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ORIGINAL PAPER

'Wine', Women and Song: The More Things Change...

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Abstract The paper addresses the socially controversial issue of the public expression of sexuality in dance in the Caribbean. Of particular interest is the phenomenon of 'wining' or 'wukkin' up', dancing involving pelvic gyrations. The focus is on changes taking place in societies in which there is supposedly the continued dominance of a male patriarchal figure. Can these changes be anything more than a new form of male control of female sexuality and public sexual expression? It seeks to address this question through an analysis of two songs, one a male performed classic competition winning calypso, 'The Black Man feeling to party' and a competition winning calypso sung by a female entitled 'This is what we do'. The former celebrates heterosexual relationships right from the period of partner dancing courtship, through marriage, child rearing and, with child rearing achieved, a return to partner dancing. The latter exalts and justifies the behaviour of women 'wining' alone or on each other. The paper concludes that women are asserting ownership of their own sexuality through auto-sexual dance expression in public. Things have indeed changed.

Keywords Auto-sexuality · Calypso · Caribbean · Gender · Sexuality · Soca · Wining

Introduction

The Problem: Morality, Female Sexuality and Public Space

At the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, public expression of female sexuality is a subject of ongoing public discussion and controversy. There are

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obvious changes taking place to the way in which this sexuality is being expressed. The question which arises is one of whether, given the continued dominance of a supposedly male, patriarchal dominance in society, such changes can be anything more than of form. Can they be anything more than a new form of male control of female sexuality and public sexual expression?

We can begin our quest for answers to these questions by examining the issue of cultural identity as it existed in the decade of the 1950s. These were the closing years of British colonialism and the eve of political independence. M. G. Smith, the distinguished Jamaican and Caribbean sociologist and protagonist of the plural society model for describing Caribbean and similar societies, gives us just the snapshot of the period we need. Smith (1965) represents a body of research on society in the British West Indies covering the period of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s.

Smith (1965) presents these societies at the time as consisting of various ethno-socio-cultural groups locked in centuries old conflict. 'Within this structural complex, the Creole society emerged together, its white rulers having the highest status and their culture the greatest prestige' (Smith 1965, p. 6). The whites referred to here are of predominantly British background and culture. He points out that, within this complex, 'things African were correspondingly devalued, including African racial traits' (p. 6). He goes on to suggest that, for many people of low status and predominantly "African Creole" culture, if the new nationalism did not deliver full citizenship "… it will cease to retain their support and may be cynically regarded as of benefit primarily to the "middle class" (Smith 1965, p. 9).

The societies of the British Caribbean at the time are described by Smith (1965, p. 191) as made up of roughly three cultural groups. The dominant minority group adhered to and practiced an approximation of British/European culture. The subordinate majority practiced what he would describe as a "Creole" culture which was highly divergent from that of the dominant group. In the middle was a group, whose members tended to have values and practices which straddled those of the two groups it fell between, as well as some values and practices which were peculiar to it (Smith 1965). Although best describing territories such as Jamaica and Barbados, the Smith model could be adjusted to account for more ethnically diverse territories such as Trinidad and then British Guiana. At the level of state power, up until political independence in the 1960s, the dominant group controlled the state and the intermediate group administered it at the middle and lower levels (p. 171).

Smith (1965) takes special interest in how these sectional distinctions played themselves out at the level of competing moral values. Using Jamaica as a reference point for the general British Caribbean, he argues that interpretation of events by way of competing moral systems was 'a principal mode of thought' in such societies. These played themselves out, he argued, by the way each sectional group gave itself a positive moral evaluation while assigning the other groups negative moral attributes. Each group sought to define itself by contrasting its own positive moral values with the negative values of the 'other'. He concludes, "For such self-identification, negation is far more essential and effective than is its opposite; hence the characteristic appeal of negativism within this society and its prevalence" (Smith, 1965, p. 174). As might be expected of the historically oppressed group,

therefore, on the eve of political independence, it is the subordinate 'Creole' group that had the greatest degree of self-doubt concerning its cultural values (p. 9).

A key area of contestation over moral values in the ex-British Caribbean is sexuality, in particular, female sexuality and the way that this is expressed in public spaces. After almost 50 years of political independence, how confident have the subordinate 'Creole' groups become on affirming their own public sexual morality in the face of misunderstanding, misrepresentation and disapproval from opposing sectional groups within the society?

