

Zoom Chat for "Carnavalesque History," November 21, 2019

From Njelle Hamilton to Everyone: 12:20 PM

Hi everyone. In a public space so can't speak, but re carnival, history and cosmic stage, I'm wondering if it's not significant that it's not actually Petion and Stalin and Napoleon (the historical figures themselves) but masquerades of them. So I'm connecting it to the moment when Patrick is dancing with the mannequin of Hadriana, so carnival as a performance of the real that then subverts/reworks the "real"...

From Digital Humanities Center to Everyone: 12:20 PM

<https://iamdbookclub.com/?service=blog-2>

From ag3339 to Everyone: 12:21 PM

Raises hand

From Abbe Schriber to Everyone: 12:21 PM

Hi Nathan- could you clarify/repeat the Jacmel paintings you just mentioned a moment ago?

From ndize to Everyone: 12:27 PM

Here are the Préfète Duffaut paintings to which I referred: <http://www.artnet.com/artists/prefete-duffaut/>

It was the old casket with the mysterious air that Madame Georges had just thrown into the sea. She had scarcely finished carrying out her mission when she felt a clenching in her heart. A puff of air brought to her just then the bronze complaints of a nearby bell announcing the curfew. It was like a knell tolling in her ear—muffled by the distance and rendered more sombre by the calm of the evening. She had an intuition, secret and profound, that she had just consummated an act of sacrilege.

Nevertheless, Madame Georges returned home, satisfied with having carried out the last will of her mother.

From Michel DeGraff to Everyone: 12:30 PM

I'm also in a public space and rushing soon to another meeting. But following up on Nathan's mention of Préfète Duffaut's painting and Laurent's mention of the "Leyopa" military group (cf. Dépestre's "...pigs, orangutans, birds of prey, bulls, sharks, cobras, crocodiles, tigers, Tonton-Macoutes, and leopards") please, at your convenience, take a listen to Manno Charlemagne's "Ayiti pa forè": [https://youtu.be/SW4sbi5G8\\_0](https://youtu.be/SW4sbi5G8_0)

From ag3339 to Everyone: 12:31 PM

word

From Joel Dreyfuss to Everyone: 12:32 PM

Remember that tonton macoute is a folk character long before being associated with Papa Doc.

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 12:33 PM

yes, good point!

From siobhananderson to Everyone: 12:35 PM

In response to Njelle's reflection on masquerade, I wonder about the role of parody here as a political subversion/translation of imperial structures of power. I don't know enough about carnival to read parody in Hadriana—perhaps someone could comment on this? I'm curious about the proximities of dress and play in this scene. Many thanks!

From regine to Everyone: 12:36 PM

I will write it

I don't know what is wrong with my computer

Exactly

From ndize to Everyone: 12:36 PM

My zoom crashed

From Rafe Dalleo to Everyone: 12:37 PM

I hope we get time to talk about why this novel is set in 1938!

From ndize to Everyone: 12:40 PM

But I also wanted to add that I think there are lots of intimate references here that would resonate with the Haitian literary world; Depestre served on the Haitian committee of the Société Africaine de Culture with Price-Mars, Jacques Stephen Alexis wrote a narrative/récit called "Le Léopard" which was posthumously published in 2017— all this to say, just as RD makes so much of his novel speak to a French readership/public, he also has so many intimate references that his friends and their families may recognize/read differently

From Njelle Hamilton to Everyone: 12:42 PM

Re 1938 (Rafe above) I'd love to hear others' thoughts on the letter between Gise and Fefe, where she references the Trujillo massacre (and of course I'm interested in the temporality of the letter, of the story, of her achronological life-death-life etc, delay between sending and receiving letter) but the 1938 date seems important in that specific historical sense.

From regine to Everyone: 12:44 PM

I am also thinking about contemporary iterations of this layering—21 c example that works intertextually is "The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao"

From Stephanie Curci to Everyone: 12:45 PM

There's also a reference to Germany and Italy and Ethiopia.

