

When the Closet is a Region: Homophobia, Heterosexism and Nationalism in the Commonwealth Caribbean

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[Tara L. Atluri](#)

Undergraduate exchange student at the CGDS, 1999-2000
from the Faculty of Arts and Science
University of Toronto, St. George Campus, University College

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Editor's Note

Working Paper number 5 began as a research project by undergraduate exchange student Tara Atluri to satisfy course work requirements for the course AR22B Women's Studies. This is an introductory course offered in semester II of the academic year 1999-2000.

Tara Atluri is presently completing her fourth and final year of undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto, St. George Campus, University College where she is pursuing an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Tara spent an academic year at The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados where she completed various Law, Women's Studies, Political Science and Literature courses. She became interested in the issue of homophobia in the Caribbean after noticing a correlation between attitudes of intolerance towards homosexuals and widely accepted sexual attitudes of intolerance towards women.

She firmly believes that a women's movement that remains unconnected to issues of homophobia is failing to examine the root ideologies upon which patriarchy and sexism are based, and is therefore patching things up without ever challenging the source of the problem.

Tara Atluri's work represents the output of a new generation of budding feminist scholars that the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at Cave Hill is committed to supporting.

When the Closet is a Region

Homophobia, Heterosexism and Nationalism in the Commonwealth Caribbean

The DJ is spinning. It's a song about killing batty-men. And I watch all the men in the fete go wild. They bang on the walls and raise hands in the air as if they are protesting, or maybe worshipping something. I hate when this song plays. I hate it because my body is no longer my body-it is theirs. Breast and hip and leg turn from flesh into target with just one new track. Every man must find a woman to dance with. To hold so tightly that his fingers leave an imprint on my skin. Fingerprints that sometimes feel as if they will stay forever.

So here I am. And here he is breathing rum and cigarette down the back of my neck. While one hand inches up my skirt, the other is an imaginary gun shooting the imaginary batty men, who don't live here but yet, are everywhere. And in this moment it all feels like the same thing. As one hand squeezes my thigh so tightly the other squeezes the trigger and obliterates a man who deserved to die for acting like a woman. As the DJ shouts that homosexuals must burn, to the crowds delight, a man whispers what he'd like to do to me in my ear and my skin feels like fire, raw and blistered by all these names he marks me with.

The next day men will tell me how they are sure there were batty men at the fete. For some their homophobic paranoia will have swelled into rage and they will have cuts and bruises from a fear driven brawl. They will say that men were looking at them. That they think a few might have even brushed up against them on purpose. They will be disgusted and angry. They will tell me how wrong it is that they have to deal with anything like this. They will tell me that that is what women are for.

Introduction

Hypothesis and Method

Attempting to address homosexuality, homophobia and heterosexism in the Caribbean has been one of my most confounding experiences to date. Attitudes towards homosexuality range from vehement hatred complete with death threats¹ to a maddening silence, which is in itself a disavowal of sexual difference. What is equally disconcerting is the lack of information that has been produced in relation to homosexuality and homophobia in the Caribbean context.

I feel that there is a strong correlation between homophobia, heterosexism and sexism. From popular culture to constitutional inequity, homosexuality is dismissed, loathed and ignored by mainstream Caribbean culture. I feel that this fear of homosexuality keeps gender roles sharply intact, thereby normalising sexism. Furthermore I feel that homophobia and heterosexism are reinforced by Caribbean nation states, based on a discriminatory nationalism that uses both religious conformity and conformity to capitalist patriarchy as a basis for inclusion. I will explore the relations between homophobia, heterosexism, and nationalism as relations of power that 'sex the nation' in highly discriminatory terms.

Within this work my main areas of focus will be popular culture (in the form of dancehall lyrics), legislation, specific incidents which have gained attention from gay rights activists in the Caribbean and abroad, the stance that religious forces have (or have not) taken, and the relationship between homosexuality as 'Western imposition' and economic neo-colonialism.

I have noticed an overwhelming lack of Caribbean feminist scholarship that attempts to address issues of sexuality. Personally, I have noticed a tangible relationship between homophobia in the Caribbean and the treatment of

women. Therefore I do not think it is possible to have a homophobic women's movement' that really moves us anywhere. The silence surrounding homosexuality in the Caribbean must be broken in order to deconstruct this need to suppress difference, which I believe, is indicative of a larger paradigm of gender relations and nationalist rhetoric.

The term 'Caribbean' within this work will refer to the Commonwealth Caribbean, which has its historical roots in British colonial domination. My research deals mainly with the countries of Barbados, Trinidad, The Bahamas and Jamaica. I understand that all Caribbean nations have different histories, social norms and attitudes. My aim is not to generalise or exclude. However, I have had to piece together the little information available and based on this, draw my conclusions.

What I offer is not a broad-based survey of the varying attitudes towards homosexuality found in the Commonwealth Caribbean. There simply is not enough information to make this a reality, yet. Instead I will examine commonalities and differences in legislation and attitudes across nations, in an effort to identify common sources of oppression and power. This is the beginning of a conversation that is long overdue. But it is only the beginning.

Section 1

The Power Of Naming-Definitions and Theories

'Homophobia' is a widely used yet ambiguous term. As Hopkins states in *Gender Treachery: Homophobia, Masculinity, and Threatened Identities*:

For some, the 'phobia' suffix codes anti-gay and anti-lesbian activity as appertaining to psychiatric discourse-the realm of

irrationality, uncontrollable fear, a realm where moral responsibility or political critique seems inapplicable due to the clinical nature of the phobia.²

Epistemologically the term depoliticises violence faced by lesbian and gay people. However, 'Homophobia' has come into being as a political tool, meaning it carries more emotional impact than terms like 'anti-homosexuality'.³ 'Homophobia' in its widely politicised context refers to "...physical violence and strong verbal, economic, and juridical abuse against gays..."⁴ Therefore, despite its literary misgivings I will use the term 'homophobia' in its widely politicised context.

Heterosexism refers to 'a political situation' in which heterosexuality is seen to be natural, moral and superior.⁵ In a heterosexist culture "... heterosexuals are accorded the privileges granted them political power, sexual freedom...juridical non-interference"⁶ to name but a few. Heterosexism can be read as a precursor to homophobia. Heterosexism "...constructs the field of concepts and behaviours so that some heterosexuals' hierarchical view of this binary will be reactionary, for a variety of reasons, thus becoming homophobia (read: violent/abusive/ coercive)."⁷ One way of conceptualising this relationship is to compare it to the correlation between sexism and misogyny. One can purport sexism without hating women; however, sexism can be seen as the root ideology upon which the extreme reaction of misogyny is based. Similarly while one can be heterosexist without being homophobic, heterosexism is culpable in the production of homophobia. It is often the context in which the extreme reaction of homophobia is based.

