personalities and difficulties faced by the loose coalition of academic institutions that have kept the conference an annual event. I suggest what this joint effort has contributed to literary and theoretical scholarship. More crucially, I hope to trace an informal history of some of the major features of such scholarship that unfolded over the period concern in the papers and keynote lectures presented.

Such an exercise is a first and necessary step, perhaps, in recognizing the place of such occasions in the consolidation of a discipline and a body of literature. The paper will seek the input of as wide a range of informants as possible, and the collaboration of the UWI libraries – particularly the West Indian Collections – in making available to future students and faculty the early stages of *regional* research dissemination in Anglophone and later comparative Caribbean writing.

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#### **"Henry Swanzy and Literary Radio Broadcast in Ghana, 1954 - 1958"**

In November 1954, after Henry Swanzy had served successfully for eight years as editor and producer of the BBC literary radio program, "Caribbean Voices," he was seconded to Accra, Ghana, then known as the Gold Coast, to establish a literary radio program there. The weekly radio program he organized in Accra from 1954 to 1958 was called "The Singing Net" and Swanzy patterned in on the "Caribbean Voices" format that had served him well during his eight years of BBC broadcasts to the Anglophone Caribbean. As he had done with "Caribbean Voices," Swanzy used the medium of radio to encourage literary activity and enterprise among aspiring Ghanaian writers. Not unlike the situation in the Anglophone Caribbean, "The Singing Net" facilitated literary development in Ghana even as BBC officialdom construed such programming as part of the strategic preparatory groundwork for Ghanaian decolonization and national independence. This paper presents my preliminary examination of the relationship between BBC literary radio programming in Accra and the development of Ghanaian literature written in English. The analysis is relevant to the conference theme of "Archiving Caribbean Literature and Popular Culture" not only as a result of Henry Swanzy's dual connection to the literary history of Ghanaian literature in English and to the literary history of the Anglophone Caribbean, but also as a consequence of the importance of poet Kamau Brathwaite's Ghanaian sojourn (1955 - 1962) to the shaping of his own cultural and poetic consciousness.

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### **The Scar as the Pathway of a Healing Narrative in *Omeros* of Derek Walcott and *The Dewbreaker* of Edwidge Danticat**

This paper will analyze the allegory of the scar that is present in the novels *Omeros* of Derek Walcott and *The Dewbreaker* of Edwidge Danticat as a literary motive that allows a representation of a deeper psychological trauma and a deposit of History. The scars present in many of the characters of both novels give coherence to the narrative and allows the re-telling of a colonial and post-dictatorial past that some have tried to bury. As an inferred conclusion of both texts the metaphor of the scar/wound is the pathway of starting a narrative that serves as a healing balm for the psychological invisible wound rotting in the insides of those characters who experienced the colonial and post-dictatorial trauma.

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### **"Caribbean Buzz Feed: Four Ways to Read a Night Woman"**

As proof that press-pass-only access to exclusive events is fading under the smartphone's apps, on November 25, 2015, social media brought curious spectators into Port-of-Spain's Big Black Box theatre to see Trinidadian clothing designer Meiling debut her "Night Women" fashion show. Powerful images and social commentary flooded Twitter, blogs, and Face Book. Meiling had created a Caribbean buzz feed, of sorts, by provoking not one or two, but four ways to read a night woman. Presenting colonially dressed models in glimmering, coal black masks, Meiling's Caribbean literature and Caribbean art infused fashion show was a prismatic return to the past and a meaningful entrance into an imagined Afro-Caribbean future. The fashion show directly linked the talent of fellow Trinidadian and mixed media artist Brianna McCarthy's "Vetiver Night Women" paintings and "vessel" masks and boldly linked to the Afro-Caribbean colonial past imagined in Jamaican author Marlon James' novel *The Book of Night Women*. And as well-versed consumers of Caribbean artistry, there are recognizable reverberations of Haitian writer Edwidge Danticat's "Night Women" in both McCarthy's and James' night women. This paper, therefore, employs the dub aesthetic in order to read the multiplicity of "night women" across the Afro-Caribbean and within various forms of Caribbean artistry. This paper is an analytical celebration of the ways in which social media produces an open access digital archive of multiple perspectives and literary hyper-links -- or what I call a Caribbean buzz feed -- under the subject of night woman.

Special Equipment Request: Video output (PowerPoint visuals)

Isis Semaj-Hall, Independent Scholar

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### **"Caribbean Oral Tradition and the Making of a Diasporic Archive in Donald Hinds's *Journey to an Illusion*"**

This paper examines the conference theme of *Archiving the Caribbean Diaspora* through a consideration of the unique perspectives of Caribbean migrants to London during the period immediately following World War II. Jamaican Donald Hinds's *Journey to an Illusion* is a thorough account of the ways in which Caribbean peoples reacted to life in the metropole. I argue that *Journey to an Illusion* represents an oral archive reflecting three major components of the West Indian experience in Britain: the fragmented nature of life for migrants from across the region, the centrality of patterns of British racialization in both the colonies and metropole, and the conceptualizations of identity forged by migrants in London as a response to the particular conditions in the capital and informed by their island-based identities. Hinds's work upsets traditional notions of archival practice and collection, instead his interactions and engagement with fellow West Indians provided the foundational connections through which he was able to gather their opinions, attitudes, and ideas. I suggest that Hinds carried a distinctly Caribbean practice and method of community engagement and social interaction, which enabled him to gain an acute perception of the Caribbean perspective. Unlike the academic sociological studies done by British intellectuals in the 1950s and '60s, Hinds's position as both migrant and researcher

provided him an insider-viewpoint regarding the perceptions migrants would reveal. Hinds's sociological-literary method reflects the hybridity of Caribbean history and society and its durability among diaspora populations in mid-twentieth century London.

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### **From Montage to the Digital. Caribbean Literature in the World Today**

Writers such as Kamau Brathwaite and NourbeSe Philip utilise digital iconography to fashion a form and language that speaks to, and images history and becoming.

Nonetheless their innovations are located in classical cinematic aesthetics and this paper explores how this use of the digital is in many ways a culmination of the ideas found in early cinema and cinema theory.

In order to make these connections I will look closely at the philosophical writings of Gilles Deleuze, in particular his two books *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema Two: The Time-Image* and examine two other works, *Born to Slow Horses* by Kamau Brathwaite and *Zong!* by NourbeSe Philip, in the light of Deleuze's conceptualisation of cinema.

I will also point to Paul Willemen's essay on the digital, in the collection *The Montage Principle. Eisenstein in New Cultural and Critical Contexts*.

