



## DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

**Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood, BA., MA., PhD, (UWI) – Head of Department**

### WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Academic Year 2022–23 was a challenging one for the Department. The department had to contend with the resignations of three members of academic staff with only one temporary replacement in place. This presented a challenge in terms of maintaining the required course offerings and also in terms of carrying out required administrative tasks, such as servicing Faculty committees. In addition, intake at both undergraduate and graduate level remained below desired numbers. In particular, the graduate programmes have suffered from not only decreasing numbers of applicants but those already in the programme have found it very difficult to complete course requirements, with one of our promising PhD candidates leaving the programme because of the unreliable payment schedule for his UWI award.

On a more positive note, the Department has formed a number of partnerships that have helped improve the quality of teaching and learning. The department's newest programme, the BA Writing, Literature and Publishing has attracted an encouraging degree of attention from publishers in the region and beyond, with diaspora Jamaicans active in the publishing industry, seeing assistance to the programme as a way of giving back. As a member of the Caribbean Create Community Partnership programme, the department and its students have benefitted from awards, training and internships.

Despite challenges, DLIE has managed to meet most of the recommendations set out in the Report of the Quality Assurance Review Team. A report was made to Faculty Board in April, and was followed by a report to Academic Board in June.

## ACCESS

### STUDENT MATTERS

#### *Majors*

Undergraduate	Postgraduate:
LIE Majors (16)	PhD (2)
Liberal Studies Majors (14)	MPhil (4)
Film Studies (6)	MA (2)
Writing, Publishing & Literature (10)	
First Class Honours (3)	

The department's sole PhD student, Mr Paul Codner, withdrew from the programme. He cited the uncertainty of payments of the UWI postgraduate scholarship as the primary reason of his withdrawal.

#### Congratulations

The department congratulates **Dr Keilah Mills** on the successful completion of the PhD with high commendation. Ms Mills was supervised by Dr Anthea Morrison, now retired from the department. The title of her dissertation was: "The Politics of Caribbean Ecologies in Selected Texts by Black Women Writers".

The department congratulates **Ms Francina Cousins** on the successful completion of her MPhil programme. Ms Cousins was supervised by Dr Norval Edwards. The title of her dissertation was: "Fleshing Out desire; Caribbean Womanist Erotics in the Selected Poetry of Grace Nichols, Opal Adisa and Tanya Shirley."

#### Staff/Postgraduate Seminars:

- Visiting Graduate students, Barbara Gfoellner, University of Vienna and Markus Schwarz, Paris Lodron University in Salzburg co-presented a seminar on the topic, "Between Oceans And Outewr Space: Caribbean Archipelagos, Poetics, Futures" on March 10 .
- Mr Elton Johnson, MPhil candidate, presented on the topic, "The Catalytic Characteristics of Dancehall as a Vehicle for Feminist Thought" via Zoom on Thursday November 17.

## TEACHING & LEARNING

### Curriculum Development:

The following was submitted and approved by AQAC and BUS:

- Changes from 60% to 100% coursework in LITS1002, LITS2108, LITS2504, LITS2706 and LITS3806;
- HUMN3100: Humanities Internship; offered Sem 2;
- Revisions to BA Film Studies to create a separate programme, the BA Film Studies; (Production Concentration) that would allow students taking that concentration to be charged the appropriate fees;
- Minor Revisions to the BA Writing, Literature and Publishing.

### Summer School 2023:

One course, PUBL3003: Editing and Proofreading was offered in Summer School 2023.

## STAFF MATTERS

- Head of Department, **Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood**, resumed office on August 2, following her Sabbatical Leave for academic year 2021–2022. Senior Lecturer
- **Dr Michael Bucknor**, resigned from his position with effect from August 31, 2022 after 23 years of service to The UWI offered through the diverse roles he played, as Lecturer/Senior Lecturer; Head of Department for two terms, between 2012 and 2018, and Public Orator for The UWI, Mona.
- **Dr Alexis Samuels** joined the Department as Temporary Full-time Lecturer for the academic year. Dr Samuels is a graduate of DLIE, having done both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Literatures in English at The UWI. She was given responsibility for teaching both literature and film studies courses.
- In Semester 1 Dr Schuyler Esprit, Dr Hilary Robertson-Hickling and Ms Ann Margaret Lim were hired as Adjunct Lecturers to teach PUBL1001 and PUBL3002; PUBL2001 and LITS2603 respectively. In Semester 2; Ms Amba Chevannes was hired as Adjunct Lecturer to teach LITS2606: Creative Writing: Screen and Stage; and Professor Opal Palmer Adisa was hired to teach LITS1009: Introduction to Creative Writing.
- The Department welcomed Dr Frances Botkin, Professor of English, Towson University, Baltimore, as visiting Fulbright Scholar for Semester 2. Dr Botkin taught the course, PUBL3003: Editing and Proofreading and also conducted research on her project, “The Higgler’s Legacy: Economies of Resistance in

Narratives about Slavery”, which explores the unusual connections between higglering, marronage, and Afro-Caribbean authorship.

