# Popular political cultures and the Caribbean carnival

Emily Zobel Marshall, Max Farrar and Guy Farrar

## Carnival is a rich resource for cultural resistance as well as pleasure

As a huge, Caribbean-led, culturally hybridised, inter-ethnic festival of popular artistic creativity and social critique, the Caribbean carnival deserves much more serious attention than it has so far received. The media tends to reduce carnival to glamorous female bodies, jerk chicken, soca music and outlandish costumes. We aim to demonstrate here that there are elements of Caribbean carnival that carry a radical message, support the display of bodies of every type, and present costumes that carry important social messages, often explaining historical events and commenting on injustice. The interpretation of carnival as performative and playful is incontestable, we suggest, but what is less commonly analysed is the play of power, and resistance to power, within the various performances that constitute carnival.

The glittering carnival enthusiastically represented by photographers, advertisers, cultural boosters and tourist agencies is the result of a complex interweaving of power among the organisers; between organisers and funders (public and private); between organisers, participants and the regulatory bodies (particularly the police); between and inside the mas camps (the sites in which carnival masquerades are built); between men and women, young and old; and sometimes, muted but

*HBMDM in 2017, featuring 'King' David Oluwale.*
*All photos in this article by Max Farrar*

present, between the ethnic groups who inject their life-force into the carnival. In this article we restrict our analysis to the gender politics of carnival and the insertion of political messages into the building and performing of carnival costumes. Our aim is to show that, when understood as a cacophony of signs that can be deconstructed historically and politically, the Caribbean carnival is a resource for cultural resistance and for social progress.

## A brief history of carnival

The Caribbean carnival has its roots in Africa, Europe and South Asia. One forerunner is the masquerade, which first arrived in Trinidad with French settlers

in the late eighteenth century. The white French elite's masked balls, as well as their masked parades through the streets as they visited each other's homes, introduced the 'world turned upside down' element of carnival in Europe into Trinidad. Playfulness is carnival's essence, and masking is the key to its subversion of the established order. In 1827 a white colonial man in Port of Spain commented: 'Ovid's Metamorphoses were nothing compared to the changes that took place … A party of ladies, having converted themselves into a party of brigands, assailed me in my quarters and nearly frightened me out of my wits': in true carnival fashion, men's power was here (briefly) overturned. From Christmas to Ash Wednesday in Trinidad, the whites' 'long succession of festivities and pleasures' set the tone for all subsequent carnivals. A French history of Trinidad published in 1882 reported: 'Brilliant as fireworks were their [the whites'] cascades of witticisms, verbal sallies, and comic buffoonery'.[1]

Even while they were enslaved, Africans had held their own dances and celebrations, drawing from their African traditions and engaging in their own role-reversal, mocking their masters' behaviour and dress. And after emancipation in 1838, the newly liberated merged these celebrations with a ritual known as Cannes Brûlées (Canboulay). This was based on a re-enactment of putting out fires in the cane fields (a task slaves were often called upon to carry out), and was in part an act of resistance and in part a harvest ritual.[2] This ritual re-enactment, like so many carnival cultural forms, was seemingly contradictory, celebrating both the extinguishing and the starting of cane field fires. The colonial authorities made strenuous efforts to ban Canboulay, prompting the 'Canboulay riots' of 1881 and 1884, which then resulted in further heavy restrictions. Port of Spain's Chief of Police commented:

> After the Emancipation of the Slaves things were materially altered, the ancient lines of demarcation were obliterated and as a natural consequence the carnival degenerated into a noisy and disorderly amusement for the lower classes.[3]

Many elements of the costuming of masquerade characters drew directly from African traditions, though they were often hybridised with other elements. Masquerade characters included the semi-military, semi-mountebank John Canoe, who appeared in the Bahamas, British Honduras, Jamaica and the USA, a figure

whom Errol Hill sees as representing 'New World Africanism'. The John Canoe figure had acquired elements from English mumming and morris dancing, as well as from the French carnival parades. The Moco Jumbie figure, known throughout West Africa, paraded on high stilts, with a fabricated head that concealed the actor. According to an English account published in the early 1800s, this figure 'frightened the boys' with its accompanying swordsman's menacing dancing and the Jumbo's 'antic terrible'. Moco Jumbie wore an Eton jacket and an admiral's hat decorated with feathers, and danced to a jig accompanied by a drum, a triangle and a flute, as Europe and Africa collided in Trinidad.

