“19th Century Jamettes: Race, Gender, Protest, & Excavating the Caribbean Archive”

a lecture by

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Abstract

The term jamette is unique to Trinidad and derives from the French diamètre (diameter), referring to those who were considered below the “diameter” of respectable society. Jamettes were poor Afro-Trinidadians who worked in marginal or illegal sectors such as domestic work, manual labor, prostitution, and gambling. Women jamettes became notorious for behavior that scandalized the colonial upper classes – particularly their carnival costumes and performances (including cross-dressing) and their prominence in the political protests of the time. This talk connects these two types of public performances while addressing the difficulty of examining women whose own voices are absent from the traditional archive.

Short Bio: (http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/faculty/faculty_profile.jsp?faculty=774)