

Abstracts ACWWS 2008

1.

Name: Michelene Adams

Paper Title: "Jamaica Kincaid's *At the Bottom of the River*: Tapping the Political Sub-conscious."

Abstract: Despite Jamaica Kincaid's popularity, critics have not generally embraced her first book to the extent that they have her later ones, and when they do approach it, they tend to focus on "Girl," the piece that most resembles the novels. In a 1990 interview, the author herself confesses that she produced *At the Bottom of the River* (1978) without the political consciousness that she began to develop only in writing *Annie John* (1983). Nevertheless, I want to argue that what's operating in *At the Bottom of the River* is what might be termed a "political *sub*-consciousness," and that its exploration of gender and power and the Caribbean is highly fresh and even revelatory.

First, I will explore temporality in the text, since Kincaid's handling of time interrogates the fundamental ontology of the West. Then I will analyse her uncommon and complex treatment of two figures that recur in Caribbean literature: the body and the monkey. What I expect to ultimately show is that although in *At the Bottom of the River* Kincaid does not challenge the abuse of power in the particular ascerbic way to which we have grown accustomed, she manages to unsettle Western notions of power and of gender and to leave room for alternatives purely through her art.

Bio: Trinidadian Michelene Adams is an Assistant Professor of English at St. George's University in Grenada. Her articles on Caribbean women's narrative have appeared in *Anthurium* 4.1 (2006), *Sargasso* (2005-2006) I, and *The College of the Bahamas Research Journal* 12 (2003).

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Panel Assignment: "Rethinking the Familiar."

2.

Name: Opal Palmer Adisa

Paper Title: "Is So Me Seh - Miss Lou (Louise Bennett) in Her Own Words."

Abstract: In 1989 I interviewed the late Louise Bennett at her then home in Jamaica. While I have used excerpts of the interview in papers I have done, I have not published the interview. In re-listening to the tapes recently, I realize how poignant and revealing Louise Bennett was about her life and her work. In this paper, using excerpts from Bennett's interview, and juxtaposing her words against certain of her poems, I offer a reading of Louise Bennett as the mother of Jamaican culture, and as a preeminent social commentator. Bennett's poetry and folk stories serve as humorous, provocative slices of the resourceful triumph of the ordinary people living extraordinary lives.

Bio: Dr. Opal Palmer Adisa, Jamaica-born, is a sought-after speaker who has lectured throughout the United States, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Germany, England and Prague. An award-winning poet and prose writer Dr. Adisa has eleven titles to her credit, including the novel, *It Begins with Tears* (1997) that Rick Ayers proclaimed as one of the most motivational works for young adults. She has been a resident artist in internationally acclaimed residencies such as Binational Fulbright Institute (Egypt), Sacatar Institute (Brazil) and Headlines Center for the Arts (California, USA). Opal Palmer Adisa's work has been reviewed by Ishmael Reed, Al Young, and Alice Walker (*The Color Purple*), who described her work as "solid, visceral, important stories written with integrity and love." Her most recent collections are: *Until Judgment Comes*, stories, 2007 & *Eros Muse*, poetry & essays, 2006

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Panel Assignment: "Rethinking the Familiar."

3.

Name: Giselle Anatol

Paper Title: "Righting/ (Re) Writing the Tempest: Literacy in Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter*."

Abstract: When Shakespeare has Caliban declare, "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse" (*The Tempest*, I.ii.365-66), he creates a prescient model of colonial resistance for 20th-century Caribbean artists such as Aimé Césaire, George Lamming, Michelle Cliff, and, most recently, Elizabeth Nunez. Rather than returning to debates about morality, the revolutionary nature of "nation language," or the subversive potential of Standard English, in *Prospero's Daughter* (2006), Nunez focuses on the relationships her characters have to written text.

The European figures in the novel view documents as fact, and use text as a means of controlling the Trinidadian population: Miss Sylvia threatens to send the young Ariana to jail for stealing, and maintains the child's fear with a hidden letter she threatens to send to the police (98); Prospero/Peter Gardner finds the letter and promises to destroy it, but instead forces Ariana into sexual bondage with it (99). British inspector John Mumsford is also preoccupied by the written word: he is never without his notebook, attempting to organize information and textually contain a story that threatens to undercut colonial authority.

Carlos, Nunez's Caliban, stands in sharp contrast. Rather than absorb the classist, Eurocentric ideology of Gardner's books, he proclaims: "Eden is a European myth meant to keep servants and slaves in their place" (88). Where Gardner fails to teach his daughter to read, Carlos succeeds; he also surpasses Gardner with his poetry, a talent inherited from his Black fisherman father, not the European conqueror.

In my paper, I will explore these and other examples, ending with an examination of Ariana-- the only character not to receive her own section in the novel, and thus without a distinct narrative. Although Nunez successfully revises Shakespeare's play from Caliban's perspective and encourages readers to question the motives of the colonizers, her book still leaves working-class Black women essentially voiceless.

Bio: Giselle Liza Anatol is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS. She has published on the work of Jamaica Kincaid, Audre Lorde, Edwidge Danticat, and Nalo Hopkinson, and is currently working on a manuscript about representations of Black female vampires in literature of the African Americas.

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Panel Assignment: "Decoding the Text."

4.

Name: Jean Antoine-Dunne

Paper Title: "Spirit, Sexuality & Self-Discovery in Works by Jennifer Rahim & Erna Brodber."

Abstract: This paper looks at how recent writings by Erna Brodber and Jennifer Rahim position sexuality within a quest for self-determination and self-discovery. Both writers descend or ascend into the world of spirit to explore how and why we as Caribbean peoples have yet to come to terms with the past and arrive at a position of certainty within our own landscapes. A non-linear history determines this passage into self; both writers use Caribbean belief systems and their particular ideas of spirituality to enable a complex and deeply interiorised sense of how the past affects the present. In *The Rainmaker's Mistake* (2007) Brodber creates new myths of emancipation and nationhood which interrogate how Caribbean people have remained locked in the stasis of the past. The past and its capacity to cripple the psyche is key in Rahim's new collection *Songster and Other Stories* (2007). The stories relate directly to the spirit as it moves within the protagonist, creating immobility in relation to her personal encounters.

Both works excavate the place of sexuality and the ways in which the female body has been misused/abused or the sexuality of women denied. Sexuality and the body provide ways of looking at how history can undermine the development of the psyche. Both works operate as vehicles of discovery, thereby healing the wounds of the past.

Bio: Jean Antoine-Dunne is a Senior Lecturer in Literatures in English at UWI. She is the Designer and Coordinator of the BA in Film at UWI St Augustine. She has published on film, Caribbean Literature, and on Samuel Beckett. She is editor with Paula Quigley of *The Montage Principle* (Rodopi 2004) which is a pioneering collection demonstrating the crossover between film and literature. As well, she is a painter and arts critic.

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality & the Body A."

5.

Name: Camille Banks

Paper Title: "Imprints From the Village": A New Way Home in Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*."

Abstract: The concept of *home* is a principal theme in African Diasporic literature, both written and aural. Writers in the African Diaspora define home as a place of comfort, acceptance, nurture, familiarity, inclusion, regeneration, and recognition. Many traditional Caribbean texts involve protagonists who feel marginalized in their homeland and begin a nomadic life in a foreign country, where, though still marginalized, they have the chance to become financially secure. Important questions result from this trend: what is the fate the Caribbean person who is forced to stay in or return to the native land? How does he/she find home? Danticat's protagonist Amabelle is forced from her native Haiti into the Dominican Republic in search of employment. However, Amabelle escapes the 1937 massacre of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic by returning to Haiti, where the conditions that forced her out still exist. How will she get *home*?

This paper will explicate the Caribbean protagonist's journey toward *home*, as constructed in *The Farming of Bones* by Edwidge Danticat. It will discuss the novel's definition of home essentially as familial and cultural/historical memory and will also explore how the text forces Amabelle to reverse her migration and devise new ways to find home.

Bio: Camille R. Banks is a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, in the Department of English. Her concentration is Creative Writing. She earned her Master of Arts in Caribbean Literature from Howard University, Washington D.C. She taught for five years in the Department of English at Hampton University. She has completed a novel and is working on a collection of short stories.

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Panel Assignment: "Framing Danticat."

6.

Name: Sara Barbour

Paper Title: "To Read is To Bear Witness in *Le livre d'Emma*."

Abstract: In Marie-Célie Agnant's novel *Le livre d'Emma*, the narrator Flore, an interpreter at a psychiatric hospital, is called on to help officials "unlock the mystery" of the young Haitian woman, Emma, recently accused of murdering her daughter. Flore quickly loses the professional distance necessary for the task because she feels herself becoming "a part of Emma." By vowing to follow Emma's story to its end, Flore accepts what Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub call the "appointment to bear witness," a "solitary burden" (*Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, 2). What appears to begin as a testimony of Emma's life, however, becomes testimony of the violence and madness suffered by women of African descent, both during and as a consequence of the slave trade and the practice of slavery. As this discussion of *Le livre d'Emma* reveals, the novel not only bears witness to atrocity, it invites readers to share in the "appointment to bear witness," and to investigate the questions Felman and Laub pose in their study: "How is the act of *writing* tied up with the act of *bearing witness*?" and "If literature is the *alignment between witnesses*, what would this alignment mean? (2).

Bio: Sarah Barbour, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Romance Languages and Core Faculty member of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Wake Forest University (Winston-Salem, NC, USA). In addition to articles on the novels of Maryse Condé, Nathalie Sarraute, Marguerite Duras, and Colette, she has most recently co-edited with Gerise Herndon *Emerging Perspectives on Maryse Condé, A Writer of Her Own*. Her research interests include French and Francophone modern and contemporary narrative in prose and in cinema, and translation studies.

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Panel Assignment: "Who Speaks for Whom? New Directions in Caribbean Language and Cultural Identity."

7.

Name: Lee E.S. Bessette

Paper Title: "Re-Imagining the Caribbean: Nalo Hopkinson's Speculative Worlds and Fantastic Fiction."

Abstract: Nalo Hopkinson is often categorized as a Science Fiction writer, although she herself prefers the term "Speculative Fiction." Integrating Caribbean spiritualism and futuristic settings, Hopkinson has pushed the boundaries of expectations for both SF and Caribbean writing. This paper will focus on two of Hopkinson's novels that re-imagine the Caribbean and Caribbean experience and the commentary they provide on colonialism and postcolonialism. In "Midnight Robber", Toussaint is a newly colonized planet, populated by those from the Caribbean, while New Half-Way Tree is where Toussaint sends those who transgress their laws. In founding a new society on a new world using old traditions, Hopkinson makes some very powerful statements on the potential and the dangers of colonialism and technology. In her most recent novel, "New Moon's Arms," Hopkinson creates an entirely new set of islands, complete with myths regarding the original colonization of the islands and current postcolonial tensions. Having the freedom to create a history for the islands frees Hopkinson to create a new future and new ways of looking at colonialism, postcolonialism and beyond.

Bio: Lee Elaine Skallerup Bessette has a PhD in comparative literature from the University of Alberta, Canada. Her interests include Caribbean literature in French and English, translation, transnationalism, and Canadian literature. She has published on Haitian author Dany Laferriere and Caribbean-Canadian writer Nalo Hopkinson.

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Panel Assignment: "Rethinking the Familiar."

8.

Name: Monique Blerald

Paper Title: "Corps Féminin, Création Plurielle et Guyane Multiculturelle." (The female Body as a Site of Creativity in a Pluralistic, Multicultural French Guiana)

Abstract: De plus en plus, les femmes se positionnent dans le paysage littéraire, artistique et culturel guyanais. Elles révèlent d'une part leur enracinement à la terre natale et d'autre part les métissages qui ont influencé leurs créations littéraire, musicale, chorégraphique ou picturale. Elles remettent également en mémoire les souffrances marquées par l'histoire de la Guyane (esclavage, orpaillage, bagne) et dévoilent par la même occasion leur intimité (amour, joie, chagrin, trahison, solitude...). Le corps féminin sert de support à toutes les formes de créativité. Il permet d'exprimer à travers des techniques et des compositions mosaïques, des histoires simples ou complexes, de femmes créoles. Les créations liées aux manifestations populaires traditionnelles ou festives telles que le carnaval témoignent de cette évolution de la pensée féminine guyanaise.

(Increasingly, Guyanese women are positioning themselves in the literary, cultural and artistic landscape of French Guiana. They continue to celebrate their rootedness in their native land. Additionally, they acknowledge the multicultural interchanges that have influenced their creativity; be these works literary or musical, be the forms dance or painting. While their writings recall a history of national suffering and personal trauma, there is always a validation of resistance and the affirmation of love and joy.)

This paper explores the ways in which the female body serves as a site for many varying forms of creativity. It discusses the various techniques that Creole women artists use: musical compositions, mosaics, simple or complex stories. The paper also focuses on the ways in which popular traditions or festivals such as carnival reflect this evolution of female Guyanese thought.)

Bio: Monique Blerald est Maître de conférences en langues et cultures régionales à l'université des Antilles et de la Guyane. Elle y enseigne l'ancien français, les littératures françaises et francophones. Ses études et publications très diversifiées portent sur les écrivains et écrivaines des Antilles et de la Guyane, sur l'exploitation des traditions populaires par les écrivains antillo-guyanais et sur la transmission des savoirs populaires. Sur le plan international, son statut de vice-présidente et de représentante des régions francophones de la Caraïbe, au sein du CIEF (conseil international d'études francophones) dont le siège social se situe en Louisiane, lui permet de développer des échanges universitaires privilégiés avec les universités de l'Amérique du nord.

(Lecturer at L'Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, Monique Blerard teaches French and Francophone Literature at the Saint-Denis de Cayenne campus. Her area of scholarship focuses on popular traditions in the writings of French Caribbean writers. As Vice President of the International Council of Francophone Studies, she represents the French speaking regions of the Caribbean and is responsible for the facilitation of exchange programmes with North American Universities.)

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality & the Body A."

9.

Name: Alisa K. Braithwaite

Paper Title: "Rethorizing Migration in the Work of Merle Hodge."

Abstract: My paper explores the ways in which Trinidadian author and literary critic, Merle Hodge, retheorizes migration in order to establish the Caribbean as an intellectual space. In response to the writers and scholars from the Caribbean area who have migrated to England, the United States and Canada, Hodge, who lives and works in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, envisions migration *not* as an opportunity to integrate into the cultural and intellectual centers of London, New York and Toronto, but instead as an opportunity to reconnect to the Caribbean as a comparable cultural and intellectual center. Beginning with her first novel *Crick Crack, Monkey*, I demonstrate how Hodge disrupts the migration narrative by creating a protagonist whose story ends the night before she leaves the Caribbean. By ending the migration narrative within the space of the Caribbean as opposed to outside of it, Hodge forces us to re-examine the notion of the Caribbean as a "leaving space." Her narrative suggests alternative ways of defining migration for the Caribbean individual which include movement within the Caribbean space and metaphorical movements through language and narrative form. I then explore how Hodge uses her critical essays to re-imagine the space of the Caribbean as one that both supports and enriches her intellectual work in spite of the challenges of working outside of the western metropolises. Hodge's work shows that she does not merely work from the Caribbean area, but is also actively redefining this area as an intellectual space so that her work can then receive legitimate consideration in global intellectual discourse.

Bio: Alisa K. Braithwaite is an assistant professor of literature at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She received her doctorate from Harvard University in English and American literature in 2006. Her current book project traces an intellectual tradition for Anglophone Caribbean women writers, which includes Merle Hodge, Sylvia Wynter, Jamaica Kincaid, Michelle Cliff and Marlene Nourbese Philip. She examines the ways in which these writers, through their critical and creative work, have redefined the landscape of Caribbean thought.

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Panel Assignment: "Following Footsteps, Making Paths: Literary Legacies and Genealogies."