To this mix was then added the impact of South Indian festivals, following the importation of South Indian indented labourers to Trinidad in the mid-nineteenth century, after the abolition of slavery had reduced the availability of cheap labour. Michael la Rose notes that the British colonial authorities were quite preoccupied with keeping the African Canboulay Carnival from joining with the Indian Hosay festival.[4] The Hosay festival originated in Shi'ite Muslim parades, in which mosque replicas (Tadjahs) were carried, accompanied by Tassa drummers, to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. In the event, the attempts to keep the traditions separate were unsuccessful, however, and the South Asian presence in the Trinidad carnival is still very much alive today.

It was only when Trinidad and Tobago's first post-colonial prime minister Eric Williams endorsed carnival as a festival to be embraced by the whole nation that it became mainstream, and the middle classes began to involve themselves in significant numbers. Williams believed that effective political leadership depended on 'enlisting culture in the struggle and placing it in the vanguard of the nationalist movement'.[5] His friend (at that time) C.L.R. James was also a supporter of carnival, but for him its importance was as an expression of working-class creativity and energy - an example of the inherent self-activity of the masses.[6] Whatever the motive, this began the process of reducing the bacchanalian element in carnival and increasing the 'bling' (our shorthand for the beads and glass jewels that adorn the 'pretty mas' costumes). The middle classes - especially the diasporic Trinidadians who had made money abroad - began to purchase (at increasingly high prices) specially-made costumes, and their huge masquerade bands were fully serviced with food, drink, guards and massive soca sound systems.

As carnival became accepted into the mainstream, it was also transformed in

many ways. And this has led to debates about such issues as commercialisation, control and representation, including the representation of women.

## Carnival women

During 'pretty mas' on carnival Tuesday, Port of Spain's final carnival parade, the city is overwhelmed by thousands of young women (and men) dancing in scanty and sequinned shorts and bras. This has meant that, in spite of the enormous contribution women have made to the music of Trinidad's carnival, many critical observers believe that the increasing fetishisation of the female body within carnival has halted social progress within the movement.[7] In both the UK and the Caribbean, images of carnival increasingly concentrate on bikinis, bosoms and bling, and women in mas are represented as accommodating themselves to stereotypes of male desire.

There is a counter argument, however, which insists that women's contemporary carnivalesque performances are a way of revaluing formerly owned and colonised women's bodies. Anna Kasafi Perkins, for example, maintains that Caribbean women have 'subverted and continue to subvert' negative interpretations of the female body, in particular those found in the Christian traditions of Lent, which, she argues, 'devalue the physical being and oftentimes view it as a site of sinfulness and temptation'. In Trinidad, the negative responses to what is sometimes called 'skin mas', due to the amount of flesh on display, should be seen as a knee-jerk reaction by men to female empowerment - a reaction to a growing sense of panic 'as women are taking over Mas, setting the pace and no longer being content to remain in the shadows playing adjunct to men'.[8] Perkins argues that the masquerade of sequins and bikinis is in fact a progressive one - one which celebrates the female body in public through bodily transgressions, and assaults conservative notions of a woman's 'proper place' (p368).

During slavery, the black female body was the site of violence, ownership and reproduction. Today, daughters, mothers and grandmothers dancing wildly on the streets in revealing clothing are making a direct challenge to the construction of the black female body as property, as a symbol of Christian virtue, or as child-bearer and mother. Through their transgressive acts they are reclaiming agency over their own bodies. As Gabrielle Hosein has argued, the bikini and beads masquerade

should not be seen as undermining or counter to feminist political activism. She regards carnival as 'the largest movement of women in Trinidad and Tobago seeking autonomy and self-determination around their sexuality and their bodies, in opposition to a particular kind of respectability politics … purely for the joy and pleasure they experience'.[9]

Yet carnival is multifaceted and replete with opposing forces, and we would argue that the spectacle does also simultaneously reinforce some of the stereotypes women wish to critique, including the image of an overtly sexualised woman on display for the male gaze. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, carnival holds up a 'magic mirror' to humanity. Carnival reflects and refracts hierarchies of oppressive power within a society, and both draws attention to and reduces the tensions and paradoxes within a nation. It will always remain a profoundly ambivalent, complex and contradictory cultural form.[10]

## Sticks, robbers and dragons

Drawing on French traditions, African martial arts and Hindu stick dances, Kalenda, or stick-fighting, is performed before huge crowds in villages and small towns across Trinidad, and has now become a carefully regulated but still extremely violent contest. It is also a traditional part of carnival. Tony Hall, director of Lordstreet Theatre Company, argues that stick-fighting contains the underlying meaning of carnival. For him, 'dance and fight' succinctly sums it up.[11]