Analysing Public Performance of Sexuality

If one is to judge by coverage and debate in the mass media, the most significant public expression of female sexuality in the ex-British Caribbean is in the area of music and dance. By definition, subordinate groups tend to have little influence in the mass media. As a result, the subordinate 'Creole' group has often had to use the very same contested area of music and dance, notably the form and content of the lyrics, as well as the performance of this music, to justify, explain and represent itself. It is to this area, therefore, that we turn to for answers to our question.

The discussion will focus on the lyrics and live presentations in competition situations of two calypsos, one Trinidadian and the other Barbadian. The first calypso is 'The Black Man Feeling to Party' by Black Stalin a.k.a. Leroy Calliste. This calypso has, in the two decades since its first performance, come to be viewed widely as a classic. It stands out for another reason, as we shall see, that it represents that most unusual of forms, the calypso love song. 'The Black Man Feeling to Party' was one of the two calypsos sung by Black Stalin in the Trinidad and Tobago Calypso Monarch Finals of 1991. The performance was part of the Dimanche Gras show at the Queen's Park Savannah in Trinidad for Carnival 1991. Black Stalin won the competition that year.

The source of both lyrics and the performance to which the analysis will refer is a grainy video of his rendition of the song on that particular occasion (Youtube, trindesi, 2008). The advantage of using the live competition performance is that these performances normally take place with a variety of props and a supporting caste which provides information about the singer's intended message. The various props applied to assisting the performer, as we shall see in the analysis, are deliberately used to blur the line between performance and the very reality it is supposed to represent.

The lyrics and performance of the calypso, 'This is What We Do' by Natahlee a.k.a. Natahlee Burke at the Barbados Crop-Over Sweet Soca Monarch Competition in July 2009 constitutes our second piece of data. This song was not the winner of that competition. It, however, won another, the People's Monarch competition for that year, involving a system of popularity voting. It was simultaneously exceptionally popular and, it can be argued, typical of the female performed, 'wining' dance calypsos, and Again, the source is a Youtube video of a competition performance, that of the Soca Monarch Finals of July 2009, in which the song placed second (Youtube, zanutube, July 2009).

Partner Dancing: Woman Wining on Man

Dance Moves Old and Public Morality

Allen (2002, p. 7) quotes the *Times of London* of 16 July 1816 thus:

> We remarked with pain that the indecent foreign dance called the Waltz was introduced (we believe for the first time) at the English court Friday last … it is quite sufficient to cast one's eyes on the voluptuous intertwining of the limbs and close compressor on the bodies in their dance, to see that it is indeed far removed from the modest reserve which has hitherto been considered distinctive of English females. So long as this obscene display was confined to prostitutes and adulteresses, we did not think it deserving of notice; but now that it is attempted to be forced on the respectable classes of society by the civil example of their superiors, we feel it a duty to warn every parent against exposing his daughter to so fatal a contagion.

The class element in the above quotation is significant. The dance was being introduced at the royal court of St. James and being done by members of the English royalty and aristocracy. For as long as the dance was restricted to 'prostitutes and adulteresses', there was no need for any outrage. However, when the dance was being adopted by the ruling class of England, there was the prospect that it would be foisted, through emulation, on the daughters of the respectable, middling classes of England. In such a situation, a protest was considered to be in order. Allen (2002) suggests that, given that the couples danced at full arms length, wearing gloves, the point of horror for the reporter is likely to have been that the male dancer's foot would, from time to time, disappear under the floor length ball gown of the lady during the dance! This serves as a bench mark for the Anglo-Protestant approach to public displays of sexuality in partner dancing. This is relevant to any understanding of British attitudes to dancing in their colonial possessions in the Caribbean in the nineteenth century and subsequently.

Just 10 years earlier in 1806, a British physician visiting Barbados had occasion to describe dancing involving male and female slaves. 'Making the head and limbs fixed points, they writhe and turn the body on its own axis, slowly advancing towards each other or retreating to the outer parts of the ring. Their approaches … are highly indecent … but of this they seem to be wholly unconscious …' (as cited in Pinckard 1806, p. 741) The pelvic gyrations described here causes Miller (1991, p. 325) to view these dance moves as akin to 'wining' in the modern Trinidad and elsewhere in the former British Caribbean. Pinckard, in his description of the 1806 dance, condemned it as indecent. This behaviour was being practised by slave women of African origin who were totally outside the sphere of colonial Anglo-Protestant morality. Nevertheless, for this British observer, the dancers were clearly lacking the modesty required of females, even slaves, in public spaces. He was applying the same standard as was used by the Times of London, a decade later, to condemn the introduction of the waltz to the court of St. James.