10.

Name: Keith Cartwright

Paper Title: "A Mourner's Travel Narrative of Adoption: Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow* and the Journey from Carolina to Carriacou and Back."

Abstract: Migrations of North American black creoles and Africans (slave and free) to the Caribbean from 1783-1817 had a substantial impact upon the development of an emergent Afro-Atlantic Protestantism. Black Baptist activity from Carolina, the Georgia coast, and British East Florida migrated to establish the first black Baptist churches in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad, Nova Scotia, and Sierra Leone. These points in turn became centers of Baptist and emergent "Spiritual Baptist" or "Revival Zion" ministry. I seek to show how Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow* taps into Afro-creole rites historically shared between Gullah praise houses and Caribbean Spiritual Baptist congregations to narrate a novel of a mourner's "travels" under the tutelage of a spiritual parent or pointer, followed by shouting modes of possession, and the setting of a saraka table ("feeding the children"). Herein Marshall bridges a gulf between North America and the Caribbean with shared rites of diasporic resistance to zombifications of many kinds: white supremacist, patriarchal, materialistic. What Marshall presents us with is a powerful spiritual travel narrative of Atlantic contact zones.

Bio: Keith Cartwright is Associate Professor of English at the University of North Florida. He is the author of *Reading Africa into American Literature* (2002) and is nearing completion of a second work titled "Sacred Grooves / Gulf Souths: Voodoo Hermeneutics, Make-Believe Authority, and Making it Rite from the Contact Zones." His scholarship has been published in books from the University of the West Indies Press, Palgrave Macmillan, and the University of Mississippi Press, and in journals such as *Callaloo*, *American Literature*, *Yinna: The Journal of the Bahamas Association of Cultural Studies*, *The Southern Quarterly*, and *Mississippi Review*. He has also published two collections of poetry.

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Panel Assignment: "Crossing Boundaries: Travel and Geography."

11.

Name: Dr. Myriam J. A. Chancy

Paper Title: "How Long Away from Home?: Myths of Place & Community."

Abstract: This essay will examine the ways in which spaces of the French Caribbean (namely Haiti and Martinique) operate as Caribbean "elsewheres" for writers of African descent writing in English and living in the US. I am particularly interested in focusing on how these writers reminisce landscapes, especially in contexts related to the slave trade and ensuing postcolonial contexts. Furthermore, I am interested in how women figure in these spaces as tropes of colonial disempowerment or, indeed, as figures of anticolonial resistance and in how Caribbean spaces are feminized or liberated from colonization suppression. I will contrast Edwidge Danticat's travel narrative, *After the Dance: A Walk Through Carnival in Jacmel, Haiti*, with John Edgar Wideman's *Martinique*, both texts commissioned for series in which well-known writers are asked to travel anywhere and write about a "foreign" place. Most choose a site which often has little to do with their own cultures. Wideman and Danticat are distinct in that they choose sites to which they have either personal or cultural connection, or to which they believe they do. Danticat chooses to travel to a Haitian site that is both real and mythic; she revisits Jacmel in order to provide readers with a sense of Haiti's rich cultural legacy. Such a text, however, could not have been produced by visiting Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, in the same time period. What investments of myth and storytelling are embedded in the text? What is real and what is not? What results from romanticism and what from a desire to reclaim the past by revisiting a site unique in Haiti for its cultural (and financial) sustenance?

Contrast to this Wideman's tale of visiting Martinique following a divorce, accompanied by a new love, a white French woman, and his desire to paint an image of Martinique read through Diasporic eyes simultaneous to a desire to romance the Other. The confluence of the romance retold in the story, the allure of tourism as a marker of privilege, and Wideman's struggle with feeling at home in a land not his own but to which he feels connected produce mixed results. A meditation and consideration of movement and postcoloniality for writers and subjects of African descent as argued in Jamaica Kincaid's incendiary essay, *A Small Place*, will frame my discussion.

Bio: Dr. Myriam J. A. Chancy is the author of *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile* (Temple UP, 2007) & *Framing Silence: Revolutionary Novels by Haitian Women Writers* (Rutgers UP, 2007); and the novels, *Spirit of Haiti* (Mango Publications, 2003) & *The Scorpion's Claw* (Peepal Tree Press, 2005).

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Panel Assignment: "Crossing Boundaries: Travel and Geography."

12.

Name: Merle Collins

Paper Title: "Say it in Performance: The Story That is Still Difficult to Speak."

Abstract: In a mixture of creative writing and analytical essay, this presentation tells the story of the Grenada Revolution from its heady beginnings through killings, invasion, a pervasive silence and the birth of new generations.

Bio: Merle Collins is a Grenadian novelist and poet, and a Professor of Comparative Literature and English at the University of Maryland at College Park. Collins has also taught in London and Grenada and served in Grenada's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Her publications include the novels *Angel* and *The Colour of Forgetting*, as well as a collection of short stories, *Rain Darling*. She has also published two volumes of poetry: *Because the Dawn Breaks* and *Rotten Pomerack*. A specialist in Caribbean studies, her critical works include "Themes and Trends in Caribbean Writing Today" in *From My Guy to Sci-Fi: Genre and Women's Writing in the Postmodern World* (Helen Carr, ed.; Pandora, 1989), and "To be Free is Very Sweet" in *Slavery and Abolition*.

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Panel Assignment: "Remembering the Grenadian Revolution."

13.

Name: Carolyn Cooper

Paper Title: "*No, Woman, No Cry*: Rita Marley's Feminist Fable."

Abstract

Rita Marley's iconoclastic autobiography, *No, Woman, No Cry*, sub-titled *My Life With Bob Marley*, contests the hagiographic image of her superstar husband, charging him with rape, both literal and metaphorical. Destabilising Bob Marley's pedestal, a dry-eyed Rita Marley celebrates her emancipation from the constraints of patriarchy. Affirming the power to define for herself the meaning of her life-story, Rita Marley narrates an archetypal feminist tale that both gestures to Bob Marley's seminal role in her life and, simultaneously, subverts his authority. The sub-title, seemingly a marketing strategy to exploit the Bob Marley brand, does signify the way in which Rita Marley's fate appears to have been inextricably tied to her husband's. But it also ironically acknowledges the fact that Rita Marley's full freedom is enabled by extricating herself from the bondage of paternalistic affiliation: her life without Bob Marley. The paper addresses the multiple fictions of autobiography, especially when the narrative is shaped by an amanuensis, as in the case of *No, Woman, No Cry*.

Bio: Carolyn Cooper is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona, where she has lectured for the past 26 years. She has published in a number of refereed journals and is the author of *Noises In The Blood: Orality, Gender and the 'Vulgar' Body of Jamaican Popular Culture* (1993), and *Sound clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture at Large* (2004).

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Panel Assignment: "Voicelessness & Agency."

14.

Name: Dr. María de Jesús Cordero

Paper Title: "The Liquid Landscapes of Women's Stories and the Rebirth of the Nation in Zoé Valdés' *Traficantes de Belleza*."

Abstract: The exiled Cuban writer Zoé Valdés' collection of short stories, *Traficantes de Belleza* [*Beauty Traffickers*], can be read and interpreted as a fragmented novel as, having lost all sense of the beauty of love and friendship, all of its female protagonists seek to sell their bodies and souls for small, material comforts. Possibly influenced by the writing of Antoine de Saint Exupery, his short story "Prisoner of the Sand" for example, Valdés' island home as well as her representation of the exile's adopted home are represented as desert landscapes complete with sand dunes, camels, wandering caravans, and belly dancers. This desert metaphor casts Valdés' stories in the mode of romance, a genre in which the distressed heroine or feminized landscape is devastated by a giant or other evil monster. In this case, it is the dictatorship and its promotion of traditionally male values which imprison both the woman and the land. As the real world has become a shell of what it once was, real life is identified with the rich dreams which are related to desert mirages. All references to water, to the sea, or to other liquids, such as blood and milk, are closely linked to women's dreams, their imaginations, and their ability to write or rewrite stories. Like the milk of their breasts, women's stories will nourish a new generation and revive the parched soul of a dying nation. In this essay, I will demonstrate how Valdés' achieves her own redemption as well as that of a nation through the rewriting of traditional tales, the fusion of cultural traditions, and the use of magic realism.

Bio: María de Jesús Cordero is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Utah State University. Born in Matanzas, Cuba, she emigrated to the United States with her family ten years after the Revolution. She was raised in Chicago, where she graduated from Loyola University with a B.A. in Spanish and English. Cordero received an M.A. in Comparative Literature from New York University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures from Princeton University. Her areas of specialization include Colonial Latin American Literature and Caribbean Women Writers.

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Panel Assignment: "Religion, Spirituality and the Magic Realist Tradition in Caribbean Women's Writing."

15.

Name: Annalee Davis

Statement about the documentary ON THE MAP

Implementing the Caribbean Single Market & Economy (CSME), the largest economic grouping after the European Union, represented a historic shift in the region in January 2007, for which social policy issues were not adequately considered or addressed in preparation for integration.

The experimental documentary, ON THE MAP airs intimate discussions with undocumented migrants who tell their stories of life between the cracks. This thirty-two minute project examines current intra-regional, Caribbean migration with a focus on Barbados, Trinidad & Guyana.

It explores the views of residents of host countries, exposes institutional abuse and demonstrates gaps between the official stand and the actual experience of unskilled Caribbean migrants.

ON THE MAP uncovers & discusses human suffering of the migrant, including the subjugation, exploitation and human trafficking of Caribbean nationals by Caribbean nationals, and with a complete lack of recourse. The video unmasks prejudices and subjugation. It fosters awareness among Caribbean residents and asks whether there is space for the dreams and rights of poor and unskilled people in our 'One Caribbean'.

In addition, ON THE MAP interviews other Caribbean people who offer alternate ways of thinking about this integrative movement. A philosopher, a mas man, a musician, a playwright and spiritual leader offer other possibilities of thinking about "the other". One interviewee suggests that we think, not in binary terms, as taught by colonialism, but in terms of relationships of difference.

Bio: Annalee Davis is a visual artist living and working in Barbados. She has been working for the past two years on producing an experimental documentary called ON THE MAP. The film was screened at the Brooklyn Museum in an exhibition called INFINITE ISLAND - CONTEMPORARY CARIBBEAN ART. ON THE MAP has also been recently selected into the inaugural Barbados Int'l Film Festival's best of Caribbean section and will be screened here for the first time in December.

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Film presentation

16.

Name: Patricia Donatien-Yssa

Paper Title: "The Traumatic Dimension of Caribbean History in Kincaid's *The Autobiography of my Mother*."

Abstract: *The Autobiography of my Mother* (Kincaid 1996) is an anger cry against the degrading colonial system, but it is also the exploration of the suffering of a woman deprived of what is basic for every human being: a memory. Without mother, she is without roots and dominated by chaos and loss. She is taken by the *blès*, a complex and metaphysical illness specific to the Caribbean. The *blès* is a fundamental element in the understanding of the Caribbean identity. It is a curious and complex phenomenon where disciplines as different as medicine, sociology, history, philosophy and psychology interfere. It appears not to be a simple and limited affection but a fundamental trauma. The *blès* would be a psychosomatic disease affecting the body as well as the spirit. This disease was born among Caribbean populations descending from African peoples who were torn away from their countries to be deported in the Americas. These populations lived under the double subjection of slavery and colonialism a long period of suffering and of negation of the self, which progressively affected profoundly, for no one can be captured, deported, sold, enslaved and tortured without being fundamentally disturbed in the very essence of his self.

It is thus, in this peculiar approach of the traumatic dimension not only of the history but also of the aesthetic of the Caribbean art that I propose to explore Kincaid's narration, characters and space from the inside, in a reading which integrates spirituality and subjectivity as legitimate factors.

Bio: Patricia Donatien-Yssa, Docteur en Études Anglophones, est Maître de Conférences à l'Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, et spécialiste de littérature et de l'art Caraïbéens. Elle développe depuis une dizaine d'années des recherches sur la littérature féminine, la spiritualité, les arts et l'esthétique ; ainsi que sur les interfaces qui existent entre ces aspects et les phénomènes socio-anthropologiques et historiques dans la Caraïbe. Parallèlement à ces activités de chercheur, Patricia Donatien-Yssa est artiste peintre et a exposé à de nombreuses reprises dans la Caraïbe, en Europe et en Afrique. Elle a également été en charge de scénographies pour des pièces de théâtre et des chorégraphies.

Patricia Donatien-Yssa, holds a doctorate in Anglophone Studies, and is a lecturer at the l'Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, where she specializes in literature and Caribbean Art. Her primary areas of research are women's literature, spirituality, arts and aesthetics; with specific emphasis on how these interface with socio-anthropological and historical phenomena in the Caribbean. Dr. Donatien-Yssa is also painter and has been deeply involved in set designs for a variety of theatrical and artistic productions.

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Panel Assignment: "Trauma & Healing."

17.

Name: Alison Donnell

Paper Title: "Once More with Feeling: Writing Beyond the Tempest of Masculine Colonial Struggle in Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter*."

Abstract: In her 2006 novel, *Prospero's Daughter*, a re-writing of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Elizabeth Nunez invokes two kinds of history alongside each other. First, the literal past of colonial Trinidad in 1961 and second, the literary past of the Caribbean—both the canonical English forms, such as Shakespeare, imposed by a colonial education and those Caribbean narratives that sought to rewrite the English narrative perspective and thereby decolonise the Caribbean imagination. Nunez's novel is a significant and highly self-conscious departure from previous Caribbean rewritings of *The Tempest* almost all of which have centred on the Caliban-Prospero (servant /master) relationship in order to explore the colonial dynamic. *Prospero's Daughter* reveals how the persuasions of a Caliban-centred rewriting of *The Tempest* have exerted considerable pressure on the political possibilities of these literary interventions, promoting a persistent focus on the figure of the native resistance hero that has seemingly obscured both Caliban's capacity for wonder, reciprocity and tenderness and the possibility of hearing Miranda and Ariel's stories. While the novel is scrupulously attentive to the complex historical relations of colonial domination structured along race and ethnic hierarchies, delivering us to 1961, the eve of Independence, Nunez also writes in the possibility of a more ethical imagined community. This paper will read the multiple intertextuality of Nunez's novel (with Lamming, Césaire, Wynter, Mootoo and others) as helping us to locate its political project but also to differentiate it from other tempestuous endeavours that have sought to promote the interests of one Caribbean people above others. It will argue that what distinguishes the location of liberation in *Prospero's Daughter* is that the revolutionary power is not invested in any one figure (Caliban, Ariel or Miranda) but rather in their relations to each other. In this way, the novel positions the idea of alliance, kinship and community beyond 'race' as the location of both emancipatory power and possible history.

Bio: Alison Donnell is Reader in English Literature at the University of Reading, UK. She is author of *Twentieth Century Caribbean Literature: Critical Moments in Anglophone Literary History* (Routledge 2006), co-editor of *The Routledge Reader in Caribbean Literature* and Joint Editor of *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*.

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Panel assignment: "Rethinking the Familiar."

18.

Name: Rodlyn H. Douglas

Title: "Secrets, Silences and Ritual Damnation: Witnesses from Caribbean Literature Expose Girlhood Pain."

Abstract: This paper investigates the girl characters in the fiction of Caribbean women writers, among them: Elizabeth Nunez, Nalo Hopkinson, Erna Brodber, Edwidge Danticat, Opal Palmer Adisa, Glasceta Honeyghan, June Jordan, Makeda Silvera, Jamaica Kincaid, and Ramabai Espinet.