- One of two administrative posts in the Department was reclassified from Secretary III to Administrative Assistant I with retroactive effect from September 2022.
- Administrative Assistant, Ms Antoinette Jackson, proceeded on maternity leave in April and delivered a bouncing baby boy!

### Principal’s Research Awards:

The Department of Literatures in English congratulated Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood, Dr Isis Semaj-Hall and former member of staff Dr Michael Bucknor for receiving the Best Research Publications for the annual Principal’s Research Awards as follows:

- Semaj-Hall, I. (2021). *Dubbing Dub Poetry? Approaching Lee “Scratch” Perry, Poetically*. *Journal of West Indian Literature*, 30(1), 44–151.
- Moseley-Wood, R. (2019). *Show Us As We Are Place, Nation and Identity in Jamaican Film*. University of the West Indies Press.
- Bucknor, M. A. (2018). “Horizons of Desire in Caribbean Queer Speculative Fiction: Marlon James’s John Crow’s Devil”. In Ledent, B. et al. (Eds.) *Madness in Anglophone Caribbean Literature: On the Edge*, 137–160.

## CREATING A STUDENT-CENTRED COMMUNITY

### Undergraduate Awards

Eight students from the DLIE received awards at the 2021/2022 Annual FHE Awards Ceremony on Thursday November 10. The awardees were: Nikema Bell, Anika Christopher, Natalia Downer, Blaire Santos, Shaniel Swaby, Anastasia Thomas, Kae-Shanae Virgo and Kevan Williams

### Graduate Awards

- Mr Kevhaun Bailey and Elton Johnson, MPhil candidates, were selected for the 2022/2023 Departmental Award for Graduate students; Ms Whitney Eaton was reassigned as Research Assistant to the Head of Department.
- Mr Elton Johnson was appointed graduate student representative for the 2022/2023 academic year. His activities included planning initiatives within the Faculty and maintaining a close connection with students within the department in order to communicate any suggestions, issues or concerns.

## DCC Meetings

The Department Consultative Committee meetings were held via Zoom on November 17, 2022 and March 16, 2023. The department experimented with the online mode in an attempt to address a number of concerns about the process. The use of the online platform allowed lecturers to meet student representatives in break-out groups. It allowed for greater efficiency in the process and has also created a more comfortable and less stressful environment in which students can speak about their concerns. This approach has been combined with the use of class surveys which have helped ensure that lecturers get a clearer understanding of the views of all members of the class.

## Student-led activities

### *Global Read-a-Thon*

The Department participated in the inaugural twenty-four (24) hour global Read-a-Thon, hosted and led by the Center for Studies on Africa and Its Diaspora at Georgia State University on February 22. The event was intended to celebrate Black History month as well as promote cultural exchange and international cooperation through reading. This became a student-led initiative and graduate student Kevhaun Bailey, along with undergraduates Kandice Thompson and Blaire Santos, coordinated the selection of readings, recruiting of readers, recording and editing of the video that was submitted for broadcast. Alumni, staff and friends of the department participated, with some of them reading original poetry. Readers included: Blaire Santos, Jovanté Anderson, Topher Allen, Jessie Mayers, Yashika Graham, Lisa Brown and Cornel Bogle. The welcome and introduction was given by **Rachel Moseley-Wood**.

### *Book Launch*

Students taking HUMN3100: Humanities Internship organised the launch of *Chants For A Woman to Bloom*, a collection of poetry and art self-published by the author, undergraduate Literatures in English Major, Ms Lattecha Willocks. Held on March 29, the event was part of the monthly open mic series at Ragamuffin Café on Lady Musgrave Road and featured readings by Ms Willocks, as well as a conversation between the author and Dundurn Press Director, Mr Kwame Scott Fraser. The launch was also broadcast on YouTube. HUMN3100 students organised meetings with the author to plan the launch, liaised with Ragamuffin Café, created a flyer and publicised the event on social media and organised the online broadcast of the event.