From ndize to Everyone: 12:45 PM

That's such a great comment Régine

From Stephanie Curci to Everyone: 12:45 PM

Oh, yes, that passage. :-)

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 12:46 PM

CLR James also published *The Black Jacobins* in 1938

From ag3339 to Everyone: 12:46 PM

Césaire the *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* in 1939. *Négritude* was kicking in Paris

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 12:48 PM

To Kaiama's point: the white blonde woman at the center of the novel also happens in Emeric Bergeaud's *Stella*, published in 1859

Bergeaud's novel is also a history but has elements of the mystic, spiritual, and erotic

From Digital Humanities Center to Everyone: 12:49 PM

Marlene I literally just started rereading *Stella* for the first time since grad school!

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 12:50 PM

importantly, *Stella* was kidnapped and taken to Saint-Domingue against her will, imprisoned, sexually threatened. she is also a virgin

From raj chetty to Everyone: 12:50 PM

labor uprisings all around the anglophone Caribbean in 1938

From ndize to Everyone: 12:52 PM

Theodora Holly gave a conference presentation at the Société Haïtienne de l'Histoire, Géographie et Géologie in 1931 and Alfred Auguste Nemours wrote a speech that might be considered a precursor to Baldwin's "I'm not your negro" called "Craignons d'être l'Ethiopie de quelqu'un"

Holly spoke about the filial qualities of Haitian and Ethiopian independence  
1945 for the Nemours speech, too

From Njelle Hamilton to Everyone: 12:52 PM

Agree with Raj re centering Jacmel/Haiti within world history; see also 84 re three centuries of world/human history convoked to celebrate/mourn Hadriana. Also re carnival/time/historiography—what is carnivalesque reality/time/history cf p 67-8: inside-out, backwards; p80 counterfeit; transformation etc. So what does the masquerade and play of carnival allow us to do? etc

From ndize to Everyone: 12:53 PM

Totally agree here with you Njelle and Raj

From Rafe Dalleo to Everyone: 12:53 PM

I was also thinking about the quotes Marlene gave us about zombies in the context of William Seabrook/US occupation

From raj chetty to Everyone: 12:53 PM

Thanks, Njelle. I'd just add: and what can it \*not\* do? (Thinking of The Politics and Poetics of Transgression on limits of carnival subversion.)

From Rafe Dalleo to Everyone: 12:53 PM

But I have to run to class!

From ag3339 to Everyone: 12:54 PM

Thank you guys!! I have to run too!

From raj chetty to Everyone: 12:56 PM

"Carnival can do everything"

I just made a t-shirt

From ndize to Everyone: 12:57 PM

"Carnaval can't babysit"

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 12:58 PM



From regine to Everyone: 12:59 PM

I have to run to a meeting. Hopefully can sort out my mic next time!

From siobhananderson to Everyone: 12:59 PM

I have to go teach—many thanks everyone!

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 01:00 PM

a funeral and a wedding!

From Cecile Accilien to Everyone: 01:00 PM

Carnival and funeral have similarities I think in terms of the "performance" aspect of both. Sorry I have a cold and can't talk much

From ndize to Everyone: 01:01 PM

Yes, thinking of Orfeu negro here as a cultural reference

From Taylor Faires to Everyone: 01:02 PM

I find it interesting the question of carnival in (re)presenting (re)enacting history. How does it work differently than other means? For instance, 100 Years of Solitude works to represent history and its repetition within a family. The repetition and "masks" being represented by family members sharing the

same names either resisting or embracing the same mistakes as their predecessors. How does this familial structure of performance work differently? Does it?

From Cecile Accilien to Everyone: 01:03 PM

They are all feasts and in many ways “feasts” and rituals are ways of keeping us from dealing with real life on the one hand but also staying in the moment.

Mèsi tout mon. Chapo Marlene, Kaima, Laurent and all the otehr KAMARAD!

From Julia Schöneberg to Everyone: 01:03 PM

Thank you everyone! I couldn't contribute, but greatly enjoyed listening in!

From ndize to Everyone: 01:04 PM

Thanks everyone, until next time!

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: 01:04 PM

thank you!