The point of the paper is to bear witness to the issues of sexual abuse and the silence that surrounds it and to look at themes of mother-daughter relationships, class, race, culture, and religion as they impinge on the narratives and plots surrounding the stories of these girl characters. The paper questions: What is the source of this culturally accepted behavior – the ritual maltreatment of girls? What importance does the backdrop of colonization play in some of these "girl stories"? How do these silences lead to the consequences endured by females in a society where subordination and obedience is still the preferred behavior for women? Why as a society are we not breaking the silences? Why do secrets persist, why does abuse endure, and the gender-based damnation which girls "attract", continue?

I will consider how accurate these writers' characterizations are when compared to the sociological history of Caribbean female upbringing. What pain lurks behind their portrayal of these characters, as they write of the plight of growing up female in the Caribbean?

Bio: Published author and performance artist, Douglas pursued a degree in Cultural Studies and Creative Writing at State University of New York, Empire State College. She has performed throughout New York City and conducts her workshop (Your Life As Story: Once Upon a Time) for Poets and Writers, International Women Writing Guild and other organizations throughout the United States.

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Panel assignment: "Trauma and Healing."

19.

Name: Adam Dworkis

Paper Title: "Fire and Sweet Water: African-Caribbean Gods as Archetypes in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*."

The phenomenon of god possession permeates the syncretic religious practices of the people of the Caribbean Islands. It should come as no surprise, then, that writers from this region would employ a parallel form of god-based inspiration in the molding of characters that populate their works. This paper deals with the topic of possession in the writer's product; I argue that the Yoruba gods dominating the creolized religions of the Caribbean emerge as models in its literature. I examine this trend in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, analyzing Antoinette Mason's relationship with fire as a manifestation of Shango, as well as in Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, in which the title heroine's self-assured sexuality establishes her identity as an Oshun figure. In the Yoruba tradition, Shango is a warrior god whose manipulation of the element of fire earns him profound fear and respect. Early in Rhys's novel, Antoinette demonstrates fascination with the flame. The element becomes integral to her character -- it grows to subsume her experience of beauty and even her sense of self. On the opposite side we find Oshun, the Yoruba possessor of the "amorous essence" of female sensuality. Condé's Tituba appears as a perfect example of the deity in human form, as she moves through the plantations of Barbados as well as the hamlets of colonial Massachusetts extolling the virtues of a life in harmony with, and not in opposition to, woman's experience and expression of her body.

Bio: Adam Dworkis is a senior pursuing a Bachelor of the Arts degree in English Literature at the University of Kansas. He is currently considering schools for graduate work in English Literature.

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Panel Assignment: "Religion, Spirituality and the Magic Realist Tradition in Caribbean Women's Writing."

20.

Name: Kalenda Eaton

Paper Title: "Moving Pictures With Sound: Diaspora, Spirituality, and Language in Helen Oyeyemi's *The Opposite House* and Erna Brodber's *Louisiana*."

Abstract: In *The Opposite House* Helen Oyeyemi spins a tale that tackles the pervasive issue of Afro-Caribbean identity abroad. Her human characters long for a Cuba they no longer know and search for belonging through an unwavering devotion to native spirituality. Meanwhile, beneath the surface lies a parallel otherworld, just as real. Erna Brodber's *Louisiana* presents similar issues of identity, displacement, spiritual communication, and migration. Her African American protagonist comes to terms with her identity by "taking on" the spirit of a Caribbean past she barely knows.

In this paper, I explore the authors' treatment of migration and spirituality in the novels. I discuss the effect self-imposed exile has on the primary characters and the communities of the "new" Diaspora. Also, I examine the author's role as outsider in her treatment of characters that do not reflect her own national origin or culture (Oyeyemi is of Nigerian parentage, raised in England; Brodber is Jamaican). I consider the problems may postcolonial theorists have addresses regarding the silencing of native voices by colonial forces and ask, "what is at stake when the subaltern speaks for another?" I also seek to uncover the significance of spirituality as a language that allows the author to voice unknown cultural spaces—giving the gaps anthropomorphic qualities.

Bio: Kalenda Eaton, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor of English at Armstrong Atlantic State University. She earned her doctorate in English from The Ohio State University with a dissertation on Black women's fiction during the post-Civil Rights era. She has presented papers on Maryse Condé and Paule Marshall and written reference entries on both authors. Her latest book, *Womanism, Literature, and the Transformation of the Black Community, 1965-1980* is scheduled to be published December 2007.

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Panel Assignment: "Who Speaks for Whom? New Directions in Caribbean Language and Identity."

21.

Name: Sharon L. Fairchild

Paper Title "Creating a Self: Location, Family, and Writing in Gisèle Pineau's *Fleur de Barbarie*."

Abstract: As postcolonial Caribbean theory, literature, and criticism moved away from the notion of Afrocentric "negritude" toward a narrower definition of Antillean authenticity, location and specificity of place gained considerable importance. Créolité and Caribbean theorists determined that aesthetic authenticity resides in cultural diversity, the Creole language, and the representation of Caribbean geography. The works of many Caribbean authors focus on the problematics of Caribbean identity due to the loss of African culture, the loss of history, and "deterritorialization." Questions of identity and origin are particularly crucial to Caribbeans living outside the Antilles, a situation resulting in family dysfunction, personal alienation, and marginalization. In her early novels Guadeloupean novelist Gisèle Pineau depicts the experiences of Caribbeans living in the "Métropole." However, in her later novel, *Fleur de Barbarie*, Pineau reverses the dilemma of displaced Antilleans with the portrayal of Josette, a Guadeloupean raised in France. When Josette is suddenly sent to Guadeloupe to live with a grandmother she has never met, she must shed her French identity, deemed "barbare" by her grandmother, and create a personal Caribbean identity.

The aim of this paper is to explore the association of place with identity as it is presented in *Fleur de Barbarie*. Does personal identity derive from geographic place or is it inevitably fixed in family lineage? Are there other ways of defining oneself? As Josette slowly grows roots in Guadeloupe, her attempt to formulate an understanding of her origins is thwarted by various barriers and secrets from the past. At the same time, Josette develops as a writer, creating an alternate concept of identity. The difficulties of becoming a writer parallel her quest for self-knowledge. In this way Pineau challenges the notion of links between identity, place, and family, which are unreliable. For Josette, and perhaps for Pineau herself, becoming a creative writer overcomes her loss of French identity and the impossibility of securing a Guadeloupean family history.

Bio: Dr. Sharon L. Fairchild is a professor of French language and Literature at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth where she is currently Chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Her PhD is in Romance Languages, specializing in nineteenth-century French literature. Her first focus of research was on the French novelist, George Sand. She has also conducted research on the French socialist movement, Fourierism, and its best-known woman supporter, Clarisse Vigoureux. Her latest publication is devoted to the novels of Maryse Condé.

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Panel assignment: "Caribbean Women Writers and Transnational Locations: Hybridity Myth and Racialized Voices."

22.

Name: Michelle Felix

Paper Title: "*Praisesong for the Widow* and the Imperial Tradition of the Travel Narrative."

Abstract: This paper addresses a gap in the scholarship on Paule Marshall that largely ignores her preoccupation with travel and tourism. The scholarship fails to recognize her repeated construction of characters who travel and her consistent insertion of tourism into her narratives. Her use of the tourism/travel trope responds to the legacy of travel writing as a tool of Empire building. Historically, colonial travelers identified the Caribbean and its inhabitants as in need of colonial control in order to bolster support from the home nation for the colonial enterprise. Today, contemporary travel literature continues to identify and define these locations for metropolitan consumption, now as paradise destinations. Considering the travel writing genre's inextricable link with the colonial enterprise and the neocolonial potential of contemporary travel, the repeated appearance of travel and tourism in Marshall's fiction merits investigation.

This paper will use travel writing theorists Mary Louise Pratt and Sara Mills to construct a lens through which to read Avey's travel in *Praisesong for the Widow*. I will argue that in the novel Marshall confronts the historical and contemporary hegemony of travel writing, attempting a postcolonial revision of the genre.

Bio: Michelle Felix is a PhD candidate in the English department at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, USA, and teaches English at Milwaukee Area Technical College. Her dissertation investigates the preoccupation with travel and tourism that is evident in Marshall's, Jamaica Kincaid's, and Michelle Cliff's fiction.

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Panel Assignment: "Crossing Boundaries: Travel and Geography."

23.

Name: Curdella Forbes

Paper Title: "Yearning for Utopia: Earth, Body, Deviance and Festive-Carnival Failure in *Cereus Blooms at Night*."

Abstract: Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* shapes its discourse on sexuality within aesthetic paradigms drawn from pastoral and apocalypse, twin poles of environmentalist epistemology. Mootoo constructs an ontology of yearning for Utopia-- a return to the earth and nascent 'bodyness' --a return that is constantly frustrated by the malevolent animus of social forces. She further suggests the inability of traditional Caribbean aesthetics and modes of social reconciliation to fulfill Utopian desire. This desire is represented through two aspects of Indo Trinidadian culture: the festive-carnival tradition associated with marriage rites, and the philosophical and patriarchal concern with the relation between man and nature; woman, earth and matter; karma and reincarnation; death, creation and renewal. I begin from the premise that the festive-carnival tradition is integral to the narrative of respectability through which Indo Trinidadian ethnic identity is asserted and that an important part of the festive-carnival's work is the production of hetero-normative sexuality as a marker of social wellness and cohesion. Mootoo's text invokes the liminal sites on which the festive-carnival masquerade, specifically its cross-dressing rituals, produces the 'codes of unseeing' by which deviant bodies and taboo sexualities are at once facilitated and suppressed. The masquerade disrupts the very play of respectability in which it engages, indeed overturns the carnival order, as it provides the cues for how the tortured, deviant body may perform and give voice to its trauma, which the masquerade disavows. In exposing the untenable dualism of the festive-carnival aesthetic, its final inability to ameliorate trauma, Mootoo makes the traumatized female body the centre of her pastoral-apocalyptic discourse. The ultimate tragedy of *Cereus* is the tyranny of culture. The search for a mode of healing and expression that refuses the carnival and returns the body to its primal origins--an ecology of connection with the body of the earth-- is imbricated in the rituals of the carnival tradition. Faced with the need to create herself anew, the protagonist can only perform *matikor*, in which woman is subjugated territory even as she is retributive maw and renewing earth. The Utopian ecology of the body, like festive-carnival costuming, in its failure signifies not only the condition of post-lapsarian mourning, but also the failure of the traditional rituals of community.

Bio: Curdella Forbes is a Senior Lecturer at UWI, Mona. Her essays have appeared in various prominent journals, and she is the author of *From Nation to Diaspora: Samuel Selvon, George Lamming and the Cultural Performance of Gender* (University of the West Indies P, 2005) and three works of fiction: *Songs of Silence* (Heinemann 2002), *Flying with Icarus* (Walker 2003) and *A Permanent Freedom* (Peepal Tree 2008)

Panel Assignment: "Sexuality and the Body B"

24.

Name: Njeri Githire

Paper Title: "Captain Bligh, Queen Victoria & the Cannibalism of Post-War Britain: Rewriting Imperial Conquest in Andrea Levy's *Small Island*."

Abstract

Face to face with the white man, the Negro has a past to legitimate, a vengeance to exact; face to face with the Negro, the contemporary white man feels the need to recall the times of cannibalism. -Frantz Fanon

My examination of the trope of cannibalism in selected works by Caribbean women writers situates itself within the wider context of my engagement with metaphors of consumption and incorporation as analytical bases for exploring issues of encounter, gender, and identity in Caribbean and Indian Ocean Women's writings.

Indeed, binary definitions of 'self' and 'other' underpin the representation of cannibalism just as the inside/outside binary plays an important role in the conceptualization of all antitheses. Postcolonial studies especially have suggested that this 'other' so powerfully figured in the cannibal was created to support the cultural cannibalism of colonization. The accusation of cannibalism was merely a projection of imperialist appetites onto the cultures subsequently subsumed. Accordingly, the cannibal may productively be read as a symbol of the permeability or instability of boundaries.

This paper will explore the ways in which Andrea Levy's *Small Island* (2004) links cannibalism and erotic fascination as different ways of consuming the body to expose the consumptive mentality and violence that underpins the legacy of imperialism.

Bio: Holder of a PhD in Comparative Literature and Women's Studies (Penn State University) I am currently an Assistant Professor of African American and African Studies at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. My primary research foci include Anglophone and Francophone literatures of Africa and the Diaspora, specifically the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean areas. I am also interested in issues of race, cultural identity, immigration and politics of citizenship in contemporary Europe and their impact on transnational relations between former colonies and former colonizing centers. My current book project "Consuming Passions: Encounter, Consumption and Gender in Caribbean and Indian Ocean Women's Writings" examines the use of metaphors of assimilation and incorporation (ingestion, regurgitation, etc.) by Caribbean and Indian Ocean women writers in the construction and performance of subjectivities that unfold in tangent to a dominant culture.

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality and the Body A."

25.

Name: VIRGINIA GONSALVES-DOMOND

Paper Title: "Caribbean Children's Literature: Psychic themes of Identity, Introspection, and Existentialism."

Abstract: Historically, Caribbean folktales have been the traditional literary genre of children stories in many Caribbean nations. The need to authenticate and validate a rich multilayered and textured regional, diasporic history and tradition, has led to an escalating number of writings specifically geared to children. The Afrocentric emphasis and legacy of orality and the communality of the storytelling tradition in Anglophone and Francophone cultures have been well documented from a number of perspectives and will be discussed in this paper.

A number of selected Caribbean children texts representing a plurality of genres such as folklore, historical, realistic, and fantasy fiction will be analyzed using the qualitative method of content analysis to ferret out themes related to multiple issues of negotiated personal, cultural and transcultural identity, introspectionism, and existentialism. Books spanning a wide range of thematic content will be examined. Works by authors such as Kincaid, Danticat and others will be presented within the frameworks discussed. Female and male protagonistic voices will be included in a gender-balanced presentation.

Bio: Dr. Virginia Gonsalves-Domond, from Kingston, Jamaica, is an Associate Professor of Psychology and Convenor of the African-American Studies Program at Ramapo College of New Jersey. She obtained her Ph.D. in Social/Personality Psychology and has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in several institutions such as Bates College, Sarah Lawrence College, and the College of Saint Elizabeth. Dr. Gonsalves-Domond is also a Mental Health Consultant with a number of Head Start Programs in New Jersey, is a published author, and has been the recipient of many outstanding academic and professional awards including one she received for teaching excellence at Ramapo College.

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Panel Assignment: "Trauma and Healing."

26.

Name: Angeletta K.M. Gourdine

Paper Title: "The Politics of Religion: Julia Alvarez's Revolutionary Migrations."

Abstract: The paper will examine Alvarez's use of the bildungsroman and historical novel to engage the relationship between religion, place, and identity. Place figures into Alvarez's narrative project in compelling ways. It is not only geographical location, but also political status and social role. As well, her writing highlights the degree to which Catholicism has influenced women's participation in nation building and their visibility in the Dominican Republic's national stories. Much of her writing is set in the nation's capital, Santo Domingo, an important destination for religious tourists. Santo Domingo is home to the Cathedral Basilica Santa Maria la Menor, the first cathedral in the New World. Juxtaposing the national history of *In The Time Of The Butterflies* and *In the Name of Salomé* next to the personal histories in *How The Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* and *Yo!* I analyze Alvarez's concern for the history of nation and the history of women, within and outside the national border. Rather than celebrating or castigating its influence, Alvarez explains how women balance the cloak of respectability Catholicism places on them with their desire for individual and national freedom.

Bio: Angeletta K.M. Gourdine is Associate Professor of English and Director of African and African American Studies at Louisiana State University, where she teaches courses in African American and Caribbean literatures. The author of *The Difference Place Makes: Gender Sexuality and Diaspora Identity* (Ohio State University Press, 2003), her articles on African diaspora women's literature have appeared in various journals including *Small Axe* and *African American Review*. She is an associate editor for *National Women's Studies Association Journal (NWSAJ)* and is completing a book that parallels images of select Caribbean islands from literature and tourist publications.