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### **Affective Archives of Indenture: Indo-Caribbean Feminist Engagements with Subaltern Histories**

In this presentation, I analyze the relationship between landscape, memory and the body in producing an affective archive of Indo-Caribbean indenture. In *The Last English Plantation* by Jan Lowe Shinebourne, June Lehall's transition to secondary school is set within the Cold War politics in 1950s Guiana. As ethnic divisions begin to consolidate, June refuses to participate in racial hierarchies and the bourgeois denigration of agricultural labor. I argue that June's experiences of intense somatic discomfort and immersive landscapes indexes how Indo-Caribbean feminist engagements with indenture use embodied memory as a site of resistant knowledge production. Bringing Indo-Caribbean feminism with M. Jacqui Alexander's "Pedagogies of the Scared" and postcolonial critiques of negative dialectics, I explore how subaltern agency of indentured laborers inheres in landscapes and social relations that produce the somatic body as a feminist archive of indenture.

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### **The Archive That Is Not One: Anglophone Popular Literature In Jamaica and New England**

At the very end of the seventeenth century, the London poet Ned Ward published two pamphlets, *A Trip to Jamaica* (1698), and *A Trip to New England* (1699). For Ward, New Englanders and Jamaicans alike are lazy and promiscuous, but he uses different methods to describe each place. In Jamaica (which Ward actually visited), nature is too grotesque to describe: "I shall not undertake here to describe these Creatures, because some of them are so Frightfully Ugly, that if any Friends Wife with Child should long for the Reading of my Book, it should chance to make her Miscarry." (12) Ashore, he comments, "Many other fruits there are, that are neither worth eating, naming, or describing." (15) In New England, (which Ward does not bother to visit) there is more or less accurate natural history, because, as it happens, he plagiarizes these descriptions from John Josselyn's scientifically ambitious *New England's Rarities* (1670).

Compounding this archival imbalance, Ned Ward's fanciful maledictions are themselves the archive for *The Jamaica Lady*, (1720) an anonymous novella. In popular English literature of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, facts seem to matter more in some colonies than in others. This paper will explore the ramifications of this epistemic imbalance as a way of reading Caribbean literature in an Atlantic context. More broadly, this paper frames a comparison between West Indian and North American colonial literatures that foreshadows evolving discursive differences between the Caribbean and the United States.

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#### ***In the Same Boats: Toward an Afro-Atlantic Intellectual Cartography***

Despite the oft-expressed aim of transcending borders, the study of Global South intellectual production has been stubbornly balkanized, its limits and contours largely determined by the elsewhere of Empire. Caribbeanist scholars in particular often find themselves in the position of negotiating nation-language frontiers that are the persistent legacies of colonialism, thus constrained by the implicitly Euro-centric foundations of contemporary university training. In response to this phenomenon, I have been working with a team of technologists to develop *In the Same Boats*. This digital humanities project consists of a series of interactive bio-bibliographical and content-rich maps that trace the movement of seminal intellectuals of the Caribbean, the wider Americas, and Africa throughout the Atlantic world. It aims to chart the extent to which Afro-Caribbean, Afro-American, Afro-Latino, and African cultural actors may have been in both punctual and sustained conversation with one another – attending the same conferences, publishing with the same journals and presses, active in the same political groups, elbow-to-elbow in the same Parisian cafés and on the same planes, literally and metaphorically in the same boats – as they circulate throughout the diverse spaces of the Americas, Africa, Europe, and beyond. Rendering visually the points of spatio-temporal intersection among these figures, *ITSB* pushes against the monolingualism and attendant border-drawing that too often keep Caribbeanist, Latin-Americanist, Africanist, and Afro-Americanist scholars from engaging in transnational and transcolonial dialogue. An ongoing, open-access, collaborative venture, *ITSB* allows specialists of the diverse linguistic regions of the Afro-Atlantic to integrate their research into a networked cartographic archive.

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#### **The acquisition of the Ian McDonald Papers: A case study at the Alma Jordan Library**

This presentation will focus on the acquisition of the Ian McDonald Papers at the Alma Jordan Library of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. This is a significant addition to the Special Collections materials spanning many decades, and particularly significant because of the role Mr McDonald has played in the transition of the Guyana's sugar industry from the mid-fifties, his avid interest in sports, and his writing of Caribbean literature, all of which are reflected in this sizeable collection. This presentation will highlight some of the issues which had to be considered in the acquisition of his Papers by the Alma Jordan Library.

Researchers and creators of similar collections would also benefit from this presentation as it discusses the drafting and terms stipulated in the legal agreement, and the major role this agreement played in determining the outcome of the negotiation process. The outcome was also largely determined by relationship building and gaining the authors trust in ensuring that his possessions will be treated with due care and respect for posterity. Finally the content of the collection will be partly itemized and snippets of original source material revealed, amplifying the value of this particular literary archive to the region.

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#### **Reading "Film Noir": No Telephone to Heaven, Revolution, and the Filmic Archive**

This paper argues that Michelle Cliff's novel *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987) offers a revolutionary representation of the Caribbean that hinges on destabilizing how the past is literally seen through the visual archive of film. Critics have positioned Cliff's novel as a critique of a literary archive of revolutionary Caribbean narratives written by men for its feminist politics and non-linear form. But what critics have not explored at length involves how Cliff's novel attempts to orchestrate revolution at the site of a film set. Indeed, *No Telephone to Heaven* is preoccupied with an archive of visual culture beyond its climactic and evocatively-titled final chapter "Film Noir"; the novel also includes numerous references to films, television, and newspapers. By invoking movies set during slavery such as *Gone With the Wind* (1939) and *Burn!* (1966) as well as the genre of film noir, Cliff's novel invites readers to reflect on film in all its layered meanings: as commercial entertainment, as political enlightenment for the masses, and as multinational industry. Examining Cliff's filmic archive shows that *No Telephone to Heaven* does not merely rewrite Caribbean revolution. More provocatively, Cliff's novel foregrounds the politics and economics of film consumption and production in order to re-vision what a future—and successful—revolution in the Caribbean must entail.

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#### **ACCESSING CUBAN FOOD ARCHIVES. ARCHIVING ACCESS TO FOOD IN CUBA, 1857-2016**

This paper traces the circulation of Cuban food writing through its entry into various archives and through the access granted, or denied, to those archives. The archives contain and produce the alternating ropes of abundance and scarcity that have characterized Cuban cookbooks over the past 150 years, from the 1857 *Cocinero Cubano* and the 1910 *Manual del Cocinero* archived in the Cuban Heritage Collection, the first two GITMO cookbooks archived in the Digital Library of the Caribbean, and the more contemporary Cuban cookbooks and cooking shows produced in Spain, Cuba, and the United States during Fidel Castro's rule. While Cuban cookbooks from the colonial and Independence periods emphasize the tropical abundance of the island's plants along with the fruitful crossing of culinary traditions and the rise of national food culture, in the years following the Revolution, Nitza Villapol made a virtue of limitation with her array of cookbooks and cooking shows as Cuban Diasporic cookbooks combined abundant nostalgia with an embrace of the productivity US and European free markets. Untangling the tropes of abundance and scarcity in the archives—including the emergence of YouTube and social media as

archives—reveals a map of the colonial, anticolonial, and neocolonial foodways that produced and granted access to the tastes of Cuba, and establishes surprising links between the impact of the Cuban Revolution, the unique region of Guantanamo Bay, the contours of the US embargo of Cuba, and the borderlines of Revolutionary Cuban food and publication policies.