The Midnight Robber is one of the traditional carnival figures bringing the 'fight' element to the street. A quintessential Trinidadian 'badman' - his character expressing resistance to oppressive and authoritarian forces - he sometimes appears on Sunday's parade in the final stages of carnival, as school children and others take to the streets in a variety of traditional costumes. He dresses in a black sombrero adorned with skulls and coffin-shaped shoes, and his long, eloquent speeches, descended from the West African 'griot' (storyteller) tradition, detail the vengeance he will wreak on his oppressors. Part of the West African/Caribbean trickster tradition - and a similar figure to Anansi and Brer Rabbit - the Midnight Robber relies on his verbal agility to thwart officialdom and triumph over his adversaries.

He is also a shape-shifter, and has the ability to perform multiple roles. He boastfully proclaims to be a terrorist as well as a saviour - a criminal extraordinaire and

breaker of institutional and supernatural laws. This is typical of trickster discourse, with its focus on turning the tables on the powerful, using intelligence and verbal skills, and of resistance to colonial power and the traumatic legacy of slavery.[12] Like other tricksters, the Midnight Robber is the agent of both destruction and creation, offering a psychological release to listeners, onlookers, storytellers and Mas players.

The Mystery Raiders are the last remaining traditional Midnight Robber band in Trinidad. Anthony Collymore, their leader, explains that what compels them to take to the road every year, with all the planning, organisation, time, energy and expense that this involves, is the need to keep alive the spirit of the 'old mas', which he believes to be under threat, as the mainstream increasingly focuses on the bling elements. This was evident, for example, in the middle of one of the band's most recent performances, when, during the Midnight Robber speeches, the local TV station filming the event cut to an advertisement break - and then cut back to beautiful dancing women adorned with feathers and sequins. In the face of the history of slavery and colonialism, and contemporary neo-colonialism, crime and corruption, the Midnight Robber is a speaker of the truth, bringing the country's attention to both historical and contemporary wrongdoings.

Band members also commented that the mas camp, where the group come together to design and make costumes and shape the performance, through its atmosphere of camaraderie, made them feel personally empowered, and helped overcome feelings of shyness, social inadequacy or awkwardness. The speeches, too, were uplifting. This area - the spiritual, emotional and psychological impact of playing mas - is another subject that is under-researched in carnival theory. Yet these masquerades that keep the creative traditions of carnival alive can be transformative at a deeply personal level.

In his ground-breaking novel *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Earl Lovelace captures the effect of playing mas on his protagonist Aldrick, who lives for nothing else than to work on his exquisite Dragon costume and play the Dragon mas at carnival. Lovelace shows us how Trinidad carnival becomes a vehicle through which the poor and dispossessed can assert their strength and humanity. Set in the 1970s, the novel suggests that carnival is, at its root, a festival of the oppressed and exploited, where rebellion is always lurking. As Aldrick dances the dragon dance through the streets he wants his dancing to bring a message to his people and to the impoverished communities of Port of Spain:

> Oh, he danced. He danced pretty, he danced to say, 'You are beautiful, Calvary Hill and John John and Laventille and Shanty Town. Listen to your steelbands how they playing! Look at the colours of your costumes in the sunshine! Look at your colours! You is people, people. People is you, people!' … He wanted everybody to see him. When they saw him, they had to be blind not to see. They had to be deaf not to hear that people everywhere want to be people and they were going to be that anyway, even if they had to rip open the guts of the city.[13]

## Carnival in Leeds

The Caribbean carnival in Britain has its own history, which for reasons of space we do not discuss here. Its role as a celebration of Caribbean culture and challenge to local racisms has been documented elsewhere.[14] However, we would argue that in Britain the social satire and protest of the early carnivals in the Caribbean have been reduced in significance, while the elements that appeal to tourists and voyeurs have grown.

In our own carnival in Leeds, however, 'pretty mas' and what we might call the boisterous and rebellious forms of traditional masquerade still exist side by side. This is not to say that there is one true path in carnival; or that a single final claim for authenticity is sustainable. As radicals, we can support the carnival rebels, shape-shifters and ideologues, while as masqueraders we can simultaneously exult in the boisterous, bacchanalian and liminal moments that carnival conjures up.