Further terms that I will employ throughout this work are 'the sexed body'⁷ and 'the heterosexual matrix,' derived from post-structuralist feminist Judith Butler. Legal feminist Carol Smart who also draws on Butler's work argues that within the law (and I argue within other cultural discourses as well) it is not only gender that

matters, but also the sexed body.⁸ This body according to Smart, "...is constantly being reproduced in law, for law reproduces self-evident and natural women and often in a sexualised and subjugated form.⁹ The sexed body refers to a construct that is not only saturated with sex, but with natural woman-ness or maleness.¹⁰ Within the concept of 'sexed body' is Butler's notion that bodies have no meaningful sexual essences prior to their 'mark of gender'.¹¹ Therefore, there can be said to be no essence of sex, which should impose binary divisions onto our lives. While I find Butler's work compelling, for the purposes of this paper I am not as concerned with notions of sex vs. gender, as much as I am with the 'natural' sexual essences that get mapped out onto the body, a mapping that assumes heterosexuality. The second term I will use from Butler is the heterosexual matrix (which I will also refer to as the heterosexist matrix, as it is both).

This refers to the dominant understanding that normal sexual desire arises out of sexual, biological and gender difference. It also imports a presumption of reproductive sex, reinforcing the naturalness of heterosexuality.¹² Within this paradigm, politicised gender identities of (often homosexual) men who perform femininity and (often homosexual) women who perform masculinity, invert the binary system but do nothing to destroy it.¹³ In a political context however, this 'gender treachery', complete with opposition,¹⁴ shows the arbitrary nature of gender and the overwhelming need some have to maintain it.

Many theorists have made linkages between homophobia, heterosexism and sexism. As Hopkins states, "Behind all homophobia... is the background of heterosexism. Behind all heterosexism is the background of gendered identities.¹⁵ While Hopkins' assertion is totalising, it offers one viable way of perceiving homophobia in a gendered context. As Gayle Rubin states in *The Traffic in Women*, within Western based cultures, gendered identities are constructed within a binary system in which men and women are defined in opposition to each other, and women are defined as the lesser of the two. Men are strong, women are weak, and so on, and so on.¹⁶ Heterosexuality is implicit

within this ideological construction of gender. Women and men appear gendered within a heterosexual matrix, as fully sexed bodies. They appear as two halves of a whole, man being the actor and woman, the acted upon.¹⁷

Gender categories however, offer up the paradox of being both natural and unstable. Gender norms must constantly be reasserted for fear of deviation. One such deviation occurs when men and women are erotically oriented towards members of the same sex. As Hopkins states, a man (and I argue a woman as well) who acts on this erotic orientation "...violates a tenet of masculinity (or femininity), and most importantly, appears to reject standards by which real men are defined as selves, as subjects."¹⁸

Within the heterosexist matrix, what is not masculine is feminine. However, as Hopkins states, "... 'feminine essences' do not easily coincide with 'male' bodies."¹⁹ Unable to cross freely between gender spheres, 'gender-traitors' are deemed to be homosexuals, despite where their sexual orientation may fall. Men who are too feminine are faggots; women who are too masculine are dykes. Their bodies are sexed in negative terms, and homophobia seeks to both punish and correct them, while reinforcing the superiority of the heterosexual.²⁰ Homophobia can be read as an effort to maintain and reproduce strict categories of gender, in which women are the inferiors of the male-female pair. As I. Bennet Capers argues in *Sex(ual Orientation) and Title VII*, heterosexism reinforces sexism in two ways. Firstly, by punishing "gender traitors" and rewarding gender conformists, "heterosexist hegemony perpetuates a schema that valorises passive, dependent women, thus contributing to sexism."²¹ Secondly, heterosexism subordinates women due to its hierarchical polarity.

As Capers states, "By creating opposites, society implicitly valorises one object over another.... female becomes both not male and somehow less than male."²² The binary heterosexist system creates man as superior and woman, through opposition. However woman is also necessary to form a definition of

man, as man and woman are defined by their differences. Therefore the binary system creates constructs that are both in opposition to each other, and mutually dependant on each other for identity.

Heterosexism also enforces sexism through its promulgation of patriarchy. As gay theorist Gary Kinsman explains,

Heterosexual identity is tied to the shifting social organisation of gender and patriarchal relations. Male heterosexual identity... is associated with the daily practices of men in the gender division of labour: a class organisation of masculinity that contains common features across class boundaries, shifting forms of family organization, the struggle for a family wage paid to the male breadwinner, male responsibility for 'his' wife and children, and male control over women's bodies and sexuality.²³

Heterosexism therefore perpetuates the subordination not only of lesbians and gays, but of heterosexual women as well. By examining the relationship between heterosexism and patriarchy it is clear that homosexuality creates "...fragmentations in the male role that could lead to less male dominance..."²⁴ Similarly lesbianism may refute "...the proposition that female sexuality exists only for the sake of male gratification."²⁵ Both lesbians and gays threaten the natural, moral state of the heterosexual, patriarchal family, and therefore their suppression is often integral to the maintenance of patriarchy. It is important to note that it is the symbolic significance of homosexuality that threatens patriarchy. As Capers states, .

When lesbians and gays question a society that denies them the right to adopt children, they question a society that says it is a woman's place to raise children, a man's place to be a

breadwinner, and both are needed to constitute a family. When lesbians and gays question a society that denies them the right to express their love physically, they question a society that says a woman's body is not her own, but is still the subject of governmental control...²⁶

By demanding an alternative view of sexuality, homosexuals threaten traditional heterosexist conceptions of sex and the family, thereby threatening patriarchy. This does not mean that homosexual relationships cannot reproduce the same gendered hierarchies and patriarchal underpinnings found in many heterosexual unions.

Furthermore as Butler states, the very assertion of the alternative lifestyle of the 'homosexual' reinforces the normalcy of the 'heterosexual', through opposition.²⁷ However, in response to the 'symbolic significance' of homosexuality, homophobia can be read as an effort to maintain the bipolar system of gender through which women are devalued.

Section II

Postcolonial bodies and Colonial Lies: The Caribbean Context

Caribbean sexualities are products of the historical experiences of the region. M. Jaqui Alexander states in *Not Just (Any) Body Can Be a Citizen* that one can trace the 'hegemonic repertoire of images' produced and reproduced through slavery and colonisation, left as a legacy to Caribbean nationalist leaders. It is not as simple as saying that sexualities were wholly pushed onto peoples, as power is never so linear.