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“So mi get it, so mi tell it”: The parameters and potentials of digital archives

Part of a larger project on the intersections of Caribbean narratives and technology, this paper explores the narrativity of digital archives. That is, the stories digital archives tell about Caribbean stories and about the Caribbean more generally. The term “archive” is rather hard to pin down and is often applied to any collection and/or digitization of materials. If, as Michel Foucault argues, the archive determines “what can be said,” then what and how do digital archives “say” the Caribbean? To answer this question, I consider a range of individual and institutional archival efforts online and the tensions between the two by examining narratorial archives such as *Caribbean Histories Revealed* and the *Early Caribbean Digital Archive*, as well as those not-so-obviously invested in a linear narrative, like *The Spaces Between Words* and the *Digital Library of the Caribbean*. How do these newer forms of preserving and presenting narratives about the region make interventions into what has been, and what can now be, “said” by and about the Caribbean? To close, I take a brief look *Like Flies to Whatless Boys* by Robert Antoni and the novel’s related web experiment. This is one of the few, perhaps only, Caribbean novels with a web component, consisting of an extra-textual archive of documents and films related to the novel. Setting Antoni’s fictional digital archive experiment alongside the digital archival projects discussed above, I explore the parameters and potentials of digital archives and their shifting relevance to Caribbean (literary) studies.

Special equipment: Projection for PowerPoint and internet connectivity.

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Bridging Caribbean Diasporas through the Cuban Theater Digital Archive

Live theater and performance are probably two of the most evanescent forms of cultural heritage. They are always ephemeral and non-repeatable. As intangible cultural manifestations, they transmit an embodied memory that is extremely fragile and risks disappearing. This non-repeatability presents challenges to any theater researcher and artist in relation to documentation, challenges that are exponentially increased in the case of Cuban and Caribbean theater. In this paper, I present one attempt to address these challenges: the Cuban Theater Digital Archive (CTDA, [www.cubantheater.org](http://www.cubantheater.org)). Developed at the University of Miami in collaboration with Cuba’s National Council for the Performing Arts, the CTDA is an interactive, bilingual cultural heritage research and digital publication site for Cuban and US-Cuban theater and performing arts.

In this paper I will discuss the range of materials it encompasses focusing on Caribbean theater, the space it offers for innovative hypermedia publication, and the role of digital archives in the preservation, production, and interpretation of diasporic Caribbean cultural heritage. As an interactive pedagogical tool, it allows students to be involved in research as they can author specific pages. Theatre researchers have access to materials they can rearrange to create other interpretative “stories.” Informed by post-custodial and community archival theories and practices, I will demonstrate how CTDA is part of a virtual culture that lives beyond cyberspace and allows communication between communities that are politically separated. At this time of changing attitudes in US-Cuban relations, CTDA and its goal of preserving and providing access to evanescent performance materials, while fostering scholarly communication may even find itself in a position to serve as a model to other digital initiatives exploring US-Cuba collaboration.

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**Destroying the Single Story with Likes and Shares: Social Media and Home**

Social media and the Caribbean story has often been ignored except by those whose blood are across the water. Telling our own stories and regaining a sense of home has long been difficult, that is, until the growth of social media. In this present moment, returning home has never been easier. Being the owners and creators of our stories have never been easier. Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie sums this up in her TEDTalk on the danger of a single story. She charges us to show the varied elements of our lives and, by that, grow nuanced and powerful. She is not the only writer and scholar with this vision. Stuart Hall long addressed this in his idea of “becoming”. “Becoming”, for Hall, is the power of creation and of storytelling. “Becoming” now is epitomized by Jamaican rising comedian Majah Hype who gained fame through his YouTube videos depicting Caribbean people abroad. “The goal is to unify Caribbean people as one,” Majah says. Trailblazers like Majah Hype are creating an

International Caribbean Television network through social media. “Such texts restore an imaginary fullness or plentitude, to set against the broken rubric of our past” (Hall 225). The power regained from social media is longreaching; it maintains investment in our countries, allows the Western world a glimpse into a Caribbean that is often unseen, and, most importantly, creates a digital home. This econnection makes home portable, accessible. Home is right on our smartphones.

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**Dancing and Performing for archiving the Caribbean body: the example of four Martinican contemporaneous artists**

Archiving is activating the memory but also being responsive to all the changes occurring in the societies and populations' ways of living. Artists are generally very sensitive to these occurrences and always try to lay traces of these changes in their creations. The concept of “encodage” ,developed by Stuart Hall, defines the body as a space of expression of the memory and as a location for cultural facts and development. For artists and notably dancers, choreographers and performers, the body , as such, becomes both a tool of creation, and also a space where the historical and the societal memory is archived and enlived. In the Caribbean, where the official History is a deficient one, where entire branches of the afro-descendants' history are ignored, the question of archiving and reactivating memory and reconstructing history is crucial. Caribbean contemporaneous artists embarked upon these questions; conferring them a peculiar dimension through the exploration of new horizons that can be exhibited to the whole planet through the web diffusion.

This communication, thus proposes to explore those aspects through the work of four Martinican contemporaneous artists who are now well known at the international level thanks to the boldness of their work but also thanks to the exhibition of their work on the web. So this essay will examine the memory of the body and the body as memory in the Caribbean through the work of Martinican dancers and performers:

- Habdaphaï (performer)
- Alfred Alerte (Dancer and choreographer)
- Christiane Emmanuelle (Dancer and choreographer)
- Annabelle Guérédrat (Dancer, choreographer and performer)

The communication will also try to analyze the body as archive of space and history as well as “monstration” of the people memory through the concepts of encodage and deterritorialization.

The presentation will be illustrated by several samples of the artists' work.

A video projector will be necessary

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### **Identity Formation in Adolescent Females of Caribbean Descent**

This paper proposal will explore the identity formation of adolescent Caribbean American women in New York City through the comparison of two important works of fiction by West Indian authors. Topics to be explored include the myths and realities of being a daughter in a Caribbean American family, as well as the contradictions and stereotypes that Caribbean women face as they strive to become successful in America.