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Panel Assignment: "Religion, Spirituality and the Magic Realist Tradition in Caribbean Women's Writings."

27.

Name: Alexis Pauline Gumbs

Paper Title: "Revolutionary Generation: Towards a Poetics of Self-Determination, Anguilla 1967-1971."

Abstract: My grandmother designed the revolutionary Anguillian Flag. My grandfather used the United Nations and the Ford Foundation to fund the defiance of a small Caribbean island that dared to dictate its own terms of engagement towards the British Empire. I was raised to believe that (we) Anguillians are a revolutionary people. Nonetheless, today Anguilla drags the disclaimer "British West Indies" after its name and struggles to maintain an economy dependent on the elite tourist market mostly controlled by interests in Europe, the United States and Canada.

From the perspective of a small island, a dependent territory, excluded from the narrative of nationalist anti-colonial revolution inscribed on the historical landscape of the 1960's West Indian process of self definition, what is revolution? What is the difference between independence and self-determination? Written from the admittedly biased perspective of a proud diasporic Anguillian, this paper draws on private letters, spoken histories and cultural artifacts to offer an intimate alternative literary reading of revolutionary post-colonial politics.

Building upon the work of Sylvia Wynter, Brent Edwards and David Scott, this paper explores the generic implications in the way we tell the story of Caribbean revolution, arguing that we replace romantic, tragic and novelistic ways of accounting for Caribbean revolution with a revolutionary *poetics*. In "Ethno or Socio Poetics" Sylvia Wynter defines "poetics" as an approach through which to generate the human by disrupting objectifying categories and producing a new and shifting relationship to a lived environment. I argue that re-reading Caribbean revolution as a critical poetic project offers a flexible, queer and intergenerational way to respond to the hegemonic neocolonialist situation in the Caribbean and to generate a revolutionary present.

Bio: Alexis Pauline Gumbs is a troublesome afro-antillean grandchile and a PhD candidate in English, Africana Studies and Women's Studies at Duke University. Alexis is also the founder of BrokenBeautiful Press (brokenbeautiful.wordpress.com).

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Panel Assignment: "Trauma and Healing."

28.

Name: Gia Harewood

Paper Title: "Violent Masculinity in *The Harder They Come* and *Shottas*."

Abstract: This essay considers the role of film in the negative psychological programming of males. By specifically examining how two Jamaican films translate Jamaican masculinity, I consider how boys and men (as well as girls and women) in the broader Caribbean are socialized by the images they see on screen.

I begin with a look at Perry Henzell's 1972 film *The Harder They Come* and the model of masculinity upheld by the rogue community hero Ivanhoe Martin. While there is a range of masculinity portrayed in the film, Ivanhoe's character is seen as the most desirable way of being. I look at how he transforms from innocent country boy to violent criminal and how his depiction is itself a translation of "real manhood." Next, I discuss how Ivanhoe's risky behavior and irreverent challenge to authority paint a seductive picture of masculinity for local and global audiences and what the implications are for real life Jamaican men and boys. Additionally, I consider the meanings of Michael Thelwell translating the film into a novel instead of the usual novel to film treatment. And finally, I turn to explore a version of his character as resurrected/translated in the 2002 film *Shottas*. With a reputation among its fans as the "Jamaican Scarface," I conclude by considering how this latest indiscriminately violent translation of its 1972 predecessor signals a disturbing trend that needs public attention.

Bio: Gia Harewood is a Doctoral candidate in the English Department at the University of Maryland at College Park. Her dissertation examines representations of violent Jamaican masculinity in literature and film. Additionally, her research interests include the performance of fatherhood, bridging the academic and the everyday, and creative ways in which to engage in social justice work. She has presented at the National Association of Independent Schools, the American Association for University Women, the Caribbean Studies Association and numerous independent schools

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Panel Assignment: "Translating Caribbean Belonging through Gender and Space."

29.

Name: Gerise Herndon

Paper Title: "Victims, Stooges, or Honored Ancestors? Women Raise the Dead."

Abstract: A writer in voluntary exile assuming the mantle of spokesperson for the Caribbean raises questions about authenticity, social responsibility and the "native informant"; novelists speaking for dead relatives raise additional questions about creative license. Jamaica Kincaid has been critiqued for appropriating the voices, sexualities and language of her brother, mother, biological father, and her native Antigua. Does she expose them, as she claims in *My Brother*, in order not to die with them? Or does she mine her Antiguan past to feed the North American appetite for images of the Caribbean?

Likewise, Maryse Condé has resuscitated English literary classics and historical figures like Tituba, while her imagined biography of her grandmother follows the path first trod by Jean Rhys who recalls of *Jane Eyre's* Bertha that she "wanted to write her a life." Condé's novel *Victoire* recreates her ancestor alternately as a passive pawn pushed by the shifting forces of acceptable race relations in Guadeloupe and as a groundbreaking transgressor defying class and race for the sake of love.

Edwidge Danticat's retelling of her uncle's life in *Brother, I'm Dying* is both a poignant tribute and a critique of a US immigration policy. These texts, not strictly novels, not quite memoirs, nor testimonials by residents of the Caribbean, take the few details, memories, hints, and rumors available to reconstruct lost biographies and histories. Just as Caribbean cultures emerged out of the bricolage of pieces of African and colonial cultural elements, so too these new creations take shape from the available materials to add provocative new art forms in Caribbean writing.

Bio: Gerise Herndon, Ph.D., is Professor of English, Director of Gender Studies, and Fulbright Program Advisor at Nebraska Wesleyan University. She earned her PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Texas in 1993 with a dissertation on Caribbean women writers. She recently published the co-edited essay collection *Emerging Perspectives on Maryse Condé, A Writer of Her Own*, as well as a special issue of *Mango Season* on francophone writing, with Dr. Sarah Barbour of Wake Forest University. She has also published on Jamaica Kincaid, Edwidge Danticat, Simone Schwarz-Bart, and Euzhan Palcy. She teaches Postcolonial and Global Literatures, Women Writing Across Cultures, and Francophone Literature.

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Panel Assignment: "Who Speaks for Whom? New Directions in Caribbean Language and Cultural Identity."

30.

Name: Régine Michelle Jean-Charles

Paper Title: "Of Memories and Men: Edwidge Danticat's *Brother, I'm Dying* and Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother*."

Abstract: This paper looks at Edwidge Danticat's recent memoir *Brother, I'm Dying* (2007) in relation to Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother* (1997). Published ten years apart and intertextually linked through their titles and genres, the texts also are mainly focused on significant men in the authors' lives and how these men deal with illness. Danticat's effort to tell the stories of her uncle and father who die of different illnesses finds its echo in *My Brother* in which Kincaid tells the story of her brother Devon Drew's life and AIDS-related death. The points at which the two memoirs converge and diverge introduce a series of questions about charting genealogies and writing into a Caribbean literary heritage. As such, this paper takes a twofold approach to the analysis of genealogies: first, by looking at how the authors depart from previous works that were centered on female genealogies, while remaining attentive to documenting the stories of family members, whose experiences inform their work. The end result is a genealogy that is not based on gender and as such reconfigures the approach to gender and lineage in Caribbean literature. Second, the paper uses a comparative framework to situate Danticat's text in relation to Kincaid's text, establishing a line from the Antiguan author to the Haitian-American author. Ultimately, it is my hope that this practice will enrich our understanding of how Caribbean women writers enter into literary dialogues by writing across islands, generations, cultures, and diasporas.

Bio: Régine Michelle Jean-Charles received her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in 2000 and Ph.D. from Harvard University in 2006. Her manuscript, "Gendering VIOlence: Francophone Women Writers, Representations of Violence, and the Violence of Representation," uses a feminist theoretical optic to explore the discourses of violence in postcolonial francophone literature. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Virginia's Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies.

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Panel Assignment: "Following Footsteps, Making Paths: Literary Legacies and Genealogies."

31.

Name: Martha Kelehan

Paper Title: "The Reading and Reception of Marie Chauvet's *Amour, colère, et folie: A Contemporary Rare Book.*"

Abstract: This paper argues that the circumstances surrounding the publication of this seminal work of Caribbean fiction have turned it into a rare book. Despite the existence of only 65 copies of the 1968 edition in WorldCat and the lack of an authorized English translation, this book has been taught in hundreds of university courses across the United States. Rather than look at the text as a literary work as many have done before, this paper focuses instead on the publication history, the reception of the text both in Haiti and in the larger international community, and how this text became part of a number of overlapping canons. Using Wolfgang Iser's work on reading as an active process of meaning-making, I undertake a close reading of textual changes between the 1968 Gallimard edition and the 2005 Soley/Emina Soliel edition.

Bio: Martha Kelehan is an Assistant Professor and the Area Studies Librarian for Africana, Latin American, & Caribbean Studies at Binghamton University (SUNY). She received her MLIS from UCLA, and has a Master's in Latin American and Caribbean Studies from Tulane University. She is the co-author with Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert of a chapter in the forthcoming book *Obsolete Geographies: Displacements and Transformations in Caribbean Cultures* (University Press of Florida).

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Panel Assignment: Decoding the Text

32.

Name: Rosamond S. King, Ph.D.,

Paper Title: "Written out? The Presence and Absence of Women-Loving-Women in Caribbean Texts."

Abstract:

most of the women are straight...

most of the gays are men...

are lesbians being written out of Caribbean literature?

This talk will address the above question through examining the relative dearth of Caribbean lesbian characters in texts from the region and the depictions of Caribbean lesbians that do exist. In accordance with the call for papers, I will analyze the legacies of presence and absence established by Caribbean writers and scholars in relationship to women who love women. I will address works from the English, Spanish, and French Caribbean, including: "Of Ghosts and Shadows" by R. Gay (Haiti), *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* by Audre Lorde (Grenada-USA), *Memory Mambo* by Achy Obejas (Cuba-USA), "Out on Main Street" by Shani Mootoo (Trinidad-Canada), and "Somebody Has to Cry," by Marilyn Bobes (Cuba).

I will also discuss the reality that many self-identified Caribbean lesbians rarely, if at all, portray lesbian characters – and the fact that many scholars avoid discussing these characters when they do exist. While each writer's choice of themes and characters is and should be individual, the *trend* of writers not portraying Caribbean lesbian lives should be identified and examined.

I look forward to sharing this new research with other ACWWS members, and to dialoguing with them about these questions.

Bio: Dr. Rosamond King is a scholar of comparative Caribbean and African literature, culture, and performance studies. I am completing my book *Island Bodies: Transgressive Caribbean Sexualities*, and my scholarly work has appeared in publications such as *The Journal of West Indian Literature*, *Sargasso*, and *Women and Performance*. I spoke at the ACWWS conference in the Dominican Republic, and have also presented my research at the meetings of the Caribbean Studies Association, Modern Language Association, and numerous other organizations. I am currently an Assistant Professor at Long Island University-Brooklyn.

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality and the Body B."

33.

Name: Dr. Ismene Krishnadath

Paper Title: "Reflection of Indo-Ethnicity in Contemporary Dutch Caribbean Prose Fiction."

Abstract: In this paper I will give an overview of ethnicity in Suriname. I will examine the link between ethnicity and cultural identity while considering the notion that ethnic grouping can both stimulate and hinder socio-economic progress and emancipation. I want to show that ethnicity is becoming less important in defining social status and opportunities and that although mixed ethnic origin is a common and well accepted phenomenon, persons of mixed origin are not visible as a group in society. I also intend to consider the portrayal of Indo-ethnicity in contemporary Dutch Caribbean prose including my own.

Bio: Ismene Krishnadath is president of Schrijversgroep '77, the writers' organization of Suriname. She has published over sixteen books including children's books, youth novels and books for adults. Her style is diverse and has grown from traditional to experimental. In 2004 she launched the first Surinamese novel in the fantasy-genre, *The Legend of Çakuntela of the Green Continent*, which was translated into English in 2006. Her latest publication is a compilation of columns titled *The Lips of Renate and 75 Other Columns*.

Panel Assignment: "The Status of Dutch-Caribbean Studies."

34.

Name: Randi Gray Kristensen

Paper Title: "Translations of Freedom: Marronage in Atlantic Discourses."

Abstract: Marronage was the concrete expression of the assertion of full Black humanity during slavery. The word Maroon is derived from the Spanish *cimarron*, initially used to describe cattle and other domesticated animals that escaped to the wild from the earliest European settlements in the Americas. The first Afro-American Maroon took to the hills of Hispaniola shortly after disembarking in 1502. Although the term was also used to describe Native Americans who fled Spanish captivity, by the 1530's it was in general use to describe Africans in the Americas who had fled slavery and implied "fierceness," being "wild" and "unbroken" (Price 2).

While marronage is still not a given in history texts, the concept of marronage has been translated from the discipline of history by practitioners of anthropology, literary criticism, and cultural theory; for inter- and post-disciplinary cultural studies projects; and for creative expression. These acts of translation have produced a polysemous signifier, deployed as productive (Glissant) or limiting (Arnold) for male gender identity; empowering (Cooper) or demeaning (Brathwaite) for female gender identity; essential to a national (Lalla) or transnational (James) literary identity; as process, metaphor, fact and myth.

This paper will review the deployments of marronage in African Diasporic Atlantic circulations over the last 50 years, tracking the migration of the concept from the historical to multiple disciplines and purposes. The purpose of such a review is not to coalesce a single "correct" use of marronage, but rather to interrogate the renewed, dispersed, and disparate recuperation and reinvention of a 500-year old signifier in the last half-century. For whom has this concept become important? For what ends? What does such an analysis reveal about continuities and discontinuities in African Diasporic Atlantic discourses? And what is its significance for contemporary Maroons?

Bio: Randi Gray Kristensen is Assistant Professor of University Writing at the George Washington University. Her dissertation, *Rights of Passage: Maroon Novels by Black Women Writers*, deploys marronage as history and metaphor in contemporary novels by African Diasporic women writers. She also writes fiction (*Electric Grace*, ed. Richard Peabody), memoir (*Under Her Skin*, ed. Pooja Makhijani) and poetry (*Creation Fire*, ed. Ramabai Espinet).

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Panel Assignment: "Translating Caribbean Belonging Through Gender and Space."

35.

Name: Geta LeSeur

Paper Title: "Testimonies of Terror in Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*."

Abstract: In 1937, under the regime of Dominican dictator General Rafael Trujillo, over 30,000 Haitian migrant farm workers were murdered in the Dominican Republic. Edwidge Danticat's *Farming of Bones* [1998] imaginatively recasts the 1937 massacre and explores the ways in which culture, ethnicity and religion are used to damn Haitians to second class citizenship, and later to deem them annihilable. In the face of overwhelming historical evidence that confirms the mixed racial origins of the people of the Dominican Republic, Rafael Trujillo attempted to reconstruct Dominican nationality by disavowing any and all claims to an African ancestry. Dominicans were reconstituted as white and/or Indian, despite the existence of large populations of dark-skinned Dominicans whose ancestry was clearly linked to the presence of African slaves in the former Spanish colony. Trujillo devised a method of distinguishing Haitians from Dominicans by forcing them to say the Spanish word for parsley, *perejil*. Those who mispronounced the word were forced to swallow mouthfuls of the parsley and were instantly brutally murdered.

Significantly, the use of parsley as both linguistic and cultural marker demonstrates Trujillo's obsession with rooting out the folk identity that is linked to African culture as constituted by the Haitian presence in the Dominican Republic. Trujillo and his regime literally pushed the Haitian culture down the throats of Haitians, killing them with it, for it.

