

WIACLALS Report

WIACLALS, in association with the Department of Literatures in English at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, convened our annual seminar at which Graduate students and faculty members presented papers on writers such as Austin Clarke, Marise Condé, Louise Bennett and on issues such as masculinities, queer sexualities, teaching science fiction, black poetics and Caribbean poetry. Among the presenters were three (3) international scholars: Prof. Berndt Clavier from Malmö University in Sweden, speaking on the modern novel; Prof. Honor Ford-Smith from York University in Canada, speaking on editing working women's autobiography; and Prof. Tanya Shields from University of North Carolina in the US, speaking on constructions of Caribbean nationalism.

We also helped to launch four (4) new books in Caribbean literature and scholarship: Kei Miller's *Fear of Stones and Other Stories* [short-listed for the 2007 Regional Commonwealth Writer's Prize], Edward Baugh's *Derek Walcott*, Erna Brodber's *The Rainmaker's Mistake* and Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo's *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas*.

Two highlights of the year's activities included a reading by Chinua Achebe sponsored by The Jamaica National Bi-centenary Committee and Department of Literatures in English and the launch of the "Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture Series," presented by Edward Baugh (himself) on "Frank Collymore and West Indian Literature." This lecture series was a way of honouring Edward Baugh's critical legacy and his other work in academia, at his retirement.

The April 2007 edition of the *Journal of West Indian Literature* was a festschrift also in honour of Edward Baugh (eds. Victor Chang and Evelyn O'Callaghan). The November issue was a general issue (ed. Victor Chang). Our 26th annual conference, on the theme "Horizons", was held March 8-10, 2007 at the College of Bahamas.

We held a multi-disciplinary conference in Jamaica, January 9-12, 2008, to honour one of Jamaica's literary and cultural icons, Louise Bennett, who died in Toronto last year. The conference theme is: "Noh Lickle Twang: Louise Bennett-Coverly, The Legend and the Legacy." Our 27th annual West Indian Literature conference will be held in Barbados between February 28 to March 01, 2008, on the theme "History, Fable and Myth: Lamming at 80" with special focus on the work of Barbadian writer and intellectual, George Lamming. We will continue our seminar series, book launches and the production of two issues of the Journal of West Indian Literature.