However, it is necessary to examine how images have been repeated and redefined from colonial, through to post-colonial nation-states. Colonialism involved sexualising Caribbean populations in racial terms, and racialising them in sexual terms.²⁸ Elizabethan statutes of rape legitimised colonial masculinity by placing it outside of the parameters of rape, while black and other 'native' masculinities were criminalised for rape.²⁹ These laws also sought to "...solidify the cult of true womanhood and its correlates, the white Madonna (untouchable) and the Black whore (promiscuous).³⁰ Colonialism collapsed identities into sexed bodies. While 'native' sexualities varied in their constructions, they held in common the fact that "...colonised sexualities were essentially subordinated sexualities."³¹

Socialisation to British norms attempted to turn 'savage' into 'civilised'. The socialisation of respectability emerged at the end of the eighteenth century and coincided with the beginnings of modern nationalism. Those once believed to be incapable of rule were attempted to be turned into reliable rulers through assimilation to British manners, parliamentary modes of governance, and conjugal marriage.³²

The soon-to-be black middle class was schooled in British morality, civility and respectable citizenship, while 'women of reduced means' and the working classes were trained in the 'home'. The elites of the rising middle class would go on to form the Caribbean state apparatus.³³

Ironically it was within the 'women's wing' of nationalist parties that one first detects heterosexist constructions of the 'nationalist woman.'³⁴ Women's bodies were used to mark the nation. They were expected to defend their 'honour', and guard the nuclear family by transmitting 'proper' values to the nation's children. The middle class Caribbean woman, during the nationalist period was expected to be the pillar of feminine propriety. She would replace the white Madonna figure as the essential feminine type. Male patriotic duty however,

involved public service to the country and adopting the mores of respectability.³⁵ Therefore, as Alexander states, Caribbean nationalism came to be formed around "...notions of respectability, which, like eighteenth century European nationalism, came to rely heavily upon sexual gestures that involved the symbolic triumph of the nuclear family over the extended family and other family forms."³⁶

It was as if Black nationalists had to prove that they had learned their lessons well from the colonial masters. As Alexander states, "At one time subordinated, that masculinity now has to be earned, and then appropriately conferred. Acting through this psychic residue, Black masculinity continues the policing of sexualised bodies, drawing out the colonial fiction of locating subjectivity in the body (as a way of denying it)... as if to convey legitimate claims to being civilised."³⁷

The sexual politics of the region can be seen as both a product of European Enlightenment ideology, and the fact that this ideology infiltrated the Caribbean as the master discourse of colonial powers. To reiterate Alexander's powerful point, the psychic residue of masters and slaves remains and is acted out in Caribbean bodies.

If You Speak It, You Become It: On the issues of silence and shame

One of the most frustrating things I have found in trying to explore sexualities in the Caribbean, is the silence that surrounds homosexuality. As Lawson Williams states in *Homophobia and Gay rights in Jamaica*, when the Jamaica Forum of Lesbians All-Sexuals and Gays (J-Flag) was launched in December of 1998 many attributed the contempt directed towards J-Flag to its disruption of the 'balance' between gays and heterosexuals.³⁸ As Mark Wignall of the Daily Observer stated quite frankly in *J-Flag must cool its homosexual heat*,

“Jamaicans expect homosexuals to be quiet as they indulge their ‘watchamacallit’. Jamaicans expect them to be ashamed, remorseful, penitent and retiring. None of us want them to take their song and dance routine to the National Arena or to Jamaica House.”

Williams states, ...It is a common understanding that the issue of gayness must never enter the “national arena” or at least not in any way that gives the issue political legitimacy.”³⁹ Any “out” homosexual activity would upset this ‘balance’, in which homosexuality is tolerated to the extent that it is invisible. This expectance of shame on the part of the homosexual is not particular to Jamaica.

In his article “Church condemns homosexual acts”, Archbishop of Trinidad and Tobago, Anthony Pantin states that

“Regrettably, it has to be admitted that over the last few years, ‘gay’ people became very aggressive. I suppose they take for granted that the best way of defence is attack. So they refuse to accept that there is anything wrong with them: ‘That’s the way God made me and I have a right to enjoy myself as much as other people.’⁴⁰

Pantin goes on to state that while this is understandable that “...does not make it right.”⁴¹ Pantin’s article is indicative of religious forces in the Caribbean which are both productive of and complicit in homophobia. Like Myers, Pantin advocates shame and silence for the homosexual.

I offer all this by way of explanation. Silence and shame guard Caribbean homosexuality. Therefore, I have found few avenues upon which to form an analysis of heterosexism and homophobia in the region. Popular culture, in the

form of dancehall and reggae seems to be some of the only and concrete cultural discourses in which attitudes towards homosexuality are expressed outright. While dancehall and reggae lyrics have come under fire for their crude portrayal of sexual politics,⁴² they offer an opening. They are explicit. And while they may be explicitly prejudiced, they do what respectable silences do not. They start the conversation.

Before I continue, I would like to note the absence of material dealing specifically with lesbianism in the Caribbean context. Many lesbian theorists have critiqued gay rights discourse, because they are often silenced in favour of a discussion about homosexual men.⁴³ My attempt is not to silence these voices.

However, the silence is indicative of one of the largest gaps in information I have found. The little that is written about Caribbean homosexuality tends to focus on men. Homophobic popular culture productions also tend to be directed at gay men. However, as JFLAG states in *An Act to Amend the Constitution of Jamaica to Provide for a Charter of Rights for Connected Matters*, ...homosexual females are also looked on as deviant.

“Ironically the best evidence of this is that the Jamaican word for lesbian (i.e., sodomite) is actually derived from sodomy, the other word for buggery.⁴⁴ Furthermore JFLAG states that “...in socio-cultural terms-jobs, housing, general treatment-the Jamaica lesbian is just as discriminated against as her male counterpart.”⁴⁵ Attitudes against lesbians have also become apparent to me in Barbados. While conducting my research I discovered an ongoing conversation on the bathroom walls of the Women's washrooms at The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. Person A wrote, “...want a pussy to suck email me at: clit4u@yahoo.com.”⁴⁶ Person B responded:

Re: To the slut who wrote the above and any other lesbian garbage on campus. With so many men out there how the

hell could you even dream of wanting a woman! There's absolutely nothing remotely sexy about a woman. Lesbianism is pure nastiness and wutlessness. Gun shot to you all. Yours Sincerely, A REAL woman!⁴⁷

Person C then wrote, "...you go girl!! Bun fyah pun dem lesbian cunts! Bitches!! Whores!!!"⁴⁸

What is interesting is how the homophobia of both B and C is represented as correction of a deviant femininity. B states that she is "A REAL woman," meaning that real women are heterosexual women, who exist within the heterosexist matrix. Furthermore words like 'whore' and 'bitch' are used to correct and punish the 'gender traitor'.

These are the same words meted out to heterosexual women who misbehave. Also B states that A should not engage in lesbians because of 'all the men out there'. Female homosexuality is seen as a deviation from the natural, superior heterosexual option. Therefore, by enforcing homophobia against women, both B and C reinforce heterosexist constructions of women as belonging to and being lesser than men. A lesbian is a 'whore', a 'bitch', while a real woman is a woman who behaves within her prescribed gender role as a sexually passive and demure woman who defers to men.

Missing the Beat: Dancehall, homophobia and sexism

Dancehall and reggae are world renowned for their homophobic and sexist lyrics. In the early 1990s Jamaican artist Buju Banton gained international attention with his song "Boom Bye Bye", advocating the murder of homosexuals. This song has been banned throughout Europe and North America.⁴⁸ After the song was banned however, it has been stated that Banton's popularity in

Jamaica increased. As Williams states, Banton's "...call to arms against "battybwoy"(male homosexuals), was widely celebrated."⁴⁹ Buju Banton is not alone in his homophobia. Artists Scare Dem Crew sing, "Batty boy fire bun dem", while Shabba Ranks sings, "Batty boy, bust gun pon dem."⁵⁰ In an interview with the Village Voice Ranks states that "If a man is thinking of homosexuality, he's thinking of disease and wrongdoings, so God himself hates homosexuals. In Jamaica if a homosexual is being found in the community then we stone him to death."⁵¹ From dancehall lyrics one can draw out the complex politics of heterosexism, nationalism, sexism and religious hypocrisy imbued within Caribbean homophobia.