Much of Danticat's book is based on interviews and ethnographic data which the author collected from returning emigrants and those of earlier generations who worked in Santo Domingo's canfields. My paper will demonstrate how these interviews and personal narratives become testimonies of terror akin to the slave narratives we all know so well. *The Farming of Bones* has many traits of the narratives, one of the truest validations of the slave-like lives experienced by thousands of Haitians, and the massacre by their "superior" neighbors.

This work is also a protest piece, in which the key island economies have held center stage for a long time. Sugarcane – that "colonial gold" for hundreds of years – has given a sometimes meager means of livelihood to both populations. That experience has been "bitter sweet" and fraught with tension and futility.

Bio: Dr. Geta LeSeur is Professor of Africana Studies, English and Women Studies at the University of Arizona. She is a past Newsletter Editor for ACWWS as well as an Editor on *MaComere*. Her research and teaching privileges Paule Marshall, Edwidge Danticat and Beryl Gilroy. She is currently working on a public history project of her Jamaican birthplace, Mocho, Clarendon Parish.

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Panel Assignment: "Framing Danticat."

36.

Name: Natalie M. Léger-Palmer

Paper Title: "The Tragic Feminine: Tragic Imaginings in *Krik? Krak!*"

Abstract: Often in readings of the Caribbean postcolonial present and its colonial past, romance—as genre and as trope—is employed to recount (and idealize) the failures as well as the successes of the Caribbean. Yet, what of tragedy? Is tragedy not an equally compelling genre and trope for reading the Caribbean postcolonial present and correspondingly, the colonial past?

This paper answers in the affirmative; however, in this piece, tragedy will not be read solely in its normative form as a genre or trope but it will be read through affective responses and experiential realities. Using Edwidge Danticat's *Krik? Krak!* and paying particular attention to the form of the piece (short stories) and content (personal narratives), this paper argues for the saliency of tragedy in readings of the Caribbean postcolonial present. Essentially, this paper posits that the failures of the anti-movement (its promises of freedom economically and politically) calls for a tragic reading of the Caribbean present. Of particular importance to this paper is the female, particularly the female as the figure of the tragic. In Danticat's piece, a tragic reading of the present is conditioned by the female's figuration as a constitutive figure of social and political change.

Bio: Natalie M. Léger-Palmer is a PhD candidate in English at Cornell University. She is interested in Caribbean literature, particularly as it relates to revolution, modernity, and globalization. She is currently at work on a dissertation that examines the literary significance of the Haitian revolution in Caribbean conceptualizations of modernity; essentially, she argues that the revolution is used to discuss Caribbean modernity as a failure of revolution.

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Panel Assignment: "Framing Danticat."

37.

Name: Marie Léticée

Paper Title: "Maryse Condé: A Writer's Journey Toward the True Color of Her Voice."

Abstract: This paper analyzes Maryse Condé's search for her true voice as a female writer of French Caribbean descent. During an intervention as the keynote speaker in Lugano, Switzerland last year, Maryse Condé spoke about her journey as a writer and candidly admitted that she had struggled with the process and that she was not sure she had succeeded as a Caribbean writer. In fact she was wondering why she couldn't be simply viewed as a writer, with no epithet attached.

In his book *Peau noire, masque blanc*, Franz Fanon addresses the consequences of colonialism on the French Caribbean psyche and writes about the "existential deviation of the negro". He explains that colonization had a tremendously negative impact on the formation of a Caribbean identity. Condé supports that argument and uses her own experience growing up in Guadeloupe to illustrate Fanon's point of view. She admits that she has not lived a deep Guadeloupean cultural experience and therefore, her voice has more of a French color than a Caribbean color. In this paper, I intend to examine the evolution of Maryse Condé's search for her true voice.

Bio: Dr. Marie Léticée is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Language at the University of Central Florida in Orlando.

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Panel Assignment: "Voicelessness and Agency."

38.

Name: Yvonne McDonald

Paper Title: "*River Woman*: The Challenge of a 21st Century Writer."

Abstract: This paper will examine the impact of "subalternity" on Caribbean Women's writings as exemplified in Donna Heman's *River Woman*.

Very little critical attention has been directed towards subalternity and Caribbean nations. Yet European nations' use of institutionalized slavery especially made the Caribbean basin a leading subaltern location. Spivak's query (1985) of the subaltern's "representability" directed postcolonial scholars to ponder the treatment of "oppressed" subjects, and the difficulties involved in making visible their historiography and in giving voice to their internal struggles and value systems. In spite of marginalization and class-based oppression, repeated incidents of resistance to hegemony in Caribbean societies indicate the enduring will power and persistent voice of Caribbean peoples (Meeks, 2000) responding affirmatively to Spivak's quest and providing undisputed testimony.

This paper revisits the issue of female subjectivity through the critical lens of subalternity showing Heman endeavors to tell the ignored "herstory," of her subaltern female protagonist's struggles against entrenchment and cultural dogmatism. It will argue that the "unsilencing" of popular women's voices in *River Woman* poses a veritable challenge to the validity of imperialistic nations measured against the ideals of democratic thought.

Bio: Yvonne McDonald is a PhD candidate in Literary Studies in the English Department at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, USA. She teaches English at Milwaukee Area Technical College. Her dissertation examines the impact of subalternity on the emergent literature of Caribbean women writers.

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Panel Assignment: "Voicelessness & Agency."

39.

Name: Julie E. Moody-Freeman

Paper Title: "'A doin good, but a wan du betta': Towards a Revolutionary Belizean Poetics of Survival."

Abstract: My paper examines *Noh Matta Wat*, a television dramatic series which chronicles the daily lives of the Diegos, a Garifuna family, to illustrate how television drama is being utilized to express a revolutionary Belizean Poetics of survival. In *Noh Matta Wat*, single parent and small business owner, Margaret Diego, with the assistance of Granny Tomasa, struggles to safely raise and educate her two children amidst social and political ferment. Written and performed in Creole and English, this series relies on Belizean music, biblical moralizing, and history to tell a story about post-independent Belize, in which Belizeans, like Margaret Diego, must eke out day by day survival in the context of neoliberalism, globalism, and neocolonial governmental naivety and corruption.

I argue that *Noh Matta Wat*, written by Belizeans Kim Vasquez and Adele Ramos, is being utilized pedagogically to teach an ethic of living to masses of Belizean youth and adults. In their collaboration with male and female producers, directors, videographers, and editors, these writers (re)vision a Belizean identity by addressing how Belizeans can challenge oppression and nihilism and by providing new visions of how to live. I conclude that examining the work of women writers of television shows in Belize provides rich scholarly terrain for the field of Caribbean Cultural and Postcolonial Studies as writers imagine new possibilities for healthy living and loving in spite of tremendous social, cultural, political, and economic obstacles.

Bio: Julie E. Moody-Freeman is an Assistant Professor in African and Black Diaspora Studies at DePaul University. Her teaching and research interests include studies in Women Writers from Africa and the African Diaspora, Caribbean Narratives and Criticism, Feminist Theory, and the Rhetoric of Colonialism and Post-Colonialism.

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Panel assignment: "Literature and Socio-Politics."

40.

Name: Paula Morgan

Paper title: "Of Far Horizons and Safe Harbours: Women's Bodies and Transnational Concourse."

Abstract: Global transnational concourse in labour, currencies, cultural formations and ideologies are invariably experienced by women on a visceral level. This paper explores a range of literary expression by Caribbean women dealing with the impact of forced and voluntary migrations on women in the historical and the contemporary wave of globalizations. It focuses on the implications of the devastating location of the female body as boundary marker in relation to constructs such as alienation and belonging, the global and the local, nationalism and transnationalism, and utopian possibilities of a world beyond oppression and borders. The paper argues that the pivotal role played by Caribbean women within the productive and reproductive global economies has bequeathed a legacy of anguish and potentiality which they carry within their bodies and bloodlines. The fictional representations tell the enormity of this anguish and grope towards healing articulations for women and their societies.

Bio: Paula Morgan is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities and Education and an associate of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Her primary area of research, teaching and publication is in women's literatures of the Caribbean and the African diaspora. Dr. Morgan has produced four books, the latest being *Writing Rage: Unmasking Violence Through Caribbean Discourse* 2006 (with Valerie Youssef). She currently coordinates the UWI Cultural Studies Graduate Programme.

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality & the Body A."

41.

Name: Victoria Bridges Moussaron

Paper Title: "The Isolation of a Woman's Voice: *Jane Eyre* (C. Brontë), *Wide Saragossa Sea* (J. Rhys), and "Jean Rhys" (D. Walcott)."

Abstract: This paper will address the question of speaking for an imagined voice, not of another person, but of a character. In the first work, the character secluded in the attic does not speak because she is mad. I ask: what might the voice of madness be? In response, Jean Rhys speaks her madness by imagining its origin in *Wide Saragossa Sea*, placing her in the position of a white child, a girl, born in the islands, "a *béké*," where she is "out of place" - indeed burnt out - but does not seem to recognize her difference. What might it mean to "return" in terms of "where one speaks from" if one's language and memories are grounded in island references displaced by such a return to metropolitan references that are without memories, where those references have become "out of place," replaced, and/or silenced?

In all three works (Brontë, Rhys, Walcott) a brother *speaks for* each woman - revealing her status as rightful wife in *Jane Eyre*; as her métisse half-brother in *Wide Saragossa Sea*, he protects her in childhood, tries to stop her from leaving the islands, comes to see her, mad, in England. Walcott's poem could be read as figuring, if not her brother, then a métisse relative - half the doer of the crime, the Englishman, and half the victim, the *béké* child - when he speaks for/re-imagines both *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Saragossa Sea*. In Walcott's imagination the young woman would not marry, would not return to the metropolis, would not go mad, but with a copy of *Jane Eyre* in her hand, is figured before blank pages waiting to be written, is given a place to speak. (What is the seclusion, the isolation of a woman's voice?)

Bio: Victoria Bridges Moussaron, Ph.D. is a Maitre de conférences (Associate Professor) at the Université de Lille III in France where she teaches poetry, literary translation and translation theory. Moussaron received her doctorate in French at Yale University. She has published on Colette, Poe as read by Baudelaire and Mallarmé, and on Walcott. She is currently writing a book on the correspondence of a New England missionary in northern Japan and her sister in Boston at the turn of the last century.

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Panel Assignment: "Who Speaks for Whom? New Directions in Caribbean Language and Cultural Identity."

42.

Name: Alida Neslo

Paper Title: "Theatre in Surinam: From our 'Roaring Sixties' and Beyond..."

Abstract: Theatre in Surinam has only made a particular impression during the time of the magic duo Henk Tjon and Thea Doelwijt. Up until now, some of their offshoots are still successfully active in the theatre. It won't be long before another successful young director will rise: for this person – in – the – future I would like to leave the bone-structure of what could be called the 'Surinamese method of the future' – global and homespun at the same time.

I'm currently working out this concept in a small laboratory together with some young people who have a sense of Creole folk art. The working title of that particular method is 'School without walls', after an old educational form that was common in pre – colonial West Africa. This method involves moving more deeply into what I found on the surface in Surinam, connecting not through vocal dialogue in the first place, but through physical gesture and music, and most of all keeping the sacred element within, an element that died a long time ago in European art, without any other similar element replacing it.

Maybe by rethinking and reworking what we have in Surinam and in the Caribbean we will revive our own theatre and even bring about developments in Europe!

Bio: Alida J. Neslo was born in Suriname in 1954. She studied linguistics and dramatic arts in Brussels and West Africa and practiced several forms of theatre (movement, puppets, visuals, Chinese opera and ballet). She travelled the world participating in diverse theatre groups under several well known directors. She also did cabaret and storytelling and presented fashion shows. She acted in and directed movies and she choreographed. She was also in television productions and radio shows. Lately she has been writing columns. Most of her activities took place in Belgium, for which she received several important prizes. She returned to Suriname in 2007 to participate in the theatre.

Panel Assignment: "The Status of Dutch-Caribbean Studies."

43.

Name: Denise deCaires Narain

Paper Title: "Have spunks and do battle for yourself": Maids, Madams and a Politics of Resistance in Caribbean Women's Texts."

Abstract: This paper focuses on the ways that the figure of the servant has been deployed in a selection of Caribbean women's texts. Beginning with Phyllis Shand Allfrey's *The Orchid House* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the discussion shifts to more recent publications including, Olive Senior's 'Discerner of Hearts', Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* and Shani Mootoo's *He Drown She in the Sea* (among others). The paper argues that the varied representations of the servant in these texts offers important insights into the tensions, ambiguities and difficulties which mark women's relationships with each other within the confines of domestic spaces. I argue that the figure of the servant functions in these texts in diverse and often contradictory ways: to endorse the values of the dominant class and/or to resist the status quo; to enable and/or to disable subaltern agency and resistance; and, frequently, to act as a crucial intermediary figure, positioned between 'the people' and the ruling elite. After offering comparative readings of the ways the selected texts represent encounters between women of unequal social status, the paper concludes by considering the possibilities and problems suggested by these texts for any notion of 'sisterly solidarity'. I argue that the 'maid/madam' relationship provides a productive starting point for exploring affiliations between postcolonial women more widely across boundaries of class, nation and culture.

Bio: Denise deCaires Narain is a Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Sussex. She has also taught at the University of the West Indies and at the Open University. She teaches courses on postcolonial writing (with an emphasis on Caribbean writers) at UG and PG levels. She has published widely on Caribbean women's writing, including *Caribbean Women's Poetry: Making Style* and a book on Olive Senior is due out this year. She is currently working on a project on the figure of the servant in postcolonial women's writing.

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Panel Assignment: "Courting Risk: Narratives of Resistance."

44.

Name: Dr. Hilde Neus

Paper Title: "'Renovelling the Past': Suriname Women Writers and History."

Abstract: Twenty years ago a remarkable book was published in Suriname: 'Hoe duur was de suiker' ('The Cost of Sugar') by author Cynthia McLeod, which was celebrated with a special party. This paper will include a concise overview of historical novels published in Suriname, focusing on the work of McLeod.

What was the reception of the book in Suriname and the Netherlands, what were the effects of the success on Suriname literature, meaning on the production of books in general, on the production of historical novels and on the continuous work of McLeod?

I would like to argue on written sources and oral history (and their role in society) as contributions to the ongoing development of Suriname historical fiction.

Bio:

Hilde Neus-van der Putten was born in 1960 in Veldhoven, the Netherlands; graduated from teachers training college in Holland in 1980; taught at a primary International School in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, from 1983 until she moved to Suriname in 1991. She studied Dutch language at the teachers Training College IOL and majored in Dutch Language and Culture at the University of Amsterdam in 2003. In that year she published her study 'Susanna du Plessis, Portret van een Plantagemeesteres.'

At present she works at the Suriname Museum as an Educational Officer, writes book reviews for the daily newspaper (www.dwt.net/Archief/2004/03-07-04/lit1.htm) and articles for the museum (www.cq-link.sr/museum). In 2007 she edited the Schrijversgroep '77 publication 'Diversity is Power'.

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Panel Assignment: "The Status of Dutch-Caribbean Studies."

45.

Name: Angelique Nixon

Paper Title: "The Politics of Consciousness: Erna Brodber's Blackspace - Building Community and Educo-Tourism."

Abstract: Erna Brodber is well known for her resistance to neocolonialism through an interrogation of the past and re-claiming of history for people of African descent. The histories and herstories that Brodber promotes transcend and challenge the dominant narrative(s) of history. This paper considers the multifaceted approach to challenging neocolonialism by Jamaican writer, activist, and scholar Erna Brodber; hence it brings together her critique of travel and U.S. imperialism in her writing along with her activism in creating a sustainable tourism venue. Located in Brodber's home village of Woodside in rural Jamaica, "Blackspace" is an "educo-tourism" site that focuses on the effects of slavery on people of African descent through several events preceding and on Jamaica's Emancipation Day. "Educo-tourism" is educational tourism, grounded in the sharing of knowledge between locals and visitors/guests. This paper also considers how Brodber critiques travel and cultural cannibalism in her novel *Myal*, revealing how the Caribbean can be consumed through travel writing and U.S. cultural production. After an analysis of her novel *Myal* as a feminist critique of travel, I discuss my experiences at Blackspace in July 2007. Brodber (re)writes histories/herstories for people of African descent while building African Diasporic community and consciousness. She maintains critical views of tourism even as she works within the tourist industry and encourages ethical exchanges between locals and tourists.