In *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (1959), Paule Marshall chronicles the complicated journey of an adolescent girl caught in the deceptive web of gender, cultural identity and race in Brooklyn. *The Friends* is a stirring novel by Rosa Guy about a lonely Caribbean teenager who befriends a wayward African American teenager. By juxtaposing the journey of these characters, and their environments: Brooklyn during World War Two, and Harlem during the Civil Rights Era, this paper will also provide a context for discussing the historical transformation of the West Indian community in New York City.

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"Your end is your beginning": *Nothing's Mat* and fractal genealogies

Erna Brodber's *Nothing's Mat* (2014) is a profoundly insubordinate family saga which challenges both the conventions and the ideologies of its genre. The novel re-conceptualizes genealogy not as a prior truth to be unearthed from documentary archives, but as a creative act grounded in the synergistic interaction of oral and material culture. Brodber's unnamed protagonist (later called "Princess" by her husband) hears her family history from her father's Cousin Nothing while also learning to make a sisal mat, which comes to serve for Princess as the repository of both the family's stories and its ancestral spirits. An alternative archive, the mat functions at the intersection of materiality and performativity; further, it transforms the teleological linearity of a family tree into a fractal-spiral circularity in which "Your end is your beginning" (14), patterns are tangible, and multiple connections are possible between individual points. This paper will argue that, through the figure of the mat, the novel rejects hegemonic genealogies - those putatively neutral, ostensibly fact-based archives of identity - in favour of fractal genealogies: dynamic, open-ended processes that honour recursivity, emphasize care and connection over blood relationship, and are uniquely responsive to both the history and the futurity of Caribbean peoples.

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### **"The U.S. Occupation of Haiti and the West Indian Archive"**

The archival turn in Caribbean literary studies has been closely connected to a challenge to nationalist literary histories. While nationalist versions of literary history have often made it hard to see connections between different parts of the region or cross-imperial influences, archival research can uncover buried political and literary projects. In this presentation, I will give the example of how we might position West Indian literature and activism from the 1920s and 1930s in relation to the U.S. occupation of Haiti. Looking at periodicals from this period in particular allows us to see the important engagements of British colonial subjects with U.S. imperialism, both in terms of political activism in support of Haitian resistance as well as responses to U.S. culture industries' representations of the Caribbean as a site of voodoo, zombies, and primitivist superstition. A reading of lesser-known periodical fiction by writers like Eric Walrond in relation to other overlooked materials from this period will allow me to reflect on how archival research can reconstruct alternative visions to nationalism such as pan-Africanism and communism that animated earlier political and literary creativity but since decolonization have been largely disavowed.

Raphael Dalleo  
Associate Professor of English  
Bucknell University

### **Postwar West Indian Fiction and an Archive of Trash Forms**

My paper argues that the category of "trash" is an essential component of West Indian cultural production. More specifically, I argue that circum-Atlantic literary traditions are shaped not only by canonical works but also by an understudied stream of trash forms crisscrossing the West Indies and its diasporas. My paper traces the boom in representations of white trash subjectivities in post-war Caribbean plantation family sagas from their incipient manifestation in the early works of Faulkner to their mutation in the burgeoning popular fiction market of Edgar Mittelholzer, Catherine Dillon, Jeanne Wilson, Roalinde Ashe, and Christopher Nicole. A West Indian archive of paperback trash fiction can be found, in part, in special academic collections devoted to literary writers such as the Caryl Phillips Papers at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. But these institutional sites represent only one facet of the archive. Like Ann Laura Stoler's understanding of the archive in the global south as inclusive of major and minor components, my work brings together canonical and works that have left "barely a historiographic trace" (*Along The Archival Grain* 5). It pulls together works that are located at institutions of higher learning and works that are dispersed in antiquarian bookstores around the globe, in on-line digitalized collections, and in bibliographical entries on otherwise unavailable cultural texts.

My presentation requires Audio visual technology to show a powerpoint presentation.

Ramón E. Soto-Crespo  
Associate Professor of English  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

### **The Anachronisms of Exile: Time and Remembrance in George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin***

George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* is a novel rooted upon time and remembrance. Through the work of G. and other narrators, the novel approaches time as an unpredictable force that for better or worse creates change and upheaval in the lives of the characters. In turn, remembrance becomes the ability to compare events of the past with "the way things are now," making the present into an unreliable catalyst by means of which G. and his fellow villagers may assess an uncertain future as the younger generations of Barbados seek their fortune in the United States and elsewhere in the Caribbean. Lamming's novel is a narrative all too conscious of its precarious relationship

with the lives and times of peoples, spaces, and places that would be otherwise disregarded by Eurocentric colonial history and the inevitable passing of the men, women, and children who live out their passion of resistance in the face of mid-twentieth century European capitalist hegemony and the evils it visits upon the impoverished masses it practically sweeps away.

Raúl Javier Vázquez Vélez, PhD student  
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#### **Hiss, Pop, Skip and Gone: Archiving Reggae Vinyl**

The once thriving record industry in Jamaica has dwindled down to only a few producers of vinyl records and there are only a handful of record stores that sell vinyl records in all of Jamaica. These culturally significant recordings are becoming increasingly rare and hard to find. The vinyl recordings of vintage reggae music represent important aspects of Caribbean culture. Unfortunately, many of these pressings were limited to small batches and these records have either become lost, destroyed by time and the elements or they have been tucked away in the collections of reggae vinyl aficionados who prize and secure them.

The advent of technology has resulted in the elimination of the need for vinyl records. The cd and mp3 downloads have become the preferred format for most casual listeners and even sound system selectors in Jamaica. This has created a situation in which most artists release their music online. These recordings become digitally archived in listener's audio collections and elsewhere, thereby ensuring that they can be easily accessed and reproduced. Therefore the future of the island's music is easily archived.

On the other hand, vinyl records pressed during Jamaica's heyday of musical production are not safely stored away in "the cloud". If they still exist at all, classic vinyl records are found largely in the hands of radio stations, sound system selectors and private collectors. A comprehensive collection of these vinyl recordings and their master tapes should be amassed and stored in a central location where they can be properly archived.

Dr. Robert Schmid  
UWI Cave Hill  
UWIOC

#### **Archiving of the Caribbean Diaspora in Austin Clarke's Fiction of the 2000 Decade**

This paper aims at analysing the scope and stakes of the diffusion of Austin Clarke's fiction from his 2002 winning of the Giller Prize for the novel *The Polished Hoe*. Using a multidisciplinary approach, including polysystem and reception theories, it analyses the archiving of Caribbeanness in Canadian public memory, resulting from the diffusion and celebration of *The Polished Hoe* and from its expansion as a play. This study also explores the influence of the reception, diffusion and expansion of this novel on the subsequent writing of the novel *More* mainly dedicated to the representation and the archiving of the transformation of Caribbean immigrants into Caribbean-Canadians.