The attitudes of Banton and his fellow homophobes are not peculiar to Jamaica. In *The Barbadian Male: Sexual Attitudes and Practice*, Graham Dann recorded similar attitudes on the part of Barbadian men. When asked to comment on homosexuality some comments included, "I feel them kinda people want killing man," "If I had my way I would burn all homosexuals in the place", and "Those people want putting on an island by themselves."⁵² What is interesting is the extent to which sexism is reinforced, alongside of homophobia. As dancehall artist Capleton sings, "Woman mi lotion, mi na lotion man."⁵³ Women are objectified, while homosexuality is condemned. The male gaze, which captures and defines women is enforced. It is meant for women, not for other men.

In order to prove a hegemonic masculinity that is defined in opposition to all that is feminine, these singers verbally attack homosexuals while objectifying women.⁵⁴ Sylvia Law writes, "Homosexual relationships challenge dichotomous concepts of gender. These relationships challenge the notion that social traits, such as dominance and nurturance are naturally linked to one sex or the other..."⁵⁵

Therefore imbued in dancehall artist's condemnation of homophobia, is a valorisation of traditional conceptions of men and women in which women are reduced to sexual slaves, with men as their masters. Again, these attitudes are not exclusive to Jamaica, or dancehall. In his study of Barbadian male sexuality Dann found,

... a panorama of views on homosexuality which range from total rejection to half-hearted acceptance. Nevertheless, underpinning most, to a greater or lesser extent, is the all too familiar sex typed dualistic world of male and female, in which woman is subservient to him. She is to feed him, clothe him and to satisfy his sexual desires. From the very beginning this was so. Any deviation from this order is considered unnatural and against the will of God.⁵⁶

Like dancehall lyrics, the Barbadian men surveyed by Dann, confirm that alongside a disavowal of sexual difference is a reinforcing of natural sexualities in which man is the possessor and woman the possessed.

Shabba Ranks, who has advocated violence against homosexuals both inside and outside of his music, extends his violence to women. In his song *Bedroom Bully*, Ranks sings:

“My daddy was a bedroom bully/Bedroom bully pon I-mom mommy/Then daddy bully Shabba Rankin mommy/ Then Shabba mommy ‘ave a bully baby/An’ de bully baby God Almighty was me/Mi a bedroom bully wid a over-bully/I am a bedroom bully without mercy...”⁵⁷

As Paulette Belvett states in *Freedom of expression and obscene lyrics: the right vs. the harm*, “...the DJ’s boast of bullying may be seen as a glorification of assault and battery against women since the word ‘bully’ denotes the use of

force to hurt or frighten. In fact Shabba leaves us with no doubt that this is what he means as the song is punctuated with the sounds of a woman crying in agony".⁵⁸ Ranks who advocates the stoning and shooting of homosexuals, celebrates sexual violence against women. His attitudes read like a road map of a heterosexist continuum of sexuality and gender. In "Bedroom Bully" heterosexuality is described literally in its most bare, crude form. Ranks' mother and father have a conjugal relationship in which they produce a child, and in which man is actor and woman is acted upon. They pass these values down to Ranks, who reiterates them. Man is the attacker, the sexual initiator, both the 'bull' and the 'bully', while woman is the passive victim. Like Capleton, hegemonic masculinity is enforced through condemnation of homosexual "gender traitors" and through the possession, and objectification of women. The message that occurs and reoccurs is that 'real men' as opposed to homosexual men, abuse, rape, and neglect women in order to prove their masculinity.

This heterosexism, which simultaneously condones violence against both homosexuals and women, is discussed explicitly by Jamaican dancehall sensation Beenie Man, in his song "Weeping and Moaning." He sings,

"You nuh see pressure man a get outa man/Every night Peter him wine pun Devon/Hold hotty-boy and bun(burn) dem one by one/Look pon Patsy, Suzette and Yvonne/Look how de gal-dem sexy and tan/I rather charge fi' rape Suzanne/More than go a prison/Fi' wine pon Jonathan."⁵⁹

Beenie Man's message is disturbingly clear. In order to proclaim heterosexual masculinity, in order to protect himself from falling prey to homosexuality, the character/singer performs masculinity by objectifying, demeaning and in its most brutal form raping women. This is a perfect example of the way in which homophobia enforces a reiteration of masculine hegemony in expressions of sexual violence against women. Furthermore, what will be discussed later in this

work, is the disturbing realisation that the state actually legislates these sexual norms.

Judge Not? Religious Homophobia and Hypocrisy

There is also a current trend in dancehall, led by artist Capleton, which employs the “bun fyah” trope. This has religious connotations. As Whiskey Bop Johnnie Walker, a Jamaican DJ is quoted as saying, “Batty Bwoy in Babylon haff’ de’d ‘cause dem ah eat di bread from Sodom an’ Gomorrah.”⁶⁰

The biblical reference coupled with the death threat encapsulates the religious hypocrisy evident within dancehall, and the wider cultural milieu. Dancehall artists, religious leaders, and state managers alike frequently draw on the Sodom and Gomorrah reference; however violence against homosexuals is rarely discussed as being against any biblical tenet. As Williams states, Banton’s ‘Boom Bye-Bye’ ... encountered little if any disapproval from the Church or any other sector of society, despite its obvious support for violence.”⁶¹ Religious reasons were also frequently cited in Dann’s study as reasons for the opposition to homosexuality. One respondent even saw homosexuality as a precursor to the end of the world, “God said in the last days all these things should happen, men shall be lovers of themselves.”⁶² What is interesting is that while many ‘religious’ respondents supported an equal division of work between the male and female spouses in the home, they also often stated that women’s rights could interfere with natural heterosexual relationships. Therefore, the support for an equal division of labour between sexes in the home was often justified as maintaining good familial relations.⁶³ Homosexuality is seen as disrupting the heterosexual family and is therefore seen as deviant.

Other sexual practices that are explicitly condemned in the bible also fail to be legislated against, showing the hypocrisy and selectiveness of this discourse. As

JFLAG states in its *Submissions of the Jamaica Forum For Lesbians All-sexuals and Gays (JFLAG) With Regard to 'An Act to Amend the Constitution of Jamaica To Provide For a Charter of Rights and For Connected Matters*, while it is claimed that Jamaica's widespread homophobia is justified in the Biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the purity laws of Leviticus,

"...the appropriation by legislatures of the Christian condemnation of homosexuals is a purely arbitrary process, guided largely by individual biases and collective prejudices. In the case of adultery, of which much more mention is made in Biblical texts, Jamaica has no law pertaining to its condemnation or prosecution. The same applies to fornication."⁶⁴

Nowhere in the Caribbean is adultery criminalised. Furthermore, Caribbean nation-states are not theocracies and should therefore not enforce the religious beliefs of one group over others. Adultery and fornication are also valorised as a sign of virility within Dancehall lyrics, and elsewhere. In Dann's study religious attitudes were also used to condemn adultery, however they simultaneously enforced heterosexism, "I am totally against a deputy because I don't believe in coveting, 'cause I believe in this world there is a man for every woman and a woman for every man".⁶⁵ The religious hypocrisy of state-managers and the overall populace can be seen in dancehall, particularly with the 'bun fyah' trope, which justifies violence against homosexuals, although most religious doctrines and texts explicitly condemn acts of violence.