Bio: Born and raised in Nassau, Bahamas, Angelique V. Nixon is a Ph.D. Candidate in English at the University of Florida. Her research and teaching interests include Caribbean and Postcolonial Studies, African Diaspora Literature, Black Cultural Studies, Postcolonial and Feminist Theories, Gender and Sexuality Studies, U.S. Multi-ethnic Literature, including African American and Native American Literatures. Her dissertation in progress, titled "Consuming Identities: Crosscurrents of Tourism, Diaspora, and Mobility in Caribbean Literature and Culture," investigates the material effects of tourism and neocolonialism on Caribbean cultural production and identity.

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Panel Assignment: "Literature & Socio-Politics."

46.

Name: Elizabeth Nunez, respondent on Caribbean Revisions and Intertextuality:
Elizabeth Nunez's Fiction

Bio: Elizabeth Nunez is a CUNY Distinguished Professor of English at Medgar Evers College and the award-winning author of six novels: *Prospero's Daughter*; *Grace*; *Discretion*; *Bruised Hibiscus*; *Beyond the Limbo Silence*; and *When Rocks Dance*. Her most recent novel *Prospero's Daughter* was a *New York Times Book Review* Editor's Choice, the 2006 Novel of the Year for *Black Issues Book Review* and the 2006 Florida Center for the Literary Arts One Book, One Community selection. Nunez has published several monographs of literary criticism focused on Caribbean literature and is co-editor with Jennifer Sparrow of the anthology *Stories from Blue Latitudes: Caribbean Women Writers at Home and Abroad*. Co-founder of the National Black Writers Conference and director for fourteen years, Nunez is executive producer of the 2004 NY Emmy-nominated CUNY TV series *Black Writers in America*. Her audiobooks include *Grace* and *Prospero's Daughter* (BBC/America) and *Discretion* (Recorded Books). Her website is: www.elizabethnunez.com

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47.

Name: Evelyn O'Callaghan, Participant in the Scholars' Roundtable

Bio: Prof. Evelyn O'Callaghan is Professor of West Indian literature in the Department of Language, Linguistics and Literature at the Cave Hill (Barbados) campus of the University of the West Indies. She has published *Woman Version: Theoretical Approaches to West Indian Fiction by Women* (London: Macmillan, 1993), *The Earliest Patriots* [Historical fiction] (London: Karia Press, 1986) and other articles and chapters on West Indian literature, particularly by women. Her edition of a nineteenth century Caribbean novel, *With Silent Tread* by Frieda Cassin, appeared in the Macmillan Caribbean Classics series in 2002, and her latest book, *Women Writing the West Indies 1804_1939: A Hot Place, Belonging to Us*, was published by Routledge in 2003. She is one of the editors of the *Journal of West Indian Literature*, and serves on the advisory committees of *Anthurium*, *Les Carnets du Cerpac*, Journal of the Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Pays du Commonwealth [Research Center for Commonwealth Studies] and the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, as well as reader for *Callao*, *Postcolonial Text*, *Ma Comère*, *Ariel*, *Caribbean Quarterly* and *The Caribbean Writer*.

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48.

Name: Edyta K. Oczkowicz

Paper Title: "Unhomely Death: Xuela's Performance of Hybridity in Jamaica Kincaid's *The Autobiography of My Mother*."

Abstract: Much has been said about the lack, absence, and mothering in Jamaica Kincaid's brilliant meditation on intersections of race, sex and love in *The Autobiography of My Mother* (1996). Undoubtedly the postcolonial identity and female subjectivity are profoundly defined by these tropes. I propose Kincaid goes beyond the representation of colonial experience when she constructs her "unhomely fiction" (Bhabha, *Locations of Culture*). As the traumatic ambivalences of Xuela's personal and psychic history unfold, the boundaries of "otherness" are revealed through her "objects of desire and derision," "fantasies of origin and identity." She also decenters multiple power relations, exercising various modes of differentiation, defense, fixation, and hierarchization. Consequently her position as a colonial subject is interrupted and allows for her recognition of what Bhabha call "a difference 'within'." Paradoxically Xuela's performance of such hybridity simultaneously re-formulates and denies her identity. At once liberated and trapped by the strangeness of such framing, Xuela and her creator Kincaid see death as the ultimate experience and the paradigm for transcending the unhomely existence. After all, "Death is the only reality, for it is the only certainty, inevitable to all things" (Kincaid 228).

Bio: Edyta K. Oczkowicz is an Associate Professor of English at Salem College, Winston-Salem, NC, where she teaches American and Ethnic Literatures as well as Contemporary Literary Theory. Her research interests include female identity-formation processes in contemporary fiction by ethnic and immigrant women writers in the U.S., Anglophone Caribbean women writers, postcolonial theory, multiculturalism, and modern Chinese fiction. Her articles have been published in *MELUS: The Journal of the Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States* and *MaComere: The Journal of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars*.

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Panel Assignment: "Voicelessness & Agency."

49.

Name: Kezia Ann Page

Paper Title: "Fable as Genealogy in Erna Brodber's *The Rainmaker's Mistake*."

Abstract: Erna Brodber's *The Rainmaker's Mistake* makes fable of a history that continues to disrupt the selfhood of African descended peoples as much as it calls into question our assumptions of how legacies and genealogies are constructed. This paper will engage Brodber's narrative journey back to slavery and her fictional recreation of the myths that implicate how African descended peoples see their past, present and future in the world. *The Rainmaker's Mistake*, as a rewriting of the experience and effects of slavery on Black consciousness, presents the myth of the master/colonizer, Mr. Charlie, and his myth-making about blackness and chattel slavery as part of the same narrative. For the purpose of creating a sustained labor force, the primary myth-maker's version of blackness implicates him as Father as much as it almost destroys socio-cultural and mental agency for his creations.

Bio: Dr. Kezia Page is an assistant professor of English at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY.

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Panel assignment: "Following Footsteps, Making Paths: Literary Legacies and Genealogies."

50.

Name Sandra Pouchet Paquet

Paper Title: "The Isle is Full of Noises: Mythical Space and Place in Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter*."

Abstract: Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter* is set in the years just prior to the independence of Trinidad and Tobago (1962), on the island of Chacachacare, a former leper colony and thus a site of banishment and human tragedy within recent memory. In this paper, I propose to explore Nunez's revisioning and re-appropriation of *The Tempest*, in the context of the transgressive lineage that has preceded *Prospero's Daughter* in Caribbean discourse: a discourse that was first inspired by an anti-colonial spirit of insurrection and the necessity of decolonization, and yet subsequently, with the exception of Lamming's *Water with Berries*, has been unable to envision the native woman as centrally embedded in the twin processes of revolt and recovery.

Bio: Sandra Pouchet Paquet is professor of English at the University of Miami where she teaches Caribbean Literature and African-American Literature. Professor Paquet is also director of Caribbean Literary Studies and editor of *Anthurium: a Caribbean Studies Journal*. She is the author of *The Novels of George Lamming* and *Caribbean Autobiography: Cultural Identity and Self-Representation*, and numerous articles of various aspects of Caribbean literary culture. She is most recently co-editor of *Music, Memory, Resistance: Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination*.

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Panel assignment: "Caribbean Revisions and Intertextuality: Elizabeth Nunez's Fiction."

51.

Name: Shalini Puri

Paper Title: "Hurricane Histories: Landscapes and Languages of Revolutionary Memory."

Abstract: This presentation will try to identify the range of discursive moves through which Grenadians in literature, conversation, and calypso, have tried to remember, honor, displace, or disavow the Grenadian Revolution: from analogies to the Carib's Leap of 1641, to Fedon's Rebellion, to hurricane and storm and other natural imagery, to repetition, prophesy and deliverance, and threat. It will close with a series of questions about the silences that still loom large in available accounts of the Revolution – and the implications of those silences for political and artistic efforts in the present.

Bio: Shalini Puri is an associate professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh. Her book *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post/Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity* won the 2005 Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis prize for the best book on the Caribbean in the foregoing three-year period. She has also edited an anthology entitled *Marginal Migrations: The Circulation of Cultures within the Caribbean*. Her work has appeared in *Cultural Critique*, *Small Axe*, *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, *ARIEL*, and the anthologies *Caribbean Romances: The Politics of Regional Representation* (ed. Belinda Edmondson) and *Matikor: The Politics of Identity for Indo-Caribbean Women* (ed. Rosanne Kanhai). She is currently working on a book on the Grenadian Revolution, its memory and its legacies for the wider Caribbean.

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Panel assignment: "Remembering the Grenadian Revolution."

52.

Name: Kara M. Rabbitt

Paper Title: "Revisioning History into Story: Suzanne Césaire Cross-examines Lafcadio Hearn on the Significance of the 1848 Martinique Slave Revolts."

Abstract: 1848 was a significant year for the people of African descent in the French colonies of the Caribbean: their Abolition from slavery was decreed on March 4, shortly after the creation of the Second Republic, and officially promulgated on April 27, 1848 in a declaration that termed slavery "an attack on human dignity" and "a flagrant violation of republican dogma."

Emancipation, however, would likely have been delayed for months or even years in intricate resolution of the slaveholders' concerns had not the slaves of the French West Indies taken matters into their own hands. When they learned of the Provisional Government's intent to end slavery, they demonstrated and rioted in Martinique. A violent May 1848 witnessed numerous deaths when the local white authorities cracked down on demonstrations and black demonstrators responded by burning settlers' homes in Saint-Pierre. These acts became texts, which the colonial governor correctly read by opting to proclaim emancipation of Martinican slaves on May 23rd, prior to official word from the French government. Guadeloupe's governor followed suit four days later. Did, then, the slaves gain their own emancipation? Or was it granted them? Whose freedom do the Abolition Acts of 1848 articulate?

This paper will explore the significance of this question for Martinique in relation to its political complexities and diverse cultural legacies. It will specifically address the importance of the May 1848 slave revolts for Suzanne Césaire, wife of the poet-politician Aimé Césaire and with him editor of the 1940's cultural review *Tropiques*. While Suzanne Césaire published only a scant few essays in *Tropiques* and nothing after 1945, she also wrote an unpublished play about the 1848 revolt, which was staged in 1952. This paper will explore her source text, Lafcadio Hearn's 1890 *Youma, The Story of a West-Indian Slave* and discuss its adaptation by Césaire, entitled *Aurore de la liberté*. It will examine the staging of Césaire's play in relation to contemporary political questions of self-determinacy and argue that her choice to hearken back to the events of May 1848 invited her public to articulate their own freedom in relation to France.

Bio: Kara M. Rabbitt is Associate Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the William Paterson University of New Jersey and founder of its French and Francophone Studies Program. In addition to her work in nineteenth-century French literature, she has published on the poetry of Aimé Césaire and on the journal works of the *Légitime défense* and *Tropiques* collectives. She is currently completing a book on the essays of Suzanne Césaire.

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Panel Assignment: "Decoding the Text."

53.

Name: Nicole Roberts

Paper Title: "The Crucible of Violence: Women Negotiating Identities in Hispanic Caribbean Narrative."

Abstract: Definitions and conceptions of female/hood in the literature of the Hispanic Caribbean are as diverse as the races of women who make up the populations. Although constructions of racial and sexual differences among women are currently engaging critical attention, much is still to be said on the ways in which contemporary Hispanic Caribbean narrative is a site in which constructions of alterity highlight the re-imaginings of female identity.

By comparatively analysing the three short stories "Un juicio más" "El sufrimiento escatalógico" and "Dulce pesadilla Abnel," I propose to show that Puerto Rican Mayra Santos Febres, relative newcomer, the Cuban Ana Núñez and the Cuban Mariela Varona are Caribbean women who use their narrative to expose how feminism and patriarchal standards coexist in a strangely complicit manner in the Caribbean societies of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Indeed, the changing first-person narrative of the authors chronicles the experiences of these female protagonists, but perhaps most importantly, these female authors present Caribbean womanhood through defiant and at times compromising acts through which the female subjects are able to re-negotiate their identities.

Bio: Nicole Roberts holds a Ph.D. from the University of Birmingham, England and is a Lecturer of Hispanic Literature at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad. She has published on Afro-Hispanic culture and poetry. Recent publications include: "Caribbean Identity: An Hispanic Caribbean Perspective." In *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, Volume 4, No. 3, Spring 2007, pp. 29-49 and "Racialised Identities, Caribbean Realities: Analysing Black Female Identity in Hispanic Caribbean poetry." In *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies: A Journal of Caribbean perspectives on Gender and Feminism*(1), April 2007. Available online at: <http://sta.uwi.edu/crgs/currentissue.asp>. She lectures on women and race relations in the Hispanic Caribbean and is also a translator. She is currently working on a book-length project on short stories by Caribbean women writers.

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Panel assignment: "Courting Risk: Narratives of Resistance."

54.

Name: María Cristina Rodríguez

Paper Title: "Multiple Geographies: Making the Distant Familiar."

Abstract: Within an understanding of geographies as movements, fluid zones, erasures of boundaries, and open histories– always with the possibility of change and of becoming more inclusive– Caribbean women writers move their stories in various directions: looking back and tracing forgotten, silenced or banished ancestors, and branching out to imagine an all-inclusive Caribbean region. This paper traces the routes undertaken by the characters created by Puerto Rican Rosario Ferré (*The House on the Lagoon*), Jamaican Barbara Lalla (*Arch of Fire*), Trinidadian Dionne Brand (*At the Full and Change of the Moon*), and Guadeloupean Maryse Condé (*Tree of Life*), and explores the fictional/imaginary journey these characters embark on, where language and cultural differences are not impediments to engage in dialog on women's understanding of the places they come from, where they travel to, and the vision of homeland and metropole that gets rearranged with their transitory position whether intra-island or in diasporic communities.

Bio: María Cristina Rodríguez is professor in the Department of English at the Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. She received her PhD in Comparative Literature from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). She is the co-editor of SARGASSO, a journal of Caribbean studies, and film critic for the weekly newspaper CLARIDAD. She has published, lectured, and coordinated activities in Caribbean women's writings, ideology in film, and migration and diaspora narratives. She is co-editor of the book *Personalidad y Literatura Puertorriqueñas*, and author of the 2005 book *What Women Lose: Exile and the Construction of Imaginary Homelands in Novels by Caribbean Writers*. She has published critical essays in *Caribbean Women Writers*, *Homines*, *Imagines*, *Phoebe*, *The Caribbean Writer*, *Canadian Review of Caribbean Literature*, *Text: Studies in Comparative Literature*, *La Torre*, *Journal of West Indian Literature*, and others.

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Panel Assignment: "Crossing Boundaries: Travel and Geography."

Name: Patricia Saunders

Paper Title: "Between Blackness and Being: Uprooting Home and Nation in Elizabeth Nunez's *Beyond the Limbo Silence*."

