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“Memories of Resistance: Filling the Void in the Collective Consciousness”

Memory has been defined as a subjective instrument for recording the past that is shaped by the present moment through lens of the individual psyche. An oral history can reveal how the past and present shape and are shaped by individual and collective values and actions. This paper seeks to revisit the political and social protests resulting from the expulsion of Walter Rodney from the University of the West Indies on October 16, 1968. The Rodney protest marches of 1968 led to rioting that resulted in three deaths and left a void in the contemporary social memory of the Caribbean (and the African Diaspora) beyond the cohort of persons involved in the riots as participants or witnesses. Of interest are the values, actions and affective sentiment that shape memories of this particular time and ritual of resistance. Through oral historical and newspaper accounts, this paper identifies links between the memory of resistance and its impact on the individual psyche of persons who witnessed or participated in the Rodney protests and on the collective psyche of the Caribbean public.