This hypocrisy became clear in Jamaica on August 19, 1997. Commissioner of Corrections Colonel John Prescod stated on a radio programme that condoms would be distributed to prisoners as part of an AIDS prevention programme. This was "A recognition of homosexuality as a fact of life in Jamaican prisons."⁶⁶

In the three days following this statement sixteen prisoners were killed in a riot, in reaction to Prescod's statement. Williams states that "Reports of the incident indicated that there was a concerted effort by the 'men' (heterosexuals) in the prisons, to kill the 'boys'".⁶⁷ The reference to boys vs. men reinforces the idea that homosexuality is a deviance from hegemonic masculinity. Furthermore, there was no statement issued concerning the incident from any religious power, despite the bloodshed. The government, like the Church, issued no statement against homophobia. This incident shows the hypocrisy of religious leaders and the complacency of the state in addressing homophobia.

Pledging Allegiance (and pledging more than that): The sexed nation

Homophobia in the Caribbean is also constructed out of a discriminatory nationalism. In the late 1990's popular dancehall artist Bounti Killa released "Can't Believe mi eyes," in which he sings in outrage at the appearance of homosexuality in Jamaica. He sings, "Can't believe seh gunman and battyman a frien" (I can't believe that gunmen and gay men are actually friends!)⁶⁸

Throughout the song Bounti Killa states that he has to do Jamaica proud by condemning homosexuality, reinforcing the heterosexist hegemony of the Caribbean nation-state. Walker's reference to Babylon as well as Bounti's assertion is indicative of the way in which homosexuality is placed outside of the nation. 'Babylon' is a popular reggae and dancehall reference to the (neo) colonising power of the West upon the Caribbean.⁶⁹ Homosexuality is seen, therefore as a Western import that must be rallied against in favour of a homophobic, exclusionary nationalism.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the Cayman Islands in 1998. On December 8, 1998 the Minister of Tourism and Transport for the Cayman Islands Government, Honourable Thomas C. Jefferson, notified Norwegian Tourlines it

would be denied landing rights at Grand Cayman Island on February 1, 1998. The reason, the cruise ship would be carrying 900 gay passengers.⁷⁰ Richard Campbell of Atlantis tours, who organises tours for the gay community stated that "It's amazing that they would go to such lengths to keep us out. We're not talking about 900 gay men moving to the Cayman Islands; we're talking about a seven hour visit..."⁷¹ Jefferson stated that "...careful research and experience has led us to conclude that we cannot count on this group to uphold the standards of appropriate behaviour expected of visitors to the Cayman Islands."⁷² What is interesting is Jefferson's categorisation of "appropriate behaviour" of the nation, which is defined based on heterosexual norms. Again, this locates homosexuality outside of the nation, as a Western import, enforcing the Caribbean nation-state as a heterosexist hegemony. Ironically, the present constitution of the Cayman Islands, 'provides for the government of the Cayman Islands as a colony under the sovereignty of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland.'⁷³ The idea of keeping homosexuals out as a means of protecting national interests from first world mores, is a strange and hypocritical statement coming from a country under British dominion.

Furthermore, it implies that there are no homosexuals within the state, continuing their long silence. This 'Western imposition' argument also seeks to mask real neocolonising powers which Caribbean State managers are often complicit in and reinforcing of. As Alexander states, "Since independence, the state has colluded in adopting strategies that have locked these nations into a world economic and political system, the effect of which is re-colonisation."⁷⁴ However, Caribbean state managers redraw these boundaries and "sound the danger of cultural contamination from the 'West' which they depict simultaneously as sexual intemperance, the importation of AIDS and the importation of feminism (read lesbianism)."⁷⁵ Ironically the privileging of heterosexist norms and the patriarchal family by the nation-state has its roots not in any indigenous school of thought, but rather in colonial values.

In *Preparing for the New Millenium: Cayman Islands 1998: Annual Report and Official Handbook*, the government of the Cayman Islands states that the ideal vision for 2008, ... is of a Cayman having traditional Christian and family values; a caring community, characterised by open dialogue, social harmony and freedom from crime."⁷⁶ Obviously social harmony does not include being in harmony with those who do not posit 'traditional Christian family values.' Further on in the *Cayman Vision 2008* it states 'The future was also visualised as having a vibrant, diversified economy, making optimal use of modern technology, managing growth yet maintaining prosperity'.⁷⁷ Imbued within this statement, and throughout the report is the promotion of greater amounts of foreign-based technology and other forms of international capital. The nation-state trumpets traditional heterosexist values as 'culture' while simultaneously attempting to make their citizens into international consumers, in a highly unequal global relationship.

Furthermore, while nation-states like the Cayman Islands ban gay visitors, Caribbean nation-states rely upon women's (hetero) sexed bodies to sell the nation. Travel brochures for the Caribbean are chocked full of overly (hetero) sexualised women in scantily clad bathing suits, on untouched beaches. The women are usually young, lending credence to the virgin land and woman trope, both of which the tourist is being invited to penetrate.⁷⁸ As Alexander states,

These are a complicated set of psycho-sexual gestures converging in this (hetero) sexual playground; this arena which Caribbean state managers see as the economy of the future; where Black masculinity manages phantasmic constructions of Black femininity, satisfying white European desire for restless adventure, satisfying white European longing for what is 'rare' and intangible.⁷⁹

Jefferson's actions reinforced a heterosexist construction of nation-state, which sexualises women's bodies in order to produce for the nation, while simultaneously calling homosexuality 'Western imposition.' As Alexander states, "The erosion of heterosexual conjugal monogamy is a perennial source of worry for state managers and so it is invoked and deployed particularly at moments when it is threatened with extinction."⁸⁰ The state relentlessly attempts to allow nothing to infiltrate its hegemonic domain, thereby showing both its commitment to heterosexism and its insecurity.

Ironically, nowhere was the use of women's (hetero) sexed bodies more evident than at Trinidad and Tobago's 2000 Carnival, deemed 'A Tribute to Women.' In *Greater protection for women mass-players* in the January 9, 2000 issue of the *Trinidad Guardian*, Carnival Band Association chairman Richard Afong said of sexual harassment at Carnival, "...no one wants to admit to the problem because of the tourism implications...But it is a real problem affecting real people and they are people who provide this country with the images that we put up to the world."⁸¹ It is precisely these images, of half-naked (hetero) sexed women in exotic costumes that use women's bodies to sell the nation. These images create an environment in which the harassment and objectification of women is also sold. Throughout the article women's safety from harassment is defined in terms of the ability of the nation to continue to reproduce this neo-colonial, heterosexed fantasy.⁸² Keep the women safe so they will not complain, so we can continue to use their bodies as selling points for the nation's Carnival.