Abstract: Elizabeth Nunez's *Beyond the Limbo Silence* traces a similar historical and political trajectory to writers such as Paule Marshall (in *Brown Girl, Brownstones*) to arrive at distinctly different, though equally open-ended, conclusion about the experiences of black West Indians in the United States. Nunez roots her protagonist in Trinidad and the United States, replete with multiple histories (writ small) within the larger historical narratives of these nation-states. The crucial difference is Nunez's emphasis on how the experience of migration differs from exile and *means* something very different for these two women in the same systems of signification. Like Selina, whose father's dreamy stories keep Barbados alive in her imagination, Nunez's female protagonist is also caught between two worlds struggling to carve out spaces and relationships that are uniquely hers. These "in between" spaces are the battlegrounds where histories of oppression migrate through memory and performance no matter the translocations of colonial subjects. Arguably, Nunez's concluding epilogue can be read as a gesture to these s/places, nestled somewhere between the obeah man of San Souci, Mad Bertha's dark attic, and the soft red clay of Olen Burrage's farm, which held the secrets and the bodies of James Earl Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman. What lies buried within, beneath, and between these s/places is eventually unearthed and revealed as part of a shared historical experience that transcends geographical boundaries in the African Diaspora. This paper will examine the more difficult transmigrations, however, that emerge within the class boundaries that seem a great deal less permeable and that inevitably shape the way in which gender and race are translated in *Beyond the Limbo Silence*.

Bio: Patricia Saunders is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Miami, Coral Gables. She is the co-editor of *Music, Memory, Resistance: Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination* (Ian Randle Publishers) and is also the co-editor of *Anthurum: A Caribbean Studies Journal*. Her book, *Alen-Nation and Repatriation: Translating Identity in Caribbean Literature* will be published in December 2007 by Lexington Books (Rowman and Littlefield).

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Panel Assignment: "Caribbean Revisions and Intertextuality: Elizabeth Nunez's Fiction."

56.

Name: Helen Scott

Paper Title: "The Legacy of the Grenada Revolution in Literature."

Abstract: Grenada's revolution inspired a rich body of formally innovative and politically radical poetry and prose fiction that bore witness to the immense promise of the historical moment. At the same time, this literature marked the bitter defeats and setbacks in the wake of the military invasion that symbolized the reassertion of US imperialism. This paper explores the legacy of both revolution and invasion in Anglophone literature of the ensuing decades, and argues that Grenada becomes a touchstone for a wide range of women writers both in the region and beyond, as they grapple with the realities of capitalist globalization and new global forms of resistance.

Bio: Helen Scott is an associate professor of English at the University of Vermont where she teaches Anglophone Caribbean literature. Originally from England, she has lived in the USA since 1988 and has been an active socialist, participating in movements for social justice, and speaking on panels and at rallies against war, and for immigrant, labor, and women's rights. She has a book, *Caribbean Women Writers and Globalization*, and articles in many anthologies and journals including *Callaloo*, *Journal of Haitian Studies*, and *Postcolonial Text*. She is a regular contributor to the *International Socialist Review*, and she edited and wrote the introduction to *The Essential Rosa Luxemburg*, forthcoming with Haymarket Books.

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Panel Assignment: "Remembering the Grenadian Revolution."

57.

Name: Stephanie Scurto

Paper Title: "The Language of Labor—the Labor of Language: Edwidge Danticat's 'Work' in *The Farming of Bones*."

Abstract: Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones* brings repressive leadership and economic exploitation together in a powerful exposé on how countries such as Haiti and the Dominican Republic attained independence, but struggled to change the material practices of the economic and political elites, thus keeping the lower classes ideologically, financially, and physically oppressed. Danticat revisits the Trujillo regime, focusing on the 1937 massacre which destroyed tens of thousands of Haitian workers and sympathizers. Though Trujillo initiates direct orders for the "border operation," Danticat uses her main character Amabelle to show the underpinnings of how the massacre comes to pass: most specifically, race and class differences, especially as they are manifested through notions of labor.

Looking closely at the novel, the words "work," "labor," or "task" appear every few pages. As such, how do representations of different "sites" of labor reveal repression and the need for testimony through the novel? In other words, how does Danticat help the audience see ideological control and economic repression through Amabelle's observations on domestic work, agricultural work, and military work? My paper asserts that while Danticat writes of a historical occurrence, her fiction uses attention to *past* crises of forced migration and exploitative labor practices, to point to *present* crises still "working" in Hispanola.

Bio: I finished my Master's degree with Honors at the University of Kansas in May 2007 and continued on into the PhD program. My general area of study is post-colonial literature and theory, and my specific areas of interest are Caribbean and African studies. I teach composition, fiction, and now am in the process of developing an undergraduate class on representations of Anglo-Asians, specifically in the Indian Diaspora. In addition to my Indo-Caribbean and Indo-African projects and the Danticat paper described in this proposal, I am currently working on other papers including the use of speculative fiction in Caribbean and African-American women's writing, and metaphors of agency in the personal narratives and memoirs of Puerto Rican women's life-writing.

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Panel Assignment: "Literature & Socio-Politics."

58.

Name: April Shemak

Paper Title: "Translating Haitian Women's Oppression in *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women's Stories of Survival and Resistance*."

Abstract: This paper examines the collection of Haitian women's testimonies, *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women's Stories of Survival and Resistance* (Cornell UP 2001), edited by Beverly Bell. While the book presents the testimonies of Haitian women's political and gender oppression in Haiti, because it was published and disseminated in English in the United States, it also signals an attempt to rectify the ongoing silencing of Haitians in the United States that is exemplified by the Immigration and Naturalization Service's systematic denunciation of Haitian asylum-seekers. I discuss the processes of collection, selection, translation, and dissemination of the Haitian women's testimonies in order to interrogate the complexities of a white female ethnographer from the United States who translates Haitian women's experience via editing, introducing and framing them within distinct themes that are drawn both from Haitian oral traditions and from Western notions of democracy and feminism and how this shapes North American readers' understanding of these narratives and Haitian women's lives. Drawing on the work of scholars such as Myriam Chancy and Carrolle Charles, I examine the significance of gender for the women's testimonies, and especially the tensions of socio-economic class, language, and cultural values discussed by the women. In the second part of the essay, I analyze how, despite Bell's framework, the testimonies reveal a number of fractures and aporias that subvert any easy understanding or categorization of the women's experiences. For example, the use of pseudonyms by some of the women attests to the difficulty of constructing themselves as subjects whose experiences are easily translatable. Other women, whose bodies have been violently abused and mutilated, offer narratives that suggest a performance of what it is to be human, and thus what it means to offer testimony. Thus, I consider how women's bodies function as corporeal archives of both political "public" violence and domestic violence. Finally, I consider what this collection represents for Haitian women and social change in Haiti, since it has not been published there.

Bio: April Shemak is an Assistant Professor of English at Sam Houston State University. Her primary areas of interest are Caribbean literature, U.S. ethnic literatures, women's literature, refugee studies, and postcolonial studies. She has published articles on Edwidge Danticat, Pauline Melville, and Cristina Garcia in *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Textual Practice*, and *Postcolonial Text*, and has presented papers at a number of conferences in the Caribbean and the United States. She is currently working on a book titled *Asylum Speakers: New World Refugees and Testimonial Narrative* in which she examines the figure of the refugee in Caribbean literature and U.S. public discourse, testimonial narrative and human rights discourses.

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Panel Assignment: "Translating Caribbean Belonging Through Gender and Space."

59.

Name: Tanya Shields

Paper Title: "Hell and Grace: Translating Caribbean Citizenship in *The True-History of Paradise* and *Crossing the Mangrove*."

Abstract: This paper examines the idea of translating citizenship in a regional Caribbean context using the novels *The True History of Paradise* (1999) and *Crossing the Mangrove* (1995). The doubleness of paradise/paradise lost, like the contradictions embedded in hell/grace terrestrial is at the core of what it means to belong in and to the Caribbean. Through explorations of memory and belonging to the land and community, these novels navigate the notions and paradoxes of citizenship that circulate in the region.

Considering that narratives of exile and fragmentation are often part of Caribbean discourse, I consider how various levels of belonging can rearticulate Caribbean citizenship, not solely based on European inheritances and their contradictions, but also on those emerging from indigenous, African, and Asian fusions. I argue that in exploring novelistic synonyms for citizenship along with the idea of who is indigenous and native to the Caribbean, there are rich and emergent possibilities of what Caribbean citizenship has been and can be. Furthermore, by contextualizing these movements with larger discussions of diaspora and transnationalism, this paper extends the hell/grace paradox to ideas on globalization and citizenship.

Margaret Cezair-Thompson's *The True History of Paradise* explores Jamaica's political, economic, and social turmoil in the 1980s and Maryse Conde's *Crossing the Mangrove* reveals other challenges of exile and belonging. In addition to exploring complex racialized, gendered, and sexualized histories, these novels also highlight the differences between independent spaces and territories that still have financial and political relationships with colonial powers and translate citizenship across language and history.

Bio Tanya Shields is an Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She has published on Pauline Melville, Rawle Gibbons, transnationalism, and the role of art in knowledge production and politics in *Constructing Vernacular Culture in the Trans-Caribbean* and *Enculturation*. Dr. Shields has worked as producer with CaribNation Television and with Carivision, a Caribbean-centered theatre group. Her research interests are Caribbean women, political regionalism, art, and politics. Her current book project is *Engaging El Dorado: Literature and Pan-Caribbean Citizenship*.

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Panel Assignment: "Translating Caribbean Belonging Through Gender and Space."

60.

Name: Marylin Simons

Paper Title: "The Need for Surinamese / Caribbean Children's Literature."

Abstract: There is great need for Surinamese children's books in Suriname. However, from 2002 to 2007, only 7 to 15 Surinamese children's books were published per year.

At present, Surinamese children's books, written by Surinamese authors, are geared towards the children of Suriname. Surinamese writers, KBF (annual Festival of Children's books) and DWL-L (literary page of daily newspaper De Ware Tijd) are involved in creating and/or promoting literature for Surinamese children. Despite the work that is being done to broaden the choice of Surinamese literature for the young reader, (school) libraries are still mostly filled with books that are especially geared to Dutch children... The eye catching collection of Surinamese books in bookstores is more a matter of attractive display than of great choice.

The paper will consider the importance of publishing foundations; the need for literary translations and adaptations geared towards the scholastic reader of Suriname; and the importance of literary exchange and promotion between the CARICOM Countries.

Bio: Marylin Simons (1959, Paramaribo) started her writing career in 1997 with weekly columns for DWT daily newspaper. After completing a correspondence course in The Netherlands on Creative Writing, she wrote a volume of short stories, first published in Suriname by Okopipi and seven audio-books for young children (3-7yrs). Her work has been published in several magazines and story collections. From 2002 to 2007, she won four literary prizes for short stories.

Panel Assignment: "The Status of Dutch Caribbean Studies."

61.

Name: Hyacinth Simpson

Paper Title: "Gardening in the Tropics: Race, Gender, Sexuality and Post/colonial Hybridity in Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter*."

Abstract: Elizabeth Nunez's novel *Prospero's Daughter* (2006) offers a reworking of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* that extends Caribbean engagement with the play beyond the critical paradigm that Jonathan Goldberg created in *Tempest in the Caribbean* (2004).

While Nunez is also invested in recuperating the figure of Caliban, her novel focuses on emerging discourses and practices during the Renaissance that gave rise to and made normative certain associations between race, gender and sexuality that served the interests of the colonial project. In revisiting and challenging these formative discourses, Nunez effectively critiques such enduring colonial significations. Thus, she not only resists the colonialist representation of Caliban but reveals how it is part of a larger discursive web that connects the other players in *The Tempest* in a complex web of meanings and relationships.

Nunez identifies the new science of botany and its horticultural language that (a) centered on New World gardens/plantations as both paradise and degenerate space; (b) reconfigured the "nature vs nurture" debate to present the planter as the careful gardener taming the wildness of colonized peoples and places with a steady and nurturing hand; and (c) saw in the practice of transplanting botanical species and creating plant hybrids that brought significant economic benefit to the colonial enterprise a means through which to both acknowledge and contain moral discomfort about the transplanting and mixing of peoples within Plantation Society as the main discursive formulation behind the racial, gender and sexual identities cemented under colonialism. The purpose of this paper, then, is to analyse Nunez's recovery of and resistance to this discursive formulation and comment on the implications of her revisionist strategy for future assessments of Caribbean engagement with *The Tempest*.

Bio: Hyacinth Simpson's research on Caribbean literature and theories of diaspora and orality has appeared in various prominent journals. She guest edited an issue for the *Journal of West Indian Literature*, is editor of *MaComère*, and recently produced a CD on Kamau Brathwaite's *Middle Passages*. She is currently co-editing a reference text on Caribbean writers in Canada for Caribbean Studies Press, and editing a book of essays, *Caribbean Migrations*, for Cambridge Scholars Press.

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Panel assignment: "Caribbean Revisions and Intertextuality: Elizabeth Nunez's Fiction."

Name: Sherry-Ann Singh

Paper Title: "An Examination of Lakshmi Persaud's Treatment of Hindu Religious Texts in Four Novels."

Abstract: Since 1990, Caribbean novelist, Lakshmi Persaud, has produced four works, each of which encompasses, in differing ways, the experience of Indo-Caribbean women. Working in various time-frames, geographic locations and socio-cultural ethos, Persaud very poignantly, though equally assertively, charts the many paths of the lives of Indo-Caribbean women. Through all four of her novels, the most subscribed to Hindu religious text in the Caribbean, the Ramayana, is used as both an anchor for and metaphor of her examinations of the socio-cultural lives of her female protagonists. My paper seeks to chart Persaud's treatment of the Ramayana as socio-religious writ that shapes the lives of a large part of the Hindu population in the Caribbean. Of primary concern will be the text's influence on the lives of her female characters. The paper will also attempt to examine how and to what extent is Persaud's treatment and analysis of this text reflective of the larger Hindu-Caribbean experience. Finally, the role of this text, both in Persaud's novels and in the larger Caribbean context, in the process of identity formation among Caribbean Hindus will be analysed

Bio: Sherry-Ann Singh is a lecturer of Indian History and the Indian Diaspora in the Department of History, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad. Her current areas of research include social and cultural transformation among Indians in Trinidad and the Indian Diaspora; the Ramayana tradition in the Indian Diaspora, Hinduism in the Indian Diaspora, and the Indian indenture system. She was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in 2005 with High Commendation. Her Ph.D. thesis examined "The Ramayana Tradition and Socio-Religious Change Among Hindus In Trinidad: 1917-1990" will be published early next year.

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Panel Assignment: "Decoding the Text."

63.

Name: Geraldine Elizabeth Skeete

Paper Title: "All (Not) in the (Heterosexual) Family: Queer Relationships and Progenies in Anglophone Caribbean Literature."

Abstract: In the extradiegetic world, minority sexual identities are openly challenging and subverting traditional, heterosexual family structures through civil unions and the fight for equal sexual citizenship with its accompanying social, legal, civil and cultural rights. Relationships formed by same-sex couples are still taboo and considered by the heterosexual hegemony to be so-called 'pretended' families. Issues formerly and – erroneously - solely associated with heterosexual couples such as cohabitation, domestic violence, adoption and artificial insemination have recently been depicted with regard to non-heterosexual characters in Caribbean literary discourse. Within the diegesis, too, alternative family groupings are portrayed in texts such as *A Small Gathering of Bones*, *Witchbroom*, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, *The Pagoda*, and *Tongues on Fire: Caribbean Lesbian Lives and Stories*. Fictional representations of queer progeny make for parent-child relationships in which references to Peter Pan, biblical allusions to John, Jesus Christ and Mary, and depictions of the Oedipal/Elektra Complexes, for example, are effected in the discourse. Vraisemblance is also evident as gay/ lesbian/ intersexual youth variously face effeminophobia, rejection, disapproval, denial, love or acceptance from adults within the family circle.