Dance Moves New and Public Morality

'Wining' is defined by the Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage (Allsopp 1996, p. 606) as 'to dance erotically by swinging the hips vigorously while thrusting the buttocks back and forth'. Miller (1991) suggests that in relation to the Trinidad of the late 1980s that he studied, these gyrations of the hip and waist "… may be performed by individuals, or upon another person, or in a line of dancers". He goes on to propose that this wining is a feature of a wide variety of parties and other occasions in Trinidad when dancing takes place. These include large scale dances with admission charges. 'Wining' occurs most frequently and prominently in response to calypso or soca music (Miller 1991, p. 325).

Miller gives a detailed anthropological description of partner dance practices in Trinidad. At dances, men may perform the act of wining on the buttocks of a woman positioned in front of him usually as she moves backwards. Dancing in this way is described in 'The Black Man Come out to Party' as the 'back-back'. Alternatively, the dance partners may gyrate front to front. Either wining or the 'hugging up' of a slow dance can lead on to another dance type referred to as 'grinding'. Here, couples move to the periphery of the dance floor. There, "… with one partner supported by the wall, they rub genitals and gyrate more systematically" (Miller 1991, p. 326). One other dance term is relevant here, that of 'jam'. It is a far more general term than the others and refers to moving the waistline vigorously in a way that, from time to time, might involve hips bouncing (Allsopp 1996, p. 310).

How Social Groups Moralize Over Dance Moves

There is a tendency, according to a proposal made by Miller (1991, p. 327) for Trinidadians to have values oriented in one of two directions. One set of values are focused around the interior of the home, the 'inside'. These values involve the notion of investment for the future and planning for the long term. They are associated with highly structured families, a high level of religiosity, and a commitment to 'traditional' family values and responsibilities and to domesticity, property and propriety. The other set of values have an 'outside' orientation. They involve a commitment to the immediately visible, to personal style, street life, to the event and to transience in general. These values reject institutionalisation, hierarchy based on occupation and kinship roles requiring formal obligations. Stereotypically, the former value system is associated with the more privileged sections of the society, and the latter with the most underprivileged (Smith 1965, p. 174). The difference in values is normally used by the more privileged groups as a justification for their own relative privilege and as an explanation of why those who are underprivileged are indeed so.

Calypso and soca music, wining and other sexually expressive dance moves, dancing parties and the annual Carnival festival season which features all of these, are linked the Afro-Creole, underprivileged sections of society. They take place as 'outside' manifestations of cultural activity. These have historically been viewed in a negative light as measured against the moral standards of the European cultured, privileged sectors of the community. These forms of cultural expression involve the

overt display of sexuality, female sexuality in particular. These are viewed, from the perspective of Anglo-Judeo-Christian tradition, as the antithesis of responsible citizenship and family life. It is against this background that we shall seek to understand the celebration of partying and partner dancing in the Black Stalin song, 'Black Man Feeling to Party'.

A Time to Jam, Back–Back, Grind and Wine

Black Stalin is one of a group of revolutionary calypsonians who, from the beginning of the 1970s onwards, supported the cause of revolutionary political and economic transformation in post-colonial Trinidad and the Caribbean. Rohlehr (2001) points out that the small group of calypsonians of which Black Stalin was a part, had, throughout the period of the 1970s, "… to state and restate their own aesthetic as radical dissenters …" (p. 20).

Research done on calypsos of the 1930s, when the genre was consolidating itself, is revealing in terms of the treatment of gender relations. A study of calypsos from this period conducted by Mohammed (2003) reveals an absence of emotional ties in male–female relationships and a distinct emphasis on economic transactions. Mohammed (2003, p. 164), in fact, concludes, with reference to calypsos of the period, 'The relations of black men and women are couched in violent and antagonistic terms, and love is merely a honeyed battle of the sexes.' No similarly detailed work is available for later periods. However, based on my own observation and knowledge of the calypso form in the last five decades, I conclude that treatment of male–female relationships has remained true to the outlook expressed in the 1930s. A calypso love song is, a result, a very, very rare thing, if not a contradiction in terms. This is the context, therefore, in which the calypso, 'The Black Man Feeling to Party', has to be understood. That it intended to be interpreted as a love song can be seen by Black Stalin's spoken introduction to his 1991 Dimanche Gras performance, 'Hol' on to yuh woman, tell she yuh love she' (Black Stalin 2008).