Ironically, as Kevin Yelvington discusses in *Producing Power*, and Carol Allen discusses in *Caribbean Bodies Representation and Practice*, every Carnival there is public outcry at women's indecent sexual behaviour at Carnival.⁸³ As one enraged citizen writes in a letter to the *Trinidad Guardian*, "Mothers who keep telling their daughters to dress decently are seen in the most revealing outfits 'wining and grining' in public on Carnival days"⁸⁴ The paradox lies between the control of women's sexuality, and the selling of it for national gains. However, within the heterosexist, patriarchal, capitalist paradigm this makes

perfect sense. Women's sexualities are not their own, as unproductive sexualities are not permitted.

Women's (hetero) sexed bodies are used to reproduce and sell the nation, thereby denying them any agency in their own sexual pleasure. Within the heterosexist paradigm, women's rights become reconstructed as 'protection rights', which place more emphasis on the protection of national interests in both images for tourism, and the heterosexual family. Women's bodies are sexed and (mis) used over and over.

(II) legal bodies and (In)visible Ideology: The implied sexuality of law

Legislation in the Commonwealth Caribbean is also imbued with heterosexist ideology. Under the 1986 Trinidad and Tobago Sexual Offences Act, sex between men is punishable by up to ten years imprisonment. Sex between women is punishable by five. Consensual homosexual sex is not differentiated from rape, both are criminalised.⁸⁵ Under The Bahamas Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 1989 both male and female homosexuality is punishable by up to twenty years imprisonment.⁸⁶ Similar laws can be found throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean. To date, Bermuda is the only country within the Anglophone Caribbean, which does not criminalise homosexual sex between consenting individuals over the age of sixteen.⁸⁷ What is interesting, and of great importance to this work, is that under both these acts domestic violence and rape laws prove insufficient.

As Tracy Robinson states in *Fictions of Citizenship: Bodies without Sex and Effacement of Gender in Law*, The Sexual Offences Bill in Trinidad and Tobago was the first attempt in the Commonwealth Caribbean to criminalise non-consensual intercourse by a husband with his wife. Controversy surrounded Clause 4 of the bill, which stated that a husband found guilty could face up to

fifteen years in prison, and could be charged with sexual assault whether or not the couple was living together at the time of the assault. Due to opposition, the clause was originally removed.⁸⁸ However as Robinson states, "Women mobilised throughout the country and lobbied ardently for its reinstatement."⁸⁹ Within section 5 of the 1986 Sexual Offences Act a watered down version of Clause 4 appeared. It states that a husband can be convicted of sexual assault if he has sex with his wife without her consent through either force or fear.⁹⁰ However, this is only considered an offence where there "is a decree nisi of divorce, a decree of judicial separation, a separation agreement, or an order for the husband not to molest his wife or have intercourse with her."⁹¹ The offence can also occur where notice of proceedings have been served by one of the parties against the other under the Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act for judicial separation, nullity or dissolution of marriage or in cases where the husband and wife are living separately within the meaning of section 4(5) of the Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act.⁹²

Many Trinidadian feminists saw the enactment of section 5 as a victory. However as Robinson states, on closer examination the supposed victory seems suspect. Section 5 creates the crime of sexual assault of which the penalty is fifteen years, as opposed to the crime of rape, punishable by life imprisonment.⁹³ No proceedings can occur without the authorisation of the Director of Public Prosecutions and most importantly for my purposes, "Rather than affirming women's bodily and sexual autonomy, husbands are treated as having proprietary rights in women's bodies. Women can only refuse if there is some legally recognised disruption in the marriage."⁹⁴ Like laws that criminalise homosexuality, the marital rape laws of Trinidad and Tobago seek to preserve the heterosexual patriarchal family, and the heterosexist matrix of gender relations in which a husband possesses his wife's sexuality. Along this heterosexist continuum, a man cannot rape his wife because she is his property, while homosexuality is ironically termed indecent.

What is remarkable about the *Bahamas Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 1989*, is that nowhere in the act is there a definition of domestic violence. Alexander states that "...the majority of the provisions focus upon the disposition of private property..."⁹⁵

Like the Trinidadian example, this is not what the Bahamian Women's movement fought for. After five years of public rallies it became clear that "...even in the face of violent disruptions in marriage, conjugal heterosexuality is most concerned with the patriarchal linear transfer of private property."⁹⁶ ⁷ The heterosexual family is maintained, at all costs, as a site of capitalist patriarchal control and maintenance of property, women and children included. Therefore within the domestic violence act "Conjugal heterosexuality is frozen within a very specific and narrow set of class relations between 'husband' and 'wife' in 'marriage'."⁹⁷ This focus on private property in the Bahamas legislation offers little to no protection for working class women who do not own property and are beaten by men with whom they may live with outside of marriage. Domestic violence is redrawn as violence against the middle-class heterosexual, patriarchal family, rather than against the woman.⁹⁸ As homosexuality exists outside of the heterosexual family, the state inscribes laws that criminalise it. 'Non-productive' heterosex in the form of "...the prostitute with an irresponsible, 'non-productive' sexuality and ...the young women whom the state defines as girls requiring its protection..."⁹⁹ are also marked by law. From the point of view of the state these sexualities have to be "... disciplined and regulated in order that it might become economically productive."¹⁰⁰ It is clear from both the Trinidadian and Bahamian legislation, that the criminalisation of homosexuality and the policing of women's bodies fall under the same fictions of the 'superior', 'respectable' nuclear family, around which these nations have been constructed.

Even in its most violent expression (i.e. rape, abuse) the heterosexual family is not interrogated. It is only when this abuse interferes with the site of reproduction and capitalist production that it becomes criminal. The failure to criminalise

heterosexuality is constructed in dialectic with the criminalising of homosexuality. As Alexander states,

“Heterosexual sex, even while dysfunctional (as in rape in marriage, domestic violence and incest), assumes the power of natural law ... only in its power to designate as unnatural those practices which disrupt marriage and certain dominant notions of conjugal family.”¹⁰¹

Within a binary construction of hetero and homosexuality, violent disruptions within the heterosexual home are beyond legislation, while consensual homosexual sex is not differentiated from same-sex rape, as all are perversions. As Robinson states, “In this heterosexist paradigm, the sexual violation men experience by other men ranks no different from consensual sex between men—they are both categorised as perversion—and therefore the former does not feature as a serious social issue, and rape by men as a distinctive feature of women’s lives is slowly neutered.”¹⁰²

What is often used to justify the criminalisation of homosexuality is the public/private dichotomy. As Lawson Williams states “The issue of sexual orientation, it is argued by many straight and gay people, is purely a private matter and has no place in the public domain of one’s life.”¹⁰³ It has been a common tenet of patriarchal legislation and lawmakers to say that ‘the law has no business in people’s bedrooms.’ This view is supported by the tired cliché; ‘A man’s home is his castle.’ This public/private dichotomy has been used to depoliticise the violence, rape, and unpaid labour of women in the home. As Frances Olsen points out in *Constitutional Law: Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Distinction*, “The movement against sexual violence against women and against sexual abuse more generally pointed out how the asserted “privacy” of things sexual resulted in very limited protection for women against sex crimes.”¹⁰⁴ If the law does not have any business in people’s bedrooms, it should not police the

sexual lives of homosexuals. If the law can and does make sexuality its business, why has the sacredness of the 'private' been called upon time and time again when women challenge their sexual subordination? Again, objectivity is myth.