#### **Rodolphe Solbiac**

Associate Professor  
Anglophone Caribbean literature, Université des Antilles

#### **The Invisible Archive? Looking for the stories of 19th c. Afro-Trinidadian Women**

Archives are a major resource scholars and others use to understand the history of particular groups of people – and to determine the context for contemporary culture. Though we know that traditional archives are always limited, we tend to believe that if something can't be found there, that it doesn't – and didn't – exist. Furthermore, in the Caribbean archives largely hold materials created by and in the interest of the colonizer. What does this mean for those of us looking for other voices? This presentation examines what archives can – and cannot – tell us, through an excavation of my own experiences of trying to find primary sources by or about nineteenth century Afro-Trinidadian women. Because of the dominance of the white, colonial planter class, and because of the socio-economic realities of the time, these women left little in their own words. Thus, the existing archive is a contested – even hostile – place, and the researcher is left looking for an "invisible" archive that resides between, behind, and beyond other texts. This presentation will detail what such an archive might look like, and how we might access it.

Rosamond S. King, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, English Department

#### **Archiving Carnival: Multiplicity and Counter-Memory in Mustapha Matura's *Play Mas***

My paper examines the enactment of Trinidadian Carnival in Mustapha Matura's *Play Mas* (1974), and suggests that the play becomes a space of (counter) archiving the Carnival, and to use Rebecca Scheinder's terminology, a space of "counter-memory" and "re-documenting." Divided into two acts; one taking place in pre-independence Trinidad, the other in post-independence Trinidad, the play displays different perceptions of the Carnival, and stresses difference as a central element to Caribbean identity. Analyzing Michel Foucault's concept of archive as transformative and Diana Taylor's notion of repertoire as a form of knowledge, I suggest that the rehearsal and re-enactment of carnival in the space of theatre promotes a heterogeneous cultural identity and envisions a diasporic memory predicated on multiplicity. I focus on the aesthetics of carnival such as dance, music and 'playing mas,' but also on the political appropriation of carnival in a neocolonial context to foreground the ambiguity of carnival. This configuration of Carnival as ambivalent challenges fixed and 'archived' representations of Carnival as a tourist event, an image criticized by writers such as Derek Walcott and Jamaica Kincaid. My investigation of Carnival aims to demonstrate how *Play Mas* is an attempt at rewriting/restaging Caribbean cultural archive. Ultimately, while I will base my reading on the first electronic edition of the play published by Alexander Street Press in 2008, I hope to address a recent revival of the play by theatre director Paulette Randall at the Orange Tree Theatre, in order to underscore the element of multiplicity in (counter) archival production.

Salma Meddeb  
PhD Candidate in English Studies  
University of Montreal

#### **Landscape as Archive: Locating the East Indian Diaspora in French Caribbean History in selected poetry from Ernest Moutoussamy's *Cicatrice***

In French Caribbean literary and critical discourses, landscape can represent a symbolic archive that serves as visible evidence of historical events such as slavery and its successor, indentureship. In this paper, I examine the poem, "Mon Vêpèlè," by the Guadeloupean writer and politician, Ernest Moutoussamy, collected in his *Cicatrice* (1985) to show how he uses landscape imagery – specifically the neem plant – to recount the East Indian diaspora's experience in the French West Indies. In "Mon Vêpèlè," the persona addresses the neem plant that is displaced from India but survives and blossoms in the Caribbean. This tree, whose root brushes against the remains of slaves that now form part of the surrounding earth, offers the persona shade to recount not only the East Indian diaspora's history but also the silencing of African slaves' history, religion and language. I firstly consider the neem plant as a metaphoric embodiment of the memory of indentureship. I show that its transplantation from India and its survival in the Caribbean parallel the East Indian's exilic experience. Moreover, as a symbol of Indian memory, the neem plant represents a metaphorical umbilical cord that connects the East Indians and their culture to the French Caribbean. I, therefore, interpret this tree and the shade it provides as a shelter that protects the East Indians' past. In this sense, the neem plant's physical

presence allows the East Indian diaspora to negotiate and claim a space in French Caribbean historicity. Moreover, I consider the contact between the neem plant, symbolizing the East Indian diaspora, and the African slaves' remains as an attempt to locate the East Indian identity in relation to its surroundings. I ultimately contend that landscape is a site of history that allows the creation of connections between the Indo- and Afro- Caribbeans. I draw primarily on Glissant's critical discussions in his *Discours antillais* (1981) on landscape as history to frame my argument.

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### **Violence and Memory: The Black Body as Archive**

Edwidge Danticat's novels *The Farming of Bones* and *Breath, Eyes, Memory* exhume and retell the story of state violence against its citizens. In *The Farming of Bones* Danticat uses the medium of fiction and the "novelization of memory" to testify against state violence. In *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, the routinized policing and sexualization of women by the Duvalier regime and his Tonton Macoutes is embodied in the mother-character, Martine Caco. The bodies of the Caco women serves as repository of state violence. Establishing that Danticat is invested in restoring the survivors' memories of violence in the national (historical) archive, this paper explores how *The Farming of Bones* and *Breath, Eyes, Memory* explicitly foreground the role of gendered bodies in and as the archive of communal memories of violence. According to Jennifer Harford Vargas, *The Farming of Bones* valorizes "creative forms of testimony as well as oral and corporeal modes of testifying to and passing on histories of oppression, modes that are not conventionally considered authoritative" (1163). In essence, archival memory that includes "written documents, buildings, maps, archeological remains, literary texts, and so on" has been traditionally privileged over "embodied memory" (1163). The oral stories told by the novels' characters and their embodied experiences, i.e., their embodied testimonies provide a compelling testament against the state's tyranny. Beginning with Danticat's exploration of the embodied characters, Martine, Sophie, Sebastian and Amabelle, the paper traces key moments of embodied violence. Further, I contend that the dismembered, re-membered bodies serve as impetus for remembering violence differently.

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### **Double Exposures: Eyeballing, Framing the Archives, and Thomas Edison's Caribbean Films**

The Edison Manufacturing Company produced newsreels that were first copyrighted on paper and later preserved digitally by the Library of Congress, the de facto national library of the United States. Edison's crews filmed in Caribbean locations producing titles such as: *Native Woman Washing Negro Baby* (1903, Nassau, Bahamas), *West Indian Native Dance*, *Railroad Panorama Near Spanish Town, Jamaica* (Edison, April, 1903), and *Native Women Coaling a Ship at D. W. I.* (1903).

Are Edison's actualities Caribbean films? What could or should this Caribbean platform for film history and theorization look like? What is cinema, now, in the digital age? And what is cinema in the Caribbean – but also, in the age of the digital, is the rubric of the Caribbean an excess of belongings or too few? And what of the images themselves, how might the nonlinear temporality invited by the digital free up or mislead our interpretations?

When we find a neglected object, such recovery, along with the partnerships that made it possible, is the true starting point of an extended, necessary, and animated investigation of where the object belongs, how it should be catalogued and what it means to us today.