Now in its fiftieth year, Leeds West Indian Carnival is the oldest Caribbean carnival in Europe, in the sense that it is a street carnival, based on the Caribbean model, and is organised and led by British Caribbeans. Its foundational narrative is portrayed in two versions: as a cure for homesickness, and as a cultural offer to the city of Leeds, who thought that West Indians in the 1960s were mainly radical protesters. The former is the message in most of the carnival's own publications. But in *Celebrate!* - the book about Leeds carnival produced by two of the authors of this article, Max and Guy - the latter is emphasised.[15] Both of these narratives come from Arthur France MBE, who had the idea in the mid-1960s that there should be a carnival, and whose committee brought it to life in 1967.[16]

All three authors of this article participate, to varying degrees, in a troupe called

Harrison Bundey Mama Dread's Masqueraders (HBMDM), a group of volunteers of all ages, all social classes, all genders and various national origins, which forms one of the largest mas bands in the carnival. HBMDM was established in 1998 as 'Judge Dread' by the human rights lawyer Ruth Bundey, who has been closely connected to Leeds's black communities since the late 1960s, and whose legal aid practice has a national reputation for its work on deaths in police custody and inquests. Ruth participated in carnival from its first years, at the invitation of her friend Edris Brown, one of the first carnival Queens, and worked with her friend and dress-maker Athaliah Durrant, and with Athaliah's partner, Guy (one of the writers of this piece), to create a troupe for each carnival up to 2015. The troupe is now called HB Mama Dread's Masqueraders in memory of Athaliah, who was sometimes known as Mama Dread. HBMDM has received Arts Council and other funding, but it is largely self-financed.

HBMDM attracts large numbers of masqueraders because it has always consisted of people of all colours and classes, and it always makes a political point. It speaks to contemporary social and cultural issues, aiming to tell stories through its costumes. Often, members carry placards to emphasise their message; wherever they can, they seek to amuse the people watching as they dance down the road, and interact with by-standers. Troupe titles indicate some of the issues HMBDM has tackled over the years. The very first troupe, 'Judge Dread - Innocent Till Proven Guilty', was led by a Rastafarian in a Judge's wig, highlighting those unfairly imprisoned. 'Shame on You BP' was about the Exxon Valdez oil slick in Alaska. Masqueraders carried a specially designed BP logo, with dripping oil and fouled birds, and a huge banner featuring the slogan and logo adorned the truck carrying the troupe's sound system. The mas bands 'All Ah We Matter' and 'Love Ghetto Connexion' have emphasised the desire to value all communities and bring people together. 'Eco Warriors' consisted of masqueraders dressed in costumes made of plastic bags.

HBMD also created a troupe calling attention to the abuse of rights and due process at Guantanamo Bay: this was the year when its members were nearly prevented by armed police from entering Potternewton Park, where carnival assembles, on the grounds that carnival 'was not political'. Then there was the troupe, 'Blud Ah Go Run - Save the NHS', which had doctors and nurses feeding the crowd medicine (sips of rum), taking their temperatures and checking their heartbeats with plastic stethoscopes.[17] The 'Unstich the Rich' troupe was led by its

own huge Midnight Robber, made by Marina Poppa of Callaloo Carnival Arts. The Robber represented the financial sector, and the masqueraders' placards linked the bedroom tax, and reductions in pensions for retired workers, to the financial crisis caused by the banks.

The troupe's members include both local political activists and people who are not so interested in politics but share the ethos. The performance of carnival binds people together, and in the HBMD troupe lots of members share in the making of the costumes, learning about cutting, wire bending and decorating. Some members have sophisticated design skills, and they lead the creative process, but carnival experts (such as Hughbon Condor of High Esteem Designs) are called in for specialist tasks. The creative (and political) task for HBMD is to combine social commentary with the desire to be recognised as carnivalists. It insists that its beautiful costumes, bling and spectacle must have equal weight with social critique. The aim is to combine a concern with political power with a performance which is as playful and humorous as it can be, given the issues being addressed.

Creating the fiftieth anniversary troupe, 'All Ah We Are Migrants', illustrated some of the tensions that can arise when aiming for consensus with a diverse group of participants. For this project HBMD partnered with the David Oluwale Memorial

Association, an organisation set up to promote knowledge and understanding of the life and death of David Oluwale, a British migrant from Nigeria who was brutalised by two Leeds policemen as he slept rough in the city centre in the late 1960s.[18] There is a widespread belief that the police drowned David in the River Aire in Leeds city centre in 1969, but they were convicted only of assaulting him. The troupe sought to tell David's story and remember him in the spirit of carnival. Using the skills of three different artists (Alan Pergusey, Jane Storr and Hughbon Condor), they created a carnival King: the abject David Oluwale became the regal King David - a huge papier-mâché head of David Oluwale afloat on waves of silky blue chiffon.