The categorisation of homosexuality as 'private' and therefore out of the realm of public discussion is highly contradictory, considering that the criminalisation of homosexual practices interferes with this supposed privacy. This contradiction is highlighted when one examines the way in which heterosexuality, even in its most misogynistic forms of rape and violence, is often left uncriminalised in the private domain. Male heterosexual power is the only sexuality that remains truly discrete. As Olsen states, "Privacy is related to manhood; 'private parts' are sexual; and the classical liberal individual is not an asexual 'person' but the male head of a family."¹⁰⁵ There is privacy, meaning the right to engage in behaviour without fear of state sanction, for the heterosexual male in the patriarchal family. There is no privacy for the homosexual, whose sex is turned into crime, whose right to marry, and raise children are legislated against. And for the heterosexual woman, the only privacy comes with the private treatment as property by her partner. For the heterosexual woman who foregoes her reproductive duty as wife and mother, who takes money for sexual services, who wants an abortion, her sexuality all of a sudden becomes a matter of national concern.

This is clear in the context of the Commonwealth Caribbean where abortion is illegal in all but two countries, Barbados and Guyana. As the Guyana Act states, the act exists to make provisions for "... termination of certain pregnancies"¹⁰⁶ and therefore inscribes laws onto certain bodies. Under Guyanese legislation, women who are pregnant as a result of rape or incest may have an abortion.¹⁰⁷ Under both the Barbados and Guyana Acts, if a pregnancy risks the life of, or could cause grave injury to, the woman, an abortion may be permitted.¹⁰⁸ Finally, if there is sufficient proof that the child will be born with "such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped"¹⁰⁹ an abortion may be permitted. In all of these cases the same 'nationalist woman' previously

discussed appears, with her fully (hetero) sexed body. The woman who is raped did not choose to have sex outside of the context of the heterosexual family, if she had, the state would have the right to legislate against her body. The ill woman would reproduce the nation, if only her body would let her. And the woman who may have a 'handicapped' child would produce a new citizen for the nation, if that citizen were a 'normal', healthy citizen. As Alexander states "...we can read state practices as attempts to propagate fictions of feminine identity, to reconfigure women's desire and subjectivity and to link the terms of the nations survival to women's sexual organs."¹¹⁰ When a husband does not inscribe his law on her body, the state fills in. Therefore, the public/private dichotomy, like the law, like dancehall lyrics, simultaneously renders homosexuality perverse, and women as victims, and if they misbehave, whores. Perversions of the heterosexist matrix are hung out to dry, while the power imbued in heterosexism remains silent, discrete, everywhere, and yet still private.

Conclusion: Old myths and New feminisms

The Caribbean nation-state is sexed in heterosexist, hegemonic terms based on constructions of masculinity and femininity that subordinate women and exclude and persecute homosexuals. Homophobia and heterosexism in the Caribbean are also based on a religious hypocrisy, which cites homosexuals as perverse, while leaving many forms of violence and abusive heterosexuality unquestioned. Homophobia and heterosexism in the region have their roots in colonialism yet ironically, homosexuality is defined by state-managers as a form of 'Western imposition'. This disguises the actions of state managers who endorse patriarchal neo-colonial policy. Such behaviour is evinced by Caribbean leaders' condemnation of homosexuality and simultaneous use of women's (hetero) sexed bodies to promote tourism. The psychic residue of colonialism is transmitted through the neo-colonial, on the basis of supposedly natural, superior sexuality. Popular culture and law offer a space from which to locate

discourses of homophobia, heterosexism, sexism, nationalism, and (neo) colonialism as existing within highly connected and dependant relationships.

While I expected to find that sexism produced heterosexism and homophobia, from my research, I have found this relationship is one of mutual dependence. One of the great deficiencies of many women's movements and anti (neo)colonial movements in the Caribbean has been a failure to problematise sexuality as a political construct. As Alexander states,

“...ironically one of the reasons the state can at least be partially successful in mobilising heterosexuality, is the persistence of the belief in naturalised heterosexuality, the belief that it lies outside of the sphere of political and economic influence and therefore state influence.”

As Caribbean feminists fight for economic de-colonisation from the metropole, from the patriarchy, I fear that homosexuality is left in the periphery. Feminists must position themselves within a space that questions the compulsory heterosexuality promoted by Church and nation-state which undermines economic and social gains women have made.

We must question the extent to which gains that women have made exist within a heterosexist matrix in which women's sexed bodies are used and reused. Finally, we must ask whether the fight should be for equality between genders, or for a destruction of sexual and gender categories all together.

The women's movement in the Caribbean must question whether or not the rights that they hold so dear are rights that actually maintain and reinforce colonial constructions of woman and man. To talk of the sexual international division of labour, the World Bank and the IMF and their exploitation of labour is hollow if one does not examine how these sexual divisions get taken for granted

as natural divisions, and how the feminist movement often purports this ideology by keeping silent about sexuality. As Jaqui Alexander states, "The work of decolonisation consists as well in the decolonisation of the body."

¹ Lawson Williams, 2000. Homophobia and gay rights activism in Jamaica, unpublished article., JFLAG, 3. Williams states that when the Jamaica Forum of Lesbians All-sexuals and Gays (JFLAG) was launched in December of 1998 they received a death threat.

² Patrick D. Hopkins, 1992. Gender treachery: Homophobia, masculinity, and threatened identities, In *Rethinking masculinity*, ed. Larry May and Robert Strikweda. Boston: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 115.

³ *Ibid* at 115-116

⁴ *Ibid* at 116

⁵ *Ibid* at 116

⁶ *Ibid* at 116

⁷ *Ibid* at 116

⁸ Carol Smart, 1994. Law, Feminism and Sexuality: From Essence to Ethics? *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 9(1): 15-38.

⁹ Tracy Robinson, *Fictions of citizenship: Bodies without sex and the effacement of gender in law*. Unpublished article, Barbados, 2000. 9-10

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10

¹¹ *Ibid.*, at 22

¹² Judith Butler, 1990. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge, 151.

¹³ Judith Butler, 1991. *Imitation and gender insubordination, inside/out: lesbian theories, gay theories*. New York: Routledge. 13-31.

¹⁴ Hopkins, 114. Hopkins defines a gender traitor as "anyone who violates the `rules' of gender identity/performance, i.e., someone who rejects or appears to reject the criteria by which the genders are differentiated

¹⁵ Hopkins, 123

¹⁶ Gayle Rubin, 1975. *The traffic in women: Notes on the `Political economy of sex, Toward an anthropology of women*. New York: Monthly Review, 157-210.