Bio: Geraldine Elizabeth Skeete holds a PhD–English degree (with High Commendation) from UWI, St. Augustine. She has taught at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. She is presently a teaching assistant and coordinator at the UWI. As a doctoral student she presented conference papers in Guyana and England in 2000 and 2002, respectively; the latter is included in an online publication. Her thesis, entitled "A Discourse of Alternative Sexuality in Anglophone Caribbean Literature," was supervised by Professor Barbara Lalla, scholar of Linguistics and Literature. Through literary linguistics, theories on gender and sexuality, and close readings, the thesis analyses the mechanisms whereby diasporic Anglophone Caribbean writers address the taboo topic of alternative sexuality in their novels and short stories. The study explores how sexual minorities in literary discourse re-appropriate their identity, attempt to de-stigmatize their sexual behaviours, redefine gender roles, and find agency and voice. It reveals irony as being a predominant trope in a counterdiscourse that subverts heterocentrism, heterosexism and homophobia.

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Panel Assignment: "Sexuality & the Body B."

64.

Name: Michelle A. Smith-Bermiss

Paper Title: "Bikini Mas Politics: Contesting Independence in Contemporary Carnival."

Abstract: The focus of much recent scholarship on Carnival dwells mainly on cultural and economic ownership of Trinidad's national festival. However, this debate seems to be taking place absent of any critical analysis (although plenty of criticism) directed to the cultural and economic politics of the young black women of the Caribbean diaspora, who are actually the majority of those parading in the streets. By focusing on the subjectivity of women masqueraders, this essay historicizes the drama around the contemporary so-called "naked mas."

My analysis relies on setting aside an increasingly standardized narrative of decline and deterioration of the "true," "cultural," and "traditional" mas. At the heart of these post-Emancipation/ pre-independence era clashes with colonial powers are the women in the streets "mashing up" the Carnival: the "jamenttes" who are represented as handmaidens to the steelband "badjohns." These men exemplify the national spirit at its foundation, according to the nationalist political project to develop (a certain) post-independence Trinidadian identity. Today's Carnival stands accused of "mashing up" the proper traditions: it is defined by participants who are dismissed as wearers of "bikinis and beads," not costumes; in the current discourse, these women are politically vacant players of a meaningless "naked mas."

In defense of the "naked mas," I attempt to articulate what I am calling a "bikini mas politics." Rather than dismiss early 21st century Carnival, I ask what current political realities are being challenged by these women in the street, and which current politics are on display in their masquerade. I contrast the historic "independent man"-- centered by the nationalist paradigm-- with the "independent woman"-- persona central to women's participation in Carnival today. I read this narrative of Carnival as one shared by contemporary masquerading women whose focus is on the camaraderie/ sisterhood of participation rather than on the individual's public political statement, and on the ritual of feeling the spirit of Carnival.

Bio: Michelle A. Smith-Bermiss earned her MA and PhD in English Literature at the University of Virginia. She is currently an assistant professor in the English department at James Madison University, where she teaches courses in Caribbean literature and culture, and African American literature. She is a 2007-2008 Woodrow Wilson-Mellon Junior Faculty Fellow.

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Panel Assignment: "Courting Risk: Narratives of Resistance."

65.

Name: Jennifer Sparrow

Paper Title: "Beyond the Ending to Brave New Worlds: Intertextual Strategies in the novels of Elizabeth Nunez."

Abstract: In a 1985 essay titled, "The 'Paradoxes of Belonging: The White West-Indian Woman in Fiction," Elizabeth Nunez argues that "...[white Creole] women must bear the guilt of the horrors of slavery inflicted by their own white ancestors upon the people and country they now call their own." This paper will explore how in her novels *Beyond the Limbo Silence*, *Bruised Hibiscus*, and *Prospero's Daughter*, Nunez has sought to resolve the "paradoxes of belonging" that inflect the socio-cultural space inhabited by the white creole woman through her engagement with two iconic female figures in Caribbean literature: Antoinette/Bertha from *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Miranda from *The Tempest*.

Bio: Jennifer Sparrow is an Associate Professor of English at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York. She holds a PhD in English literature from Wayne State University, with a special interest in writers from the Caribbean. She teaches courses in Caribbean literature, postcolonial literature, and composition, and she also develops and teaches online literature survey courses. Her essays on Caribbean literature have appeared in edited volumes and scholarly journals including *Wadabagei* and *MaComère*. With Elizabeth Nunez, she co-edited an anthology, *Stories From Blue Latitudes: Caribbean Women Writers at Home and Abroad* (Seal/Avalon Press, 2005).

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Panel assignment: "Caribbean Revisions and Intertextuality: Elizabeth Nunez's Fiction."

66.

Name: Linda Strong-Leek

Paper Title: "Afro-Cuban Religion and Spirituality: Cristina Garcia's and Flor Fernandez Barrios' Representations and Recreations of a Diaspora Spirit."

Abstract: This paper examines the intersections of African religious and spiritual traditions within the Cuban context. Fernandez-Barrios and Garcia investigate and analyze the myriad ways in which Cuban women both seek to embrace, as well as reject, the African influence in Cuban spirituality. Both works re-create an autobiographical and fictionalized space for Cuban women to explore spirituality, but with vastly dissimilar outcomes. While Fernandez-Barrios fully embraces her curandera history in *Blessed by Thunder, Memoirs of a Cuban Girlhood*, one of the major characters in Garcia's novel, *Dreaming in Cuban*, Felicia, perishes after her full initiation as a Santeria priestess. This work will seek to address the political, social, economic, and spiritual reasons for such vastly different responses to this complex set of spiritual beliefs.

Bio: Linda Strong-Leek is an Associate Professor of Women's Studies and African/African American Studies at Berea College. She has published on African novelists Flora Nwapa and Chinua Achebe, and her manuscript, *Excising the Spirit: A Literary Analysis of Female Circumcision*, is scheduled for release by Africa World Press in the fall of 2008. Dr. Leek is currently working on a manuscript tentatively entitled "Mami Wata: Spirituality and Caribbean Women's Novels." She is also working on a Public History Project in Kentucky to save the Oliver Street School, the only African American school standing in Clark County, Kentucky.

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Panel assignment: "Religion, Spirituality and the Magic Realist Tradition in Caribbean Women's Writing."

67.

Name Australia Tarver

Paper Title: "Mixed Geographical Bodies and Hidden Histories in Charlotte Williams' Memoir, *Sugar and Slate*."

Abstract: Just as her father, Denis Williams, the famous Guyanese archeologist, uncovered links between ancient Amerindians of Guyana and modern Guyanese, Charlotte Williams digs beneath the connections among her triple ancestries in Wales, Africa and Guyana to gather the scattered pieces of her history together in her memoir, *Sugar and Slate*. But writing a memoir is not the same as uncovering concrete artifacts, and Williams' mixed identities do not turn up easy answers. "Everyone thinks you're mixed up if you're mixed race," Williams concludes, suggesting by the end of her memoir that she is comfortable with the multiple sources from which she has viewed her life. The reader, however, may view her journey as a complex puzzle with equally complex resolutions. Jamil Khader has said that the "project of rewriting home in contemporary Caribbean women's writings has been confined to experiences of displacement" ("Subaltern Cosmopolitanism" 2), but Williams redefines otherness by critiquing what mixed heritages mean in each location, all of which are transformed into a physical corpus which Williams examines as liminal extensions of herself. Hers is a reverse and circular migration, following and retracing the paths of her father from Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and Wales. This paper, then, borrows from travel narrative discourse, postcolonial theory, and tropes of bodily and geographical displacement to address the complexities of, as Nico Israel puts it, being "between exile and diaspora."

Bio: Australia Tarver is currently associate professor of English at Texas Christian University where she teaches African American literature, African Diaspora literature, post-1900 American literature, and multi-ethnic literature. Her essays have appeared in such journals as *MaComere* and *College Literature* and such collected editions as *Arms Akimbo: Africana Women in Contemporary Literature* and *Contemporary Literature in the African Diaspora*. She has co-edited a volume of critical essays, *New voices on the Harlem Renaissance: Essays on Race, Gender and Literary Discourse* (2006). Her current research projects concern black Southern novelists and transatlantic links among multi-ethnic writers.

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Panel assignment: "Caribbean Women Writers and Transnational Locations: Hybridity Myth and Racialized Voices."

68.

Name: Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley

Paper Title: "When She Was My Shipmate: Theorizing 21st Century Caribbean Feminism in Recent Neo-Slave Narratives."

Abstract:

We have no ancestry except the black water...

Dionne Brand

How does peering into Caribbean women's forgotten past open a vantage point from which to imagine their connections into the next millenium? This is the crucial question posed by several historical novels by and about Afro-Caribbean women published at the turn of the 21st century. This paper proposes to explore two such novels, Surinamese Cynthia McLeod's *De vrije negerin Elisabeth* [The Free Negress Elisabeth] (2000) and Jamaican Nalo Hopkinson's *The Salt Roads* (2003). In particular, I will look at how the novelists thematize relationships begun between female shipmates on the Middle Passage, and how they represent these submerged bonds as a ruttier to imagine future directions for Caribbean feminist alliances. Creating fictional narratives of the Middle Passage where shipmates at once lose traditional identity markers and create new connections to fellow kidnapes, these authors imagine slave holds as both sites of violence and crucibles of resistance where women struggle through their linguistic, cultural, religious, and sexual differences. As they resurrect strategically ignored women's histories, McLeod and Hopkinson narrate these histories as allegories for challenges of class, color, and sexuality that divide women in the contemporary Caribbean, and imagine what negotiations are necessary to strengthen connections across such divides.

Bio: Originally from San Francisco, California, Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley is an assistant professor in the departments of English and African American Studies at the University of Minnesota. Her forthcoming book, *Thieving Sugar: Reading Desire Between Women in Caribbean Literature* (Duke University Press), excavates and explores Dutch-, English-, and French-language Caribbean women's texts between 1900 and 1990, tracing how their queering of landscape-as-female beloved metaphors imagines a poetics and erotics of decolonization.

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Panel Assignment: "Courting Risk: Narratives of Resistance."

69.

Name: Belinda Deneen Wallace

Paper Title: "Bridging the Body to Another Place: Translating Revolutionary Lyricism in Dionne's Brand's *In Another Place, Not Here*."

Abstract: Dionne Brand's *In Another Place, Not Here* is a multilayered novel where two historical moments coalesce: the US invasion of Grenada and the Trinidadian Black Power Movement. Brand's interjection into and reconstruction of these historical narratives is the focus of this paper. In this novel, Brand creates a coded language which she uses to communicate with one particular audience—women, more specifically, lesbians. Dionne Brand uses revolutionary lyricism as a means to establish a collective individuality, to reclaim her-story within history, and to reconstitute female sexual autonomy.

Using body marks as our map toward unpacking these moments, we can avoid a singular approach and instead investigate many simultaneous narratives and interpretations. Furthermore, Brand's novel speaks from "a multiple and complex social, historical, and cultural positionality which, in effect, constitutes black female subjectivity and enter into a dialectic of identity with those aspects of self shared with others"—a collective individuality, if you will" (Henderson 1989).

Thus, black women's bodies are historicized not only in terms of their locations, but also by their very selection as a topic of discourse about Caribbean history. The multiple meanings that Brand's black female bodies bring forth encourage us to expand our notion of translation in ways we may not have previously encountered or even considered. She constructs black female bodies as fluid texts which form a visible *mélange* inscribed with multiple accounts that, when taken together, give birth to a poly-vocal tale that is told through a narrative of testimony, revolution, and romance.

Bio: Belinda Deneen Wallace holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Maryland, College Park. She is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of New Mexico in the Africana Studies Program. Her primary areas of research are Caribbean literature and culture; women, gender and sexuality studies; and Caribbean histories. She has lectured on Caribbean women's literature and culture in the Caribbean, Europe and the United States. She is also a founding member of the Caribbean Research Interest Group (CRIG), an activist and scholar organization dedicated to studying the literatures, languages and cultures of the Caribbean.

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Panel Assignment: "Translating Caribbean Belonging through Gender and Space."

70.

Name Peggy W. Watson

Paper Title: "Order and Chaos in Christina García's *Monkey Hunting*."

Abstract: This study examines the skillful linking of narrative technique and thematic content in Christina García's 2003 novel, *Monkey Hunting*. As in her previous novels, *Dreaming in Cuban* and *The Agüero Sisters*, García creates a multi-generational family that moves in dogged fashion between nations, cultures, and languages, seeking to find order and stability in a world of ill-defined parameters. Beginning with Chen Pan, a Chinese immigrant to Cuba in the 1850's, the novel portrays one family's turbulent encounter with inevitable chaos, leading some family members back to China, and others to the United States and Vietnam.

Haunting and poetic, *Monkey Hunting* evokes universal themes—order and chaos, good and evil, isolation and the agonizing need for companionship—in a distinctly Caribbean context. Through characters and events of various times and places, and employing narrative techniques that alternately connect and harmonize, then clash and disjoin, the novel succeeds in creating a fictional world in which immigrants struggle, sometimes without success, for self-definition. As the Chinese-Cuban Chen Pan learns in the novel, one must always "distrust all forms of certainty."

Bio: Peggy Watson, associate professor of Spanish, received her doctorate in Spanish Literature from Tulane University. She has taught over 20 years at Texas Christian University in the Spanish Department, receiving numerous awards, including the prestigious award for mentoring undergraduates. She has published various articles on Spanish and Caribbean literature, emphasizing textual, contextual and cultural perspectives. Currently, She is the director of TCU's Honors Program and is leading the effort to develop the program into a College by 2009.

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Panel Assignment: "Caribbean Women Writers and Transnational Locations: Hybridity, Myth and Racialized Voices."

71.

Name: Dessima William

Paper Title: "The Storm that Never Ended: How the Grenada Revolution Stays Alive."

Abstract: Relying on a review of policies, appointments, organizations and other materials in the public domain, this paper will discuss the ways in which both post-revolutionary state and civil society have kept memories and aspects of the Grenada Revolution from fading away. The paper will also seek to explain why this is so and to tease out the possible impact of this.

Bio Dessima William, Professor of Sociology at Brandeis University for many years, diplomat and a former Ambassador to the United Nations from Grenada, is now an independent scholar based in Grenada. Known for her work on global justice, women's movements, gender, development, and education, she is the founder and Director of the Grenada Education and Development Programme (GRENED).

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Panel assignment: "Remembering the Grenadian Revolution."

72.

Name: Charlotte Willis

Paper Title: "Myth and History in Michelle Cliff's *Free Enterprise*."

Abstract: Jamaican novelist and U.S. citizen Michelle Cliff's fiction participates in the postcolonial movement to rework myth and history. In her historical novel *Free Enterprise* (1993), Cliff pointedly revisits the relatively contemporary legend of John Brown, known as the leader of the October 16, 1859 raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Pro-slavery Southern whites reified Brown into an insane rabble-rouser who incited the "cold-blooded" murder of slaveholders. Whites in the U.S. also negatively mythologized Brown's contemporary Mary Ellen Pleasant, nicknaming her "Mammy." Cliff revises conceptions about Pleasant and Brown. In addition, she creates a character that the fictional Pleasant (M.E.P.) dubs "Annie Christmas" after the Southern folk heroine—a powerful, black longshorewoman on the Mississippi. The novel's *gens inconnu* protagonist Annie Christmas behaves significantly differently than the legend—another instance of Cliff's revisionist mythology.

Cliff's aims mirror those of the activist women she imagines and creates. Instead of fighting for the abolition of slavery, though, she attempts to alter perceptions about the historicity of history and the ways in which certain histories perpetuate cultures of bigotry. Cliff wishes not only to raise readers' awareness about a possible historical inaccuracy but also to provoke readers to question their own identities.

Bio: Charlotte Willis is a doctoral student in American literature at Fordham University in New York, where she is currently in her first year of study. While associate editor of the 2007 edition of the literary journal *descant*, she co-edited the journal's 50th anniversary anthology. Charlotte has presented papers on Morrison and other contemporary writers

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Panel Assignment: "Caribbean Women Writers and Transnational Locations: Hybridity, Myth and Racialized Voices."