Some troupe members doubted that the Oluwale story was suitable, arguing that carnival was not the stage for misery. But others argued that carnival is able to embrace fighting and fear, giving the examples of Trinidad's Jab Jab Molassie masqueraders, who wear masks and crack bullwhips, and its Blue Devils, who carry sharp tridents, and whose mouths foam with red blood: both these groups can be genuinely terrifying. (On the other hand, the extraordinary energy of Leeds carnival's own Blue Devils generates surprise rather than dread, and whips have been absent from Leeds since the 1980s.) The abjection of slavery may be a source

for carnival's drive for pleasure, but a story like Oluwale's is a challenging topic for this joyful spectacle. After these discussions, efforts were made to find a more uplifting narrative, and, fortunately, there is evidence from Oluwale's contemporaries that he was the life and soul of the party in his early days in Leeds.[19] Alan Pergusey sculpted David's face, based on the police's grim mug-shot, but with a smile, hinting at the happy, dance-hall character who was sometimes called 'Yankee' because of his enjoyment of US popular culture.

The 'All Ah We Are Migrants' theme also led to discussion, with some troupe members arguing that the masquerade suggested that all migrants were a single homogeneous mass. One or two members of the troupe argued that this was not so - that the Caribbean generation of migrants in the 1950s and 1960s were quite different from those arriving today from Eastern Europe and elsewhere. This was not the majority view, but the discussion was not easy. And there was a further dispute about how the migration theme should be represented. To express the beauty and creativity that migrants can bring, most of the troupe were costumed in hibiscus flowers, designed by Agnes Richards and Grace Hixon; whereas, to represent the perilous journey that recent migrants have faced in crossing the Mediterranean, it was decided that some of the troupe would wear orange life-jackets. But when a youth group called Leeds DynaMix, most of whom are recent migrants, joined HBMD, they challenged the life-jacket idea, pointing out that the jackets could be interpreted as degrading. Finally, there was a sharp dispute about the seventy words describing our purpose that would be read out at the King and Queen show. The initial draft was kicked out for being insufficiently political - as was the initial draft of the postcard to be handed out to by-standers explaining the meaning of King David and his Migrant Masqueraders. In the end the postcard's headline read:

> Harrison Bundey Mama Dread's Masqueraders say:
> ALL AH WE ARE MIGRANTS
> Migration is a human need.

The text explained that our King David led 150 masqueraders from varying migrant backgrounds. And at the King and Queen show, Simon Namsoo, in a suit of African fabric made by Joan Jeffrey, danced to Black Stalin's 'Black Man Feelin' to Party', with David's head on his shoulders and streams of chiffon at his waist representing the water Oluwale crossed and in which he perished. The postcard said

we acknowledge the many, like David, who have died - and continue to perish - in water. We also recognised that every human has a migrant story; and that in recent times, the barbarism of slavery, forced migration and Empire has divided us all. However, because of our ongoing struggles against racism and injustice, we continue to flourish. The hibiscus flower, symbolic of joy and immortality, celebrates the colour and life that migration brings.

King David was not placed in the top three contestants at the King and Queen show: only one judge liked our work. This might be taken to indicate that the appetite for bling is greater than the appetite for politics - a regular complaint made by the Mystery Raiders Midnight Robber band in Trinidad. Most of the Leeds carnival expresses the performative and playful aspects of carnival, but power and politics emerge in all sorts of ways.

The 'emancipation' theme also appeared in a photography project organised as part of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations, featuring young carnival designer Lorina Gumbs. Lorina's design for a carnival head-dress on the theme of emancipation had at its heart a crown of Kings and Queens surrounded by colours evoking sea voyages, Caribbean fields and sugar mills. It also depicted chains, representing the shackles of slavery, with a broken chain representing freedom. People not steeped

*The Trinidad Raiders in 2017*

in the meanings of carnival might find the cluster of signs in the head-dress hard to read, but the message is clear for anyone deeply involved in mas (and is crystal clear to all who read the project's brochure). Carnival's magic lies in its multiplicity of signs, which can be interpreted in a multitude of ways. And its power is enhanced by ambiguity.