¹⁷ Ngaire Naffine, 1994. Possession: Erotic love in the law of rape, *The Modern Law Review* 57: 10-37. On pages 10-11 Naffine states that in the Western view `Erotic love' 'is the love between a woman and a man, a heterosexual couple, within which there are particular and different roles anticipated for the woman and for the man.' Man is the possessor, and woman the possessed. Furthermore, she states that within this view, there are only two immutable types: `woman' and `man', both of whom appear fully sexed.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 124-125

²¹ Bennett I. Capers, 1991. Sex(ual orientation) and Title VII. *Columbia Law Review*. 91

²² Ibid, 1162

²³ Ibid, 1163-1164

²⁴ Ibid, 1164

²⁵ Ibid, 1165

²⁶ Ibid, 1167

²⁷ Butler, Imitation and Gender Insubordination, 14-15.

²⁸ M. Jaqui Alexander, 1994. Not just (any) body can be a citizen: The politics of law, sexuality and postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas. *Feminist Review*. 48: 11-12

²⁹ Ibid, 12

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid, 12-14

³⁴ Ibid, 13

³⁵ Ibid, 13

³⁶ Ibid, 13

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Williams, 3

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Anthony Pantin, Church condemns homosexual acts, *The Trinidad Guardian* [Port of Spain] 8 Jan. 2000: 20. 21

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Dub: keep the rhythm, lose the lyrics, editorial, *The Barbados Advocate*. 7 March. 2000: 8. This editorial is part of a wide rhetoric, which states that dub artists are “destroying the fabric of society by dehumanising a generation, and by corrupting our youth”(8). I feel that this discourse has little to do with the sexism and homophobia imbued in dancehall and reggae lyrics, and more to do with preserving the middle class respectability discussed earlier. In many ways as will be discussed later in this work, the same values in the lyrics of dancehall can be found in legislation. The difference is that in the music it is blunt, while in the legislation, a conservative silence attempts to overshadow the ideological message. Therefore, the call to ban dub lyrics in many instances seems to be about keeping these issues locked safely in silence, rather than challenging any of the sexual norms within the music.

⁴³ Adrienne Rich, *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence*. 62-91. 23

⁴⁴ -Flag, Submissions of the Jamaica Forum For Lesbians All-Sexuals and Gays (J-Flag) With Regard to 'An Act to Amend the Constitution of Jamaica to Provide For A Charter of Rights and For Connected Matters, unpublished article. 5.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Bathroom Graffiti #1, Women's Washroom Humanities Quadroon. University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados. February 10, 2000

⁴⁷ Bathroom Graffiti #2, Women's Washroom Humanities Quadroon. University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados. February 10, 2000

⁴⁸ Peter Noel, Batty boys in Babylon: Can gay West Indians survive the 'Boom Bye Bye Posses?' *Village Voice*. January 12 1993. 29-36

⁴⁹ Williams, 1

⁵⁰ Cited in Noel, 31

⁵¹ Noel, 29

⁵² Graham Dann, 1987. *The Barbadian male: Sexual attitudes and practice*. London: MacMillan. 27

⁵³ Cited in Noel, 29

⁵⁴ Linden Lewis. 1994. Constructing the masculine in the context of the Caribbean, 19th Annual Caribbean Studies Conference, Merida, Mexico, 23-28 March. 1994.

⁵⁵ Capers, 1166

⁵⁶ Dann, 64

⁵⁷ Cited in Paulette Belvett, 1997. *Freedom of expression and obscene lyrics: the right vs. the harm*, LLB Thesis, 24. Faculty of Law Library, UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 27

⁵⁹ Cited in Dub: keep the rhythm, lose the lyrics, 8.

⁶⁰ Noel, 31

⁶¹ Williams, 1

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Dann, 55-61

⁶⁴ J-FLAG, 3

⁶⁵ Dann, 79

⁶⁶ Williams, 2

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Williams, 1

⁶⁹ Noel, 27

⁷⁰ Cayman Islands deny landing rights for gay charter. *USA Today*. January 7, 1998. http://nz.com/Queer/OUT/new___199801/19980111.html. Online. Internet. 1 February 2000.

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ Government of the Cayman Islands, Cayman Islands Annual Report and Official Handbook. Georgetown: Government of the Cayman Islands.

⁷⁴ Alexander, 15

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Government of the Cayman Islands, 25

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ See Graham Dann, 1996. *The language of tourism*. Wallingford: CAB International.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Cited in: Terry Joseph, Greater protection for women mas-players. *Sunday Express*. 9 January 2000. 9

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Kevin Yelvington, 1995. *Producing power*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. See Chapter 5, Gender At Work. 156-15. Caroline F. Allen, 1998. Caribbean Bodies: Representation and Practice. In *Caribbean Portraits*. Ed. Christine Barrow. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers. 276-293.

⁸⁴ Yelvington, 156-157

⁸⁵ 86 Trinidad and Tobago Sexual Offences Act (1986). (Port of Spain: Government Printing Office). Currently under review is An Act to Amend the Sexual Offences Act, 1986. This would raise the penalty from 10 to 25 years imprisonment for male and female homosexuality. It would also make it possible for a police officer to arrest gays and lesbians without a warrant. What is interesting is that many of the other amendments, such as those also increasing the penalties for rape and incest could be seen as a feminist victory. And yet, they reinforce the idea that deviant heterosexual and consensual homosexual can be equated. Furthermore, under the new (1999) Equal Opportunities Bill for Trinidad and Tobago, designed to protect persons from discrimination at places of employment, and other institutions, it is explicitly stated that 'sexual orientation' is not one of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited. Therefore, the bill allows for discrimination against lesbians and gays within the workforce, and within other institutions, such as schools.

⁸⁶ The Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act (1991). (Parliament of Bahamas).

⁸⁷ See Herbert Wells, 1996. The status of non-traditional unions in the Commonwealth Caribbean. LLB. Thesis. Barbados: Faculty of Law, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill.

⁸⁸ Robinson, 20-22

⁸⁹ Ibid, 21

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Alexander, 9

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 10

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 14

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 9-10

¹⁰² Robinson, 15

¹⁰³ Williams, 5

¹⁰⁴ Frances Olsen, 1993. Constitutional law: Feminist critiques of the public/private distinction. *Constitutional Commentary*. 10:311: 323.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 325

¹⁰⁶ Guyana, 3

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., See Section 5(3)(a)

¹⁰⁸ See Barbados Act, Section 4(a) and Guyana Act, Section 6(4).

¹⁰⁹ See Barbados Act, Section 4(b). Also see Guyana Act, Section 7(b). Under the Guyana Act it is also interesting to note Section 5(3) (b) in which it states that a woman who has been proven to be HIV positive can also have an abortion. Section 5(4) is also interesting. It states that if there is evidence to show that the abortion resulted in spite of the use of contraceptives by either of the parties, one may be eligible to have an abortion.

¹¹⁰ Alexander, 10

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