I recognize that the Edison works picture familiar asymmetries between the presumed dominant white gaze and the subjugated looked-upon black female object/subject, but what makes me curious are the brief but disruptive ways the women "eyeball" the camera, calling attention to those normatively unseen, and re-framing the act of filming an Other as a two-way exchange.

Terri Francis, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Cinema and Media Studies/The Media School  
Indiana University

### **Negotiating National Identity in a Digital Diaspora**

Whether it is the five-minute mini music documentary video, "Hakka Chinese Jamaican," ripped from Canadian Broadcasting Television and uploaded to YouTube by Max William on May 7, 2011 or what Patricia Lange refers to as deeply personal "videos of affinity," vlogs uploaded from the intimate space of "home" by The PhotoBlogger and Natzimas, the uploaders of these videos to YouTube, these Caribbean diasporic subjects use the platform to negotiate their relationships to constructions of racial, gendered, and national identity. This paper explores the negotiations of identity by Caribbean Chinese on digital platforms, specifically their use of YouTube to create an archive, to write themselves into historical and national memory. In doing so, I am trying to answer Timothy Chin's call to question how cultural texts created by these subjects, in this case videos uploaded by digital Caribbean diasporic subjects, explore and challenge "discourses of national, cultural, and racial identity" (107). This paper seeks to parse out these challenges articulated on YouTube where technology, history, cultural production, and the concepts of "platform" converge and I am asking what kind of languages of resistance, if any, are being produced in these spaces.

Tzarina T. Prater, Assistant Professor of English in Bentley University's English and Media Studies Department

### **A More Intimate Archive: The Visual Representation of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg**

Arturo Alfonso Schomburg is a pioneering figure of early twentieth century New York City, as a book collector and archivist. A Black Puerto Rican, an Afro-Latino, born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, Schomburg's Caribbean heritage is often overlooked. In this presentation, I examine the body of portraits that survive Arturo Schomburg, some of which have rarely been seen outside of the center that bears his name. Based on the premise that portraiture is also a text that can be read and interpreted, in this presentation I argue that there is something deliberately performative in Schomburg's elusiveness in front of the camera. If performance is a series of repeated gestures, then one has to conclude that Schomburg is, at the very least, uncomfortable in front of the lens. In the majority of the photographs taken of him throughout his life, he willfully looks away from the camera, often sitting or standing in a three-quarter pose. Even when he looks in the direction of the camera, he often looks above the lens. In this demonstration of defiance, he allows us to see the man himself, who refused to be apprehended by a medium that had to that point been used to replicate and perpetuate demeaning stereotypes about people of African descent. In this way, we are allowed a glimpse of his Caribbean subjectivity; unlike many of his contemporaries such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, Schomburg's response to an attempted photographic capture is one of resistance.

Vanessa K. Valdés, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at The City College of New York – CUNY

### **The story of three literary archives at the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) and the lessons they teach about acquiring, preserving and making literary archives accessible to persons outside the Academy.**

This presentation will use three literary archives at the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) as prisms for reflecting on the challenges and opportunities with acquiring, maintaining and organizing literary archives in a society with a relatively short history of actively acquiring literary archives. The archives to be examined are those of W. A. Roberts, J. E. Clare McFarlane and Louise Bennett Coverley. The National Library of Jamaica holds substantial personal papers/archives for these Jamaican authors of literary note and the presentation will address the acquisition of their archives, how the archives are being physically managed and how matters such as copyright, deposit agreements, institutional financial and staffing capacities determine their level of accessibility. The presentation will also seek to show and tell

interesting tidbits gleaned from the archives of Roberts, McFarlane, Bennett-Coverley and will conclude with arguments why the National Library of Jamaica should be the preferred depository for the papers of Jamaica's literary luminaries, or alternatively how the archives of Jamaica's authors of note may be collaboratively acquired by Jamaican libraries.

Winsome Hudson (Mrs)  
National Librarian/ CEO, National Library of Jamaica

### **Creating spaces: The Importance of Preserving the Works of Three Early Barbadian Writers**

The literary works of William S. Arthur, Karl Sealy and A.N. Forde paved the way for future generations of Barbadian/West Indian authors; however, much of their contribution is forgotten. Born in 1909, Arthur was the precursor and his contributions to the *Forum Magazine* and the *Barbados Herald* exhibited a degree of radicalism and foresight that was also reflected in his literary work. Indeed, while his journalistic writing advocated male adult suffrage, workman's compensation and women in the workforce, his prose and poetry created settings, themes and tentative attempts at nation language to which locals could relate. He thus heeded his own call made in the *Herald* in 1932 for texts that depicted local themes, imagery and language. This was a period when only British text books were available and Sealy (b. 1922) and Forde (b.1923) would later take up the challenge and create imaginative accounts of events that shaped their nation and the region, including the 1937 riots and migration during the building of the Panama Canal. Their short stories appeared in early editions of *Bim* magazine with Sealy and Forde's poems and short stories re-appearing in Caribbean school texts in the 1970s and 1980s. Ironically, however, Arthur's writing is mostly forgotten. The preservation of their work beyond old microfilmed articles and aging copies in *Bim* is therefore vital. Indeed, these three writers re-shaped how the Barbadian/West Indian working class was represented and how the West Indian viewed him/herself. Consequently, in this twenty first century, with the advent of eBooks and data bases, the works of all three writers could be preserved and accessed digitally by everyone for critique and analysis.

Zoanne C.E. Evans  
UWI Cave Hill Campus  
Instructor/PhD student

### **There IS West Indian Jazz. Caribbean Poetry as a Trans-national Archive.**

*I use the term 'jazz' here not so much as a term for a musical art form, as for a mode of being in the world, an improvisational mode of protean, fluid and flexible dispositions toward reality suspicious of 'either/or' viewpoints, dogmatic pronouncements, or supremacist ideologies.*

Cornel West, *Race Matters* (1994, 151).

As "the 35th Annual West Indian Literature Conference highlights the significance of the archive in Caribbean literary and cultural studies", I would like to propose the idea of poetry as a chronicle. In particular, a repository of the cultural production of the Caribbean diaspora that binds trans-Atlantic culture and migratory memory, proposes trans-national poetics and re-establishes links with the islands, archipelagoes, landmasses and continents of the world.