Those of us who research and write about carnival do so in order to open up its meanings for wider scrutiny and discussion; we hope to offer people the opportunity to think and act politically while they perform and play. Indeed, political, traditional, mas enjoyed something of a resurgence in Leeds in 2017: a host of cultural activities and events, attended by members of the carnival community and other interested parties locally, nationally and internationally, have been celebrating and engaging with the more profound, violent, resistive, political and traditional elements of Caribbean carnival.

When Midnight Robbers re-appear in Leeds alongside other traditional masqueraders, we hope that those who encounter their anti-authoritarian energy and speeches will be inspired to research and read, but also - as they are moved by the spirit of the mas towards a personal and political awakening - to dance and fight.

**Emily Zobel Marshall** is a Senior Lecturer in Postcolonial Literatures and Course Director for English Literature at the School of Cultural Studies at Leeds Beckett University.

**Max Farrar** is a retired sociologist, politico, writer and pleasure-seeker, who has been photographing, participating in and writing about Leeds West Indian Carnival since 1972. He is co-author with Guy Farrar and Tim Smith of *Celebrate! 50 Years of the Leeds West Indian Carnival*, 2017.

**Guy Farrar** is a part-time photographer and development/leadership consultant in the not-for-profit sector. All three authors are participants in Harrison Bundey Mama Dread's Masqueraders, one of the largest mas bands in the Leeds carnival.

## Notes

1. Cited in Errol Hill, *The Trinidad Carnival*, New Beacon Books 1997. The following section draws heavily from this account.

2. Milla Riggio, 'The Carnival Story - Then and Now' in Milla Riggio (ed), *Carnival: Culture in Action - The Trinidad Experience,* 2004, Routledge, p42.

3. *The Trinidad Carnival*, pp16-17.

4. Michael la Rose, '"The city could burn down we jammin' still!" The history and tradition of cultural resistance in the art, music, masquerade and politics of the Caribbean Carnival', paper presented to the International Conference on the Caribbean Carnival, 'Power, Performance and Play', at Leeds Beckett University, 19-21 May 2017.

5. Eric Williams, cited in *The Trinidad Carnival*, p114.

6. C.L.R. James, 'Independence, energy and creative talent of Carnival can do other wonders', *The Nation*, 21.2.59. Thanks to Christian Hogsbierg for this reference.

7. Women's positive roles within carnival are explored in Rudolph Ottley, *Ambataila Women - The untold story of women in calypso from chanterelle to calypsonian, 1834-2014*, 2016.

8. Anna Kasafi Perkins, 'Carne Vale (Goodbye to Flesh?): Caribbean Carnival, Notions of the Flesh and Christian Ambivalence about the Body', *Sexuality &*

*Culture*, 2011, p373.

9. Gabrielle Hosein, quoted in M. Powers, 'Leave Me Alone'. *The Washington Post*, 26.2.17.

10. This section draws on Emily Zobel Marshall, 'It's not all Sequins and Bikinis? Power, Performance and Play in the Leeds and Trinidad Carnival', in Milla Riggio (ed), *Turning Tides*, Ian Randle Publishers, forthcoming in 2017.

11. Tony Hall, 'Mas Interventions', paper presented to the International Conference on the Caribbean Carnival, May 2017.

12. This section draws on Emily Zobel Marshall, 'Resistance Through "Robber Talk": Storytelling Strategies and the Carnival Trickster', *Caribbean Quarterly*, 2016, Volume 62. The quotes from Collymore and his band are from her research trip in Trinidad.

13. Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Faber and Faber 1998, p5.

14. See for example Darcus Howe, *The Road Make to Walk on Carnival Day,* 1978, Race Today Publications; and Ishmahil Blagrove Jr (ed), *Carnival - A Photographic and Testimonial History of the Notting Hill Carnival*, Rice n Peas, 2014.

15. Guy Farrar, Tim Smith, Max Farrar, *Celebrate! 50 Years of the Leeds West Indian Carnival*, Jeremy Mills Publishing 2017.

16. In his Foreword to *Celebrate!*, Arthur France explains his political and educational purpose in making carnival costumes.

17. A reference to Mikey Smith's poem, 'It A Come', which has the refrain 'Blood ah go run/If justice nah come'.

18. For more information see www.rememberoluwale.org/. See also Caryl Phillips, *Foreigners - Three English Lives*, Harvill Secker 2007; Kester Aspden, *The Hounding of David Oluwale*, Vintage 2008; and S.J. Bradley (ed), *Remembering Oluwale: An Anthology*, Valley Press 2016.

19. This idea was captured in Jeremy Sandford's use of 'Smiling David' as the title of his radio play, *Smiling David*, Calder and Boyars 1974.