## HUMN3100: Humanities Internship

This course was approved just ahead of the beginning of Semester 2 so that registration was limited to Writing, Literature and Publishing Majors who are required

to take it. One LIE Major sat in on seminars and participated in class activities. Visiting Publisher, Mr Kwame Scott Fraser led a number of the seminars and mentored students. Guest lectures and presentations were also done by Dr Ann-Marie Williams, Student Services & Development Officer, Placement & Career Services; and Ms Yan Suen, Publications Officer, SALISES. Work placement opportunities were offered by Create Caribbean, Dundurn Publishers and SOE Publications Unit. It is intended to expand internship placement opportunities in AY2023–24 in order to allow for increased registration in the course.

### Visiting Publisher

Kwame Scott Fraser, Director & Publisher of Dundurn Press organised “A Conversation between Tanya Batson-Savage”, Publisher, Blue Banyan Books, on Thursday October 20 in N4. Ms Batson-Savage is a graduate of DLIE. The event was organised specially for students in the Writing, Literature and Publishing programme. On October 21, Mr Fraser also gave a guest lecture in the course, “Current Trends and Issues in Publishing”. Mr Fraser returned to Mona for February and March, 2023 to work with the WLP programme. He provided mentorship to Level 3 students, through training in proofreading, the creation of online work placement opportunities with Dundurn for two students and offers for continued employment for two students. His stay at Mona was made possible through the assistance of the Dean’s office.

### Create Caribbean Community Partnership Programme

The Department joined the Create Caribbean Community Partnership programme in September 2022. Create Caribbean Inc. aims to develop the creative capacity of youth in Dominica and the Eastern Caribbean through a focus on education and research in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Its goal is to foster a culture of intellectual inquiry, encourage the use of digital technology in academic research, and increase outreach and community participation in the preservation and dissemination of Caribbean history, heritage and other research areas of significance. As one of Create Caribbean’s Community Partners, DLIE will collaborate on projects and workshops and our students will benefit from opportunities for graduate and undergraduate internships. Create Caribbean awarded two Graduate Student Fellowships to MPhil student, Mr Kevhaun Bailey and MA student, Ms Joanna Jackson. Create Caribbean also provided one internship for the HUMN3100 course.

As part of the partnership, Founder and Director of Create Caribbean Dr Schuyler Esprit presented a workshop for members of the Faculty titled, “Bringing Digital Humanities to the Undergraduate Classroom” on April 19 in N5.

## Publishing Days

Sharmaine Lovegrove, Managing Director of Dialogue Books, a brand-new division of Hachette UK, partnered with DLIE to stage a number of events in May. The events kicked off with a cocktail reception at Spanish Court Hotel on Wednesday May 22 for writers and practitioners in the local publishing industry. Ms Lovegrove, along with Christina Demosthenous, Commercial Publisher with Dialogue Books, conducted a Manuscript Workshop on Wednesday, May 24 which saw them having individual meetings with students and others to discuss improvements on their submitted manuscripts. Dialogue Books provided lunch for the seven participants who attended. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for students, some of whom described the event as life-changing. On the evening of May 24 the Dialogue Books representatives presented a seminar for members of the public, titled “Meet the Publishers: Demystifying Publishing – From Manuscript to Bookstore” at the Multifunctional Room.

Visual Artist Laura Facey Cooper screened her film *Paddlin’ Spirit* and participated in a discussion on the film as part of the activities for the course, Women in Cinema: LITS2907, on Wednesday February 15. The activity was intended to allow students a better understanding of how film can function as an expression of life-writing and how the process of life-writing can serve as a means of reinventing the self and healing.

### **Journal of International Women’s Studies (JIWS) Undergraduate Conference**

**Grant:** Three undergraduates were awarded the Journal of International Women’s Studies (JIWS) Undergraduate Conference Grant to present their work at the 15th Annual International Charles Town Maroon Conference & Festival, June 21–24, 2023, but only two students presented at the conference, Kandice Thompson and Natalia Downer. The students were granted the award on the basis of impressive coursework submitted for a project in PUBL3003: Editing and Proofreading. The award was made possible through the coordination of Lecturer for the course, Visiting Fulbright awardee, Dr Francis Botkin, who also organises the conference. The course assignment required students to submit content for a class project, a mini-literary magazine called *Fear of the Folk*. The Conference theme was “Reconciliation: Justice, Healing, Unity” and students participated on a panel: “Reconciling Jamaicans with their folk culture”, chaired by Dr Isis Semaj-Hall, Lecturer in DLIE. The award provided transportation to the conference and accommodation for one night.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### CAPE Series