Despite a plethora of Caribbean verse devoted to and/or influenced by African American jazz music, there is limited scholarship dedicated to the analysis of the inextricably cross-cultural relations between these two artistic modalities. Built upon among others Anthony Kellman's research on Anthony McNeill (1941-1996) – "Jamaican experimental poet influenced by the Beat poets and free-jazz musicians in 1960s New York City" – and Barbados-based writer Philip Nanton's curatorial exploration of St Vincentian trumpeter and poet Shake Keane's (1927-1997) interdisciplinary output, the paper will attempt to discuss the archival politics and methods present in a selection of jazz-themed poems by contemporary Caribbean writers, including Mervyn Morris, Kamau Brathwaite, Roger Robinson, Anthony Joseph, Kei Miller, Christian Campbell, and Lauren K. Alleyne. Among others, due to their immortalization through the medium of verse, figures of African American and West Indian jazz musicians, such as John Coltrane and Don Drummond, have not only entered the ever-expanding archive of Caribbean literature but have been instrumental to creating symbolic connections both home and abroad, both *inna yard* and *inna forin*.

Furthermore, textual recurrences of jazz powerhouses serve as a means of affirmation of the importance of, to quote Paul Gilroy, "[t]hat precious musical heritage, so important for so long, [which] can also decay and become a mere soundtrack for the advertising of lifestyles rather than the precious fruit of everyday creativity improvised against the odds of exploitation. Those sounds can fade and be nothing more than an exotic backdrop to the sale of all sorts of other things." (Baker 2014, 5-9). The selected Caribbean poems seem to be resisting such commodification and by doing so they archive the living pneuma of the past, the zeitgeist that defies the onset of time.

Understandably, the selection of poetic texts under discussion also constitutes an archive in its own right, typified by its limitations and internal hierarchisation, in turn "generating new critical, theoretical, practical and ethical questions for critics, historians, and archivists regarding the sites of cultural production, consumption, and interpretation."

The proposed paper is an integral constituent of a work-in-progress diachronic project aiming to, as if following in the footsteps of Kwame Dawes' notion of the "reggae aesthetic", research the development of the "jazz aesthetic" in the Anglophone Caribbean poetry of the twentieth-century and beyond.

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### **Caryl Phillips's *Crossing the River* and the chorus of archival memory**

Caryl Phillips's *Crossing the River* (1993) has been extensively analysed by critics. While the novel has given rise to a number of readings, a constant in the various existing interpretations is that it invites the reader to listen to unheard voices from the past, that of the African father who sold his offspring into slavery and those of his children who are now spread over time and space. However, if one consults Caryl Phillips's archives, which are housed by the Beinecke Library at Yale University, one becomes aware of another "chorus of a common memory," made up of voices that did not make it into the book, but which are nonetheless important pieces in the writer's diasporic puzzle. What I would like to do in this paper is retrieve these lost voices by looking at Phillips's archives, notably at an early unpublished radio play entitled "Crossing the River" and at the early drafts of the third section of the eponymous novel, and see how these documents relate to the novel's final published version. Such a reading will enable to trace the literary genesis of one of Phillips's most popular texts while also allowing us to imagine what the book would have been like if Phillips had made different choices.

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### **Archiving the Voice: Orality in Cyberspace**

For at least three decades now Jamaicans have been bemoaning the deleterious impact of television and other media on the oral tradition. The consensus is that we have lost and will lose stories, riddles, jokes and other forms of orature as people spend less time entertaining each other in live settings, and as they turn to other media for entertainment. However, while it is true that face-to-face and group interactions have been significantly curtailed, access to the internet with its range of communicative possibilities has allowed for new modalities in the transmission of orature. This paper examines the use of facebook, email chains, whatsapp, Youtube and other platforms in disseminating and archiving Caribbean orature. Exploring what is lost and gained in the extensive use of these methods, the paper also offers some tentative observations about how these new modes simultaneously reinforce and challenge established cultural values and performance strategies. Further, the paper asks, how do these archiving methods (re)shape the ways we might define community, belonging, and oral-scribal interplays.

Carol Bailey

### **Represent This, Imagine That: Visuals of Slavery and Freedom in Brazil and Haiti**

This paper will explore the visuality of slavery and freedom in Brazil and Haiti. The *Museu Afro Brasil* has an unparalleled archive of historic, artistic and ethnographic images in its mission to research, preserve and exhibit the collected iconography that helps to define Afro-Brazilian culture. Similarly, the *Musée du Pantheon National Haitien (Mupanah)* memorializes the Haitian Revolution and its aftermath. As museums curated to celebrate the cultural topos within two such evocative diasporic spaces, I am interested in exploring in this talk the choice of imagery and the stories that are told through the imagery. Since both museums are meant as sites of empowerment, how do these images simultaneously tell the history of dispossession, evoke the agency of the oppressed, and give form to individual ethos and subjectivity? How do the images reify or displace our concepts of primacy and power? And, what do these collections tell us about how cultural memory is simultaneously appropriated and generated?

I will be using a powerpoint presentation and will need projection for a Mac computer.

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**"Memory Boxes. Exploring the Collections of Some Early Jamaican Writers"**

ABSTRACT

"Memory Boxes," explores the legacy of Jamaican literary writers in so far as it exists in unpublished collections in libraries and archives. Specific attention is paid to collections held at the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ), namely, the collections of Una Marson, Walter Adolphe Roberts and J.E. Clare Macfarlane. Whether we view the works of Roberts and McFarlane as purely historical and lacking in significance when compared to those of the 1950s, or as precursors and pioneers in Jamaica's literary tradition; their collections of unpublished materials presents the opportunity for further analysis of the early 20th century literary scene and the individuals themselves. The paper seeks to highlight research value in these collections. Marson's unpublished Pocomania is an example of one such resource and highlights the role of the library/archive in the preservation of literature and the memory of the writer. Therefore, the paper explores the value of the preservation of unpublished literary collections as part of the individual and collective memory of West Indians. By analyzing the value and memory in these collections, the paper aims to encourage and promote the deposit of scripts and personal collections in archives and libraries in the West Indies.

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**Accessing the West Indian Archive: Kenneth Ingram's Archival Cartography**

The official archive of colonialism was always intended to be plausible. The reports that Governors and their Heads of Department composed for their superiors in the metropolis aimed to put their work in a favourable light. Acknowledging how seductive colonialism's official archives still are is one thing, appraising them is another. We can not reject the access these files offer to data that colonial administrators could tap, but finding alternative perspectives to contextualize the view from the Governor's office window has always been more difficult. This is a particular issue given the vulnerability of paper in the Caribbean. Yet, given the wealth that the West Indies generated and the region's prominence in seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth-century European affairs, such interest generated extensive correspondence which offers alternative perspectives. This non-government archive has also survived, albeit scattered in institutional and private collections. This paper considers the remarkable research agenda developed by Kenneth Ingram, a Jamaican librarian, to locate and identify this material. Tracing the "how" and "what" of his project allows us to look over the shoulder of a pioneer in developing effective maps of the archive and, potentially, looking past the assertions and the claims of successive colonial administrators to explore the experiences of the wider society.

