

INSTITUTE OF CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Professor Carolyn Cooper, BA UWI, MA, PhD Toronto – Director

WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

The Institute sustained our lively public education programme with a lecture series, “That Time in Foreign,” co-ordinated by Mr. Cecil Gutzmore, lecturer in Caribbean Studies, which focused on the life experience of Jamaican migrants to the UK who had returned home. The Institute also hosted the 8th annual Walter Rodney Lecture, given by Dr. Ayotunde Bewaji, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Language, Linguistics and Philosophy, entitled “Bridging the Ethical Gap in Politics: Implications of Walter Rodney’s Intellectual Heritage for Africana Leadership.” In addition, the Institute hosted several book launches and a film series. The Institute also co-hosted the Empress Menen conference in celebration of Rastafari women.



Academic Staff

In the 2006-2007 academic year there were two full-time lecturers in the Institute: Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah who taught courses in Cultural Studies at the undergraduate and graduate level; and Mr. Cecil Gutzmore who taught the foundation course, FD11A – Caribbean Civilisation. Part-time lecturers, who are so essential for the delivery of the Institute’s academic programme, taught the following courses:

- Professor Barry Chevannes: Introduction to Caribbean Folk Philosophy
- Mr. Donald Davis: Deconstructing the Culture of Sport
- Dr. Rachel Moseley-Wood: Caribbean Films and Their Fictions
- Mr. Arthur Newland: Rastafari in the Global Context

- Rev. Ashley Smith: African Religious Retentions in the Caribbean
- Mr. Miguel Williams: The Culture of Rastafari
- Mr. Peter Harding, Mr. Patrick Hylton and Mr. Herbie Miller, graduate students in the Institute, tutored in undergraduate courses.

Two new Lecturer posts, one in Reggae Studies and the other in Rastafari Studies were approved, to be implemented on a phased basis: one, with effect from August 1, 2006; and the other from August 1, 2007. Mr. Kam-Au Amen was appointed as a Temporary Lecturer in Reggae Studies in the second semester of the academic year.

Administrative Staff

The post of Administrative Assistant that had been temporarily filled by Ms Lorna Smith since August 2005 was established, with effect from August 1, 2006. The Administrative Assistant was supported by three undergraduate student assistants: Ms Nicole Little-John; Ms Kayosan Swaby and Ms Rosalee Wood.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah

- “Negotiating a Common Transnational Space: Dancehall, Kwaito and the Mapping of New World Performance”, The International Association for the Study of Popular Music Conference, Mexico City, June 2007
- “Locating Halfway Tree: Musical Production and Performance at the Black Atlantic Crossroads”, 32nd Annual Caribbean Studies Association Conference, Bahia, Brazil, May – June 2007
- “A Common Space: Dancehall, Kwaito and New World Performance”, 6th International Association of Cultural Studies Crossroads Conference, Istanbul, July 2006
- “One dancehall from slave ship to ghetto”, guest lecture for visiting students, Northwestern University, Institute of Jamaica, Kingston, September 2007

- “Dancehall crossing borders through performance”, guest lecture for visiting students from Bates College, USA, Kingston, May 2007
- “Space, Caribbean Space and the Transnational”, Cultural Studies Programme, UWI Cave Hill, May 2007
- “Freedom of Speech for the living Fire”, Chuck Fendah’s album launch, Weekenz, Kingston, May 2007
- “Branding Jamaica Through Music: Turning Cultural Boom into Elementary Economics”, WIPO/JIPO follow-up Workshop on a National Branding Strategy for Jamaica, JAMPRO, January 2007
- “Antecedents, Continuity, Evolution: Dancehall Culture in a Sociological Context”, Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, UWI, Mona, November 2006
- “Negotiating a Common Space: Mapping Performance in Jamaican Dancehall and South African Kwaito”, Conference on the Caribbean, Virginia, USA, October 2006

Mr. Cecil Gutzmore

- “Get up, Stand up... Let’s Make It Work”, lecture hosted by the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission, Port Antonio, February 2007
- “African Music in the Survival of Enslaved Africans and its Influence on Jamaican Society Today,” Public lecture, St Catherine Library Service, February 2007
- “Causal Factors in Abolition and Emancipation,” Public lecture, St Catherine Library Service, April 2007

Rev. Ashley Smith

- “The Incidence of Suicide, A Challenge to the Family: A Caribbean Perspective,” The Caribbean Federation for Mental Health Conference, Anguilla, November 2006
- “The Church’s Approach to Persons with Disabilities,” The United Theological Symposium on Disabilities, Kingston, April 2007

PUBLICATIONS

Mr. Cecil Gutzmore

- * 'The SS Empire Windrush: Myths and Facts', Jamaica Journal
Vol. 30 Nos. 1-2, 10-13

Rev. Ashley Smith

- * "Furthering Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Jamaica,"
Groundings, Issue 18, January 2007

Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah

- * "'Slackness Personified', Historicized and Delegitimized", in
Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism, No. 21, Vol. 11
No. 1, 174-185, October 2006,

PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Cecil Gutzmore

- Advisory Board Member, African Caribbean Institute of
Jamaica
- Co-presenter, "Looking Back, Looking Forward", Talk Radio
93FM

Dr. Sonjah Stanley Niaah

- Editorial Board Member, Cultural Studies, Routledge, 2007
- Associate Editor, Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and
its Diasporas, Lexington Books
- Member, Jamaica National Bicentenary Planning Committee
to commemorate the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave
Trade
- Advisor, Jamaican Music Museum Development Project,
Institute of Jamaica
- Judge, Reading Competition, National Library of Jamaica

POST-GRADUATE MATTERS

Despite the constraints of inadequate funding, the MPhil and PhD post-graduate programme continued to attract large numbers of applicants. However, in order to review our modus operandi, we did not accept new students for the 2006-2007 academic year. With fifty-eight (58) students registered in the graduate programme in Cultural Studies, and given the recurring problem of finding committed supervisors, it seemed unwise to increase numbers. Instead, our focus was on facilitating students' completion of the programme.

A proposal to introduce at Mona the Diploma and MA in Cultural Studies, which are both offered at the Cave Hill and St. Augustine campuses, was submitted for review. These new programmes will increase options for potential students.

Mr. Donald Davis successfully defended his dissertation on April 27, 2006 and became the third student to complete the PhD in Cultural Studies. Mrs. Myrna Hague-Bradshaw presented a seminar paper in April 2007, on the basis on which her registration was upgraded from MPhil to PhD.

The Institute hosted a luncheon on November 30, 2006 in honour of Mr. Jalani Niaah and Mrs. Vivienne Pitter who completed a PhD and an MPhil respectively. Supervisors were also honoured on that occasion. Students were motivated by the celebratory event which encouraged them to strive for completion. The annual Graduate Retreat was held on the weekend of January 19, 2007 in Treasure Beach, St. Elizabeth. Students gave an update on their research and received valuable feedback from their peers and lecturers.

In addition, graduate students continued to present papers at local, regional and international conferences:

Kai Barratt

- "Redefining the 'Jamette' in Trinidadian Soca Music," presented at the Black Cultural Interventions into Gender and Sexuality Studies Conference, University of Florida Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere, March 2007

Maureen Webster Prince

- “The Role of the Audio Visual Information Network (AVIN) in the Preservation of Image Collections,” Seminar on “Image Collections as Cultural Heritage,” Kingston August 2006
- “(Re) Negotiating Jamaica’s Past through the Lens of Indigenous Serial Radio Drama,” International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) Annual Conference, Mexico City, September 2006
- “Education and the National Audio Visual Heritage Collection of Jamaica: Use of Audio Visual Material in Education,” The International Association of Television Archives Annual Conference, Madrid, October 2006

THE REGGAE STUDIES UNIT

WORK OF THE UNIT

The Unit, co-ordinated by the ICS Director, Professor Carolyn Cooper, continued to prosper, despite inadequate funding. Her proposal that the Unit, having outgrown the “temporary home” of the Institute, be established as an autonomous Centre was presented to a meeting of Heads of Department of the Faculty of Humanities and Education held on January 17, 2007. The matter was again considered at a meeting of the Board of the Faculty held on March 22, 2007. The consensus of both meetings was that the Reggae Studies Unit ought to remain within the Institute since it constituted a vibrant element of that enterprise.

The appointment of Mr. Kam-Au Amen as Temporary Lecturer in Reggae Studies from January-June 2007 emphatically advanced the work of the Unit. Having developed the undergraduate degree programme in Entertainment and Cultural Enterprise Management, he monitored its passage to approval. The establishment of this programme is a quantum leap for the Reggae Studies Unit.

Mr. Amen also began working as the Co-ordinator of the ‘Culture 3’ conference on ‘Global Reggae: Jamaican Popular Music A Yard and Abroad,’ to be convened February 18-24, 2008 at Mona. He also coordinated the Reggae/Rastafari Discussion Series held in the second semester of the academic year.

The Reggae Studies Unit and the Institute for Hospitality and Tourism co-sponsored four successful seminars on Event Planning and Management, coordinated by Mr. Amen and delivered by Mr. Sam McCook, MBA, a Specialist in Entertainment and Event Planning. Participants came from both the private and public sectors including the Office of the Prime Minister; the Management Institute for National Development; the University of Technology; the University of the West Indies, Mona; the Portmore Community College and KIA Motors.

The Reggae Studies Unit hosted the 10th annual Bob Marley lecture on Thursday, February 6, delivered by Consulting Psychologist Dr. Leachim Semaj. The lecture, entitled “Bob Marley: National Hero or National Icon?,” generated widespread debate.