The Department conducted two **CAPE Lecture/Discussion Series**: On Thursday March 9 in collaboration with the Montego Bay Community College and on Saturday March 18 at UWI, Mona. Presenters included Dr Aisha Spencer, Miss Carolyn Allen, Ms Whitney Eaton, Mr Kevhaun Bailey, Ms Desiree Crooks **and Ms Lisa R. Brown**, who coordinated the series. The department's archive of CAPE lectures posted on the department's YouTube channel was updated with the addition of a recording of a discussion session with successful CAPE students, now UWI undergraduates. This discussion was hosted by Lisa R. Brown. The YouTube channel series continues to be a useful resource for teachers around the island and the region. Requests from teachers in Guyana, St. Kitts and Antigua indicate the impact this outreach activity has generated.

### Creative Writing Workshops

In collaboration with the **Nomadic Jamaican Poets Festival & School Tour 2022**, which is spearheaded by Malachi Smith, the Department co-hosted a **free Poetry Workshop and Reading** on Thursday November 10. Amina Blackwood-Meeks, Ann-Margaret Lim and Cherry Natural participated in the workshop. This workshop was free and open to the public. A poetry reading featuring participants on the tour was held later that day, beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the Library Multifunctional Room.

DLIE hosted "**Writing What Writes You**" a creative writing workshop conducted by Professor Opal Palmer Adisa on March 25. Professor Adisa, who taught in the department's creative writing programme this semester, urged workshop participants to make time and space in their lives for writing. Twelve participants attended and were presented with certificates.

### The 16th Annual Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture was held on Thursday March 30 in the Library Multifunctional Room. Guest speaker, Geoffrey Philp, spoke on "Garveyism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Climate Activism". Philp is a Jamaican author of poetry, short stories, novels and children's books, including *Twelve Poems and A Story for Christmas* (2005), *Dubwise* (2010) and most recently, *Archipelagos* (2023). He has also written *Benjamin, My Son* which was nominated for the IMPAC Dublin Literary prize. Mr Philp was awarded the Silver Musgrave Medal in 2022; he currently teaches creative writing at Miami Dade College.



### The Gift of Words

A pre-Christmas activity, “The Gift of Words” with Professor Opal Palmer Adisa, was held on Thursday December 1, 2022 in the Library Multifunctional Room. The event featured readings from Professor Palmer Adisa’s books *The Storyteller’s Return*, *Portia Dreams* and *100+ Voices for Miss Lou* as well as performances by musician, Charmaine Lemonius. Isis Semaj-Hall chaired the event.

### March is Movie Month at Mona

A surprise visit by projectionist David Morrison facilitated the return of Movie Month for one night in March, after a two-year hiatus following the outbreak of COVID. Dubbed “Reel and Come Again”, Movie Month 2023 featured the screening of two favourites from the Africa World Documentary Film Festival on Friday March 24, in N1: *Mama Africa*, Directed by Mika Kaurismaki and *Songs of Redemption*, directed by Miguel Galofre. The complete AWDF archive is stored in the Main Library and is available for the use of members of the UWI community.

### Book Launch

The Department hosted a virtual launch of Dr Pamela Mordecai’s *de book of Joseph & A Fierce Green Place* on Thursday, February 9, titled “Walk A Short Way Wid Dis Sistren”. The launch featured readings by Owen “Blakka” Ellis and a conversation between poet, Tanya Shirley and Dr Mordecai; it was chaired by Rachel Moseley-Wood. The event can be viewed on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/Z94G90mLV48>.

## ALIGNMENT

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & LINKS WITH OTHER UNIVERSITIES:

#### Dr Isis Semaj-Hall:

- In July 2023 Dr Semaj-Hall travelled to Barbados and interviewed Barbados’s Republic poet, Cyndi Celeste about performance poetry and the role of poetry in the Caribbean’s 21st century political progress. While there she also conducted research for a monograph.
- Invited panellist for the Jamaica Music Museum’s 11th Annual Reggae Black History Month Grounation: “Sounds and Society: Sixty Years of Music, Political Activism and Social Change” at The Institute of Jamaica on February 5.
- Hosted PREE’s Live PREE reading and open mic event at the Sky Gallery in Kingston on January 28.