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**From Barbados's Donkey Man to Trinidad's Mancrab—Archiving the Caribbean Body through Carnival Costumes and Prostheses**

Various Caribbean carnival costumes and traditions tangentially connect to their countries' histories of slavery—Trinidad's stick fighters recall canboulay, the re-enactment of events in slavery to commemorate slaves' emancipation, and Barbados's Crop Over gives rise to Donkey Man, a part man/part donkey figure that epitomizes slavery's "donkey" work. A precursor then, to these festivals, includes a legacy of repression, punishment and maiming of the enslaved body. I argue that carnival costumes operate as prostheses to reform once damaged enslaved bodies and to regain health lost to punishment and amputations. Because organic symmetry of the body cannot be regained, there are limits to the resulting transhuman body. Here I use Joel Garreau's understanding of transhuman to mean "the enhancement of human...physical...capabilities [to bring about] the elimination of...unnecessary suffering, and the dramatic extension of life span." Such carnival prostheses succeed when contemporary costumes recall the past, such as when Aldrick Prospect destroys his dragon costume at the end of each carnival and crafts a new one for the following season in Earl Lovelace's *The Dragon Can't Dance* (1979), reinforcing his grandfather's legacy as a tailor, or when the revelers on Bournehills re-enact the slave Cuffee Ned's revolution in Paule Marshall's *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* (1969). These archival processes establish psychic health. But such transhumanism falters when the inorganic prosthesis of the costume overwhelms the reveler, such as the metallic arms in Peter Minshall's Mancrab character in his band *River* (1983) or Vere's motorcar in *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People*.

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**ABSTRACT FOR 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WEST INDIAN LITERATURE CONFERENCE  
John Hearne's Short Stories**

When John Hearne's first novel, *Voices under the Window*, was published in 1955, he had already received the affirmation of having two short stories published in reputable journals. Thereafter, he evidently focused primarily on his larger projects: over the next six years, Hearne would publish nearly as many novels (four – the Cayuna series) as stories (six); with one other novel and one other story published during his lifetime. A total of ten stories have been recovered from his archive, most published in the period 1953–61; a few others are mentioned in personal correspondence or other archival material but have not yet been located. Their small number is perhaps one reason why his stories, with a few exceptions, have not received much notice to date. The larger reason, however, may be that Hearne, despite the international acclaim he received in the 1950s to mid-1960s, fell out of favour with West Indian critics in the late 1960s because his work was seen as not progressive enough and too middle-class. As part of a larger project of recovery of recognition of Hearne as a major Jamaican novelist, this paper seeks to bring attention to an overlooked part of his archive, exploring the relationship between Hearne's stories and his novels. The paper suggests that his short stories, though not major in terms of quantity, nevertheless play a significant role in Hearne's creative output. They are, therefore, an invaluable component of Hearne's literary archive.

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**Women, Writing and the Public Sphere: Feminist Approaches to Caribbean Archives**

In this presentation, I reflect upon my entry into the archives of the University of the West Indies in search of evidence of early writing by Indo-Caribbean women that preceded the florescence of literature by this group in the 1980s and 1990s. This work to trace the footprints of the uncelebrated forms that women's writing took and the preconditions for women's writing allows us to reexamine what we think we know about the conception of the Caribbean literary in the early twentieth century, its transoceanic dimensions, the role of Indian women in the public sphere, the difficulties that Indian women faced claiming the title of writer and the ways in which they challenged patriarchal expectations even while shaping their interventions within particular ideas about respectable womanhood and personal choice. The work of little known writers Grace Nobbee and Amala Ramcharan and the small literary journals being published in Trinidad from the 1940s to the early 1960s constitute my main objects of analysis.

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**"My maps, my compass" –Reframing the Caribbean Archive in Michelle Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven***

In her novel *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987), Michelle Cliff employs epigraphs derived from a broad range of sources – Yoruban hymns, Jamaican geographer Barry Floyd, and contemporary Trinidadian-Canadian poet Dionne Brand, among others – to produce a Caribbean literary archive that differs both compositionally and qualitatively from the English canon's construction of literary authority. Cliff asserts the literary authority of Caribbean authors with an opening epigraph from Derek Walcott, and all but two of the novel's eleven chapters carry their own epigraph, concluding with an extract from another poem by Walcott. In the epigraph to the novel's central fifth chapter, Cliff quotes a moment from Victorian English poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse novel *Aurora Leigh*: "'God, free me from my mother!' she shrieked out, / 'These mothers are too dreadful!'" Cliff uses the Barrett Browning quotation to critique both the English canon's exclusion of women, and the English narrative of itself as the "Mother Country," using a voice from within both. Barrett Browning's

inclusion amid the many other diverse epigraphic sources, from Martinican poet Aimé Césaire to Jamaican proverbs, also removes any qualitative distinction among them and recasts Barrett Browning as herself part of a Caribbean counter-canon. Cliff employs these and other epigraphs in *No Telephone to Heaven* to offer a newly expansive vision of the Caribbean archive and its capacity for resistance.

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**Abstract: Archival Fault Lines in Haitian Literature**

On 12 January 2010 at 4.53pm a 7.3 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, killing more than three hundred thousand people, injuring hundreds of thousands more, and leaving one and a half million homeless and displaced. In the face of such a catastrophe with such widespread death, destruction and suffering, what can writers do in response? This is the question many of Haiti's writers have been asking themselves since that pivotal moment. Based on manuscript and rewritten versions of literary texts, the paper asks how the thematics and representational forms of Haitian writing developed in the wake of 12 January 2010. It uncovers a tendency among writers to create a unique "aura" of archival documents in the very form of their books themselves. By examining how writers document the developing moment of the quake, the paper shows that representation is wrested away from sensationalist media reporting about Haiti, transforming conventional modes of representation. Analysed here are the new narratives of Haiti created by these writers and their readers who reassemble multiple fragments.

**Bio:** Rachel Douglas is Lecturer in French at the University of Glasgow. Work to date has focused on C. L. R. James, Frankétienne, Haitian literature, literature about Haiti by writers from other parts of the Caribbean, questions of rewriting, autotranslation and the literary in postcolonial contexts, and on postcolonial visual cultures.

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**Representing History: Narratives of Nation in Two Anglophone Caribbean Documentaries**

The essay looks at the use of archival material in two Caribbean documentaries, *Womanish Ways* (2012) and *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution* (2013). Using different narrative strategies, each film engages with archival material to reflect on critical historical moments in ways that reinforce the importance of these events in forming ideas about nation and the construction of national identity. The archival material is critical to a process of "imaginative re-discovery" as the films create alternative perspectives of already well documented events. These films constitute new expressions of historical enquiry in the Caribbean that in turn generate new audiences for the consumption of narratives of the past. As texts which create open-ended, multiple perspectives and function as sites of critical social and political commentary, these films register a departure from the paradigms of an earlier generation of locally made West Indian documentary produced in the colonial period.

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