- Guest on “Afrofuturism, Lee ‘Scratch’ Perry, and Jamaican Music.” *Afrofuturism Podcast*, hosted by Louis Chude-Sokei, 9 Nov. 2022. Carnegie Hall. URL: <https://tinyurl.com/bdewsv4s>.
- Moderated the National Gallery of Jamaica’s 4-month film screening series for the Kingston Biennial in October.
- Facilitated an online digital workshop at Temple University, Philadelphia, USA titled “Professional Pathways in the Black Digital” It was hosted by Temple University Digital Humanities and Libraries and was held on April 27.
- Invited by Dr Henry Ivry, Lecturer at the University of Glasgow to partner in the working group, “Ecology of Sound.” The invitation emerges out of U. of Glasgow’s ongoing collaboration with the University of the West Indies and the goals of the partnership are to develop and co-teach undergraduate and postgraduate courses in digital humanities at both institutions. The “Ecology of Sound” partnership plans to bring together scholars and artists in an international symposium to build analytical and artistic tools to explore how sound is instrumental in building and conceiving a more sustainable world. The workshop will feature two “Listening, Writing, Composing” workshops and will also engage sound via “DJ Sets” live via community radio. As part of the partnership, Dr Semaj-Hall visited Glasgow in March to work on course development and project planning. She also delivered a lecture on March 23 in the “Creative Conversations” series which was sponsored by the Ferguson Bequest and co-organized by Creative Writing at the University of Glasgow and the Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies in Glasgow. Titled “Dub: Music, Identity, and Word Art,” the lecture explored the roots of dub and its influence on her research and worldview. On March 24, 2023, Dr. Henry Ivry and Dr Semaj-Hall hosted a one-hour radio slot on Clyde Built Radio station, titled “Ecology of Sound,” in Glasgow. The academics turned DJs, chose songs and paired them with theoretical readings. Dr Ivry is expected to visit Kingston in October 2023.

**Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood:**

- Invited to participate in two roundtable discussions which formed part of the activities for The Association pour la Promotion du Cinéma des Antilles et de la Guyane (APCAG) Archives Film Festival on November 21 and 22, 2022. She participated online and presented on the topics: “The need for a film library” and “Caribbean Film Heritage”.
- Keynote address at the Dancehall Queen 25th Anniversary (online) symposium on October 11, 2022 titled, “Happy Birthday Queen!: Complicated Transactions of Empowerment in *Dancehall Queen*”. The symposium was organised by the Institute of Caribbean Studies, UWI.

### Conference Participation:

*The Annual West Indian Literature Conference, October 13–15, 2022*

The department was well represented at the West Indian Literature Conference held at the University of The Bahamas from October 13–15, 2022. The conference was hybrid and facilitated both face to face and online presentations. Participants from DLIE were: Ms Lisa Brown who presented a paper online, titled: “Testifying to the Choir: Self-Publication and the Politics of Identity in Three texts by Jamaican Women”; Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood, who presented a paper in person titled: “Governance, Citizenship and Identity in the Work of Esther Figueroa”; and MPhil student, Kevhaun Bailey, presented a paper online titled: “Cause I’m Gonna Make It’: Jamaican Diasporic Cinema and the Generic Violence of Inheritance”. The department is scheduled to host the 2024 conference in October.

#### **Kevhaun Bailey, MPhil candidate**

- Presented the paper, “The Silent ‘Cis’ in Gender: Cissexism and Gendered Antagonisms in Shani Mootoo’s *Cereus Blooms at Night*” at the virtual conference, Social Change And Gender-Based Violence: Representations In Caribbean Literature And Performance Cultures.

#### **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall**

- Presented a paper, “The Roar of Our Canon: Engaging Caribbean Voices” at the Society of Antiquaries of London to the Caribbean Literature in English “Writing Back and Writing Forward” Symposium on October 28.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE**

#### **Dr Jennifer Brittan**

- Member, Modern Language Association
- Member, American Comparative Literature Association
- Member, Canadian Association of American Studies

#### **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall**

- Adjudicator in the National Library of Jamaica’s Poetry Competition; October 2022.
- Editor and Co-Founder, *PREE: Caribbean. Writing*
- 2021–2022 Caribbean Studies Association, served as Literary Salon Committee and Chair

**Dr Norval Edwards**

- Member of the Editorial Team of the online Literary Journal, *PREE Caribbean Writing*.
- Member, Advisory Board, *Issues in Critical Investigation*, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.