The love theme is presented within a framework of various time episodes. The first, Time 0, represents the literal time during which the song is being sung. This is signaled in the song by the use of the form 'tonight'. In this time space the main action progresses. The woman, the person addressed in the song, is doing household chores. The couple have, according to the version sung at the Dimanche Gras show, eight children. The singer, the addresser, instructs the woman to cease doing housework because tonight they are going out to party. Having made sure the children are fine, they exit the house. Outside, on instruction from the man, she leaves her troubles by the doorstep. They are on their way to the party. There, as they dance, the time changes as they 'turn back the hands of the clock'.

In the song, there are, as well, times past. Time − 1 is the immediate past, best viewed perhaps as the beginning of the present. This is the time when they began to have children and had to stay away from partying in order to devote time and energy to child rearing. This is also the time during which, when the singer's friends congratulate him on the development of his career, he gives all the credit to the woman, 'the secret force behind', 'the one who give me courage, the one who have

me great'. It is the recognition of her role which provides a premise for the story line of the calypso, the invitation to go out and celebrate. Time − 2 is the period before T − 1. It is a magical time when they were courting, had no children and were present at every dance party. It is to this time that they are turning back the hands of the clock.

The key to the song, however, is two kinds of future. Time + 1 is the immediate future, the time of the party, when they would 'do a little soca, do a little grind, do a little back–back, and show them youngsters how to wine' (Black Stalin, Verse 2). This involves a return to Time − 2, a mystical time when they were courting, had no children and could party non-stop. But then, there is Time + 2, tomorrow, as introduced in the line, 'We go deal with that [the troubles left at the doorstep] tomorrow'. This time period begins in the morning when they arrive back home from partying. They pick up the troubles that had been left at the doorstep on their way to the party. T + 2 is a return to the realities of Time 0, the housework and the troubles, from which they are escaping in the song. We have support here for a criticism such as that by Rohlehr), that this calypso is profoundly escapist.

The escapism is not only temporal but spatial. The escape is from the 'inside', as represented by household chores, child rearing responsibilities and troubles. The doorstep represents the limits of this space, the point at which all inside concerns are left behind. And the escape is out to an 'outside' of freedom, as in 'just put on something sexy, so you'll be free to move around', and into a world of heterosexual expression in dance, of 'jam', 'back–back', 'grind' and 'wine'. Within the inherited post-colonial Euro-Christian ethic, these behaviours are profoundly vulgar and indecent. This is particularly so since the actors are a couple who have assumed the sacred task of bringing up children.

Any interpretation of this song has to be made against the backdrop of the song writer and performer, Black Stalin's own history of defending in song Trinidadian, Caribbean and African popular cultural forms. He can be assumed to be acutely aware of the Euro-Christian critique of calypso and soca's public dancing practices in his country. His answer is to contextualise it. In the song, public partner dancing to soca music at parties is presented as a phase, in the first instance, associated with courtship. Once children arrive, this phase ends and one of dedicated and responsible domesticity is ushered in. By way of a nostalgic reprise, as well as a means of strengthening the existing child rearing union, the couples are allowed a temporary release in the form of partner dancing of the back-back, grind and wine type in public. An additional role for this bout of public dancing is to model behaviour for a new generation. This is in the form of the singer's promise that 'We go do a little soca, we go do a little grind, we go do a little back-back, and **show them youngsters how to wine**'. The couple have reproduced themselves biologically and are now seeking to do so culturally. For everything, there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.

The message is clear. Condemnation of sexuality in partner dancing in the public sphere is misguided. This represents courtship and youth, a phase which is part of a continuing life cycle that includes another, that of responsibility and solid nuclear family values. Life in Trinidad requires a balance between the values represented by the 'inside' and those represented by the 'outside'. This is perhaps neatly summed

up in the following observation, ‘Most Trinidadians … draw upon both these tendencies, emphasizing structure and the long term with increasing age and at Christmas while showing an orientation towards transience during youth and at Carnival’ (Miller 1991, pp. 327–328). The quote points to ‘inside’ values being associated with mature years and a family associated season, Christmas. By contrast, ‘outside’ values are most indulged in during youth and during the Carnival season.

But ‘Hol’ on to yuh Man’

In the calypso, ‘Black Man Feeling to Party’, it is the man, in traditional style, who invites the woman to dance. She was, as per stereotype of the dutiful wife and mother, tied up with household chores and wearing clothes which were distinctly ‘non-sexy’ and restrictive of free movement. Before leaving to party, it is she who is assigned the task to ‘… make sure the children okay’. She is also the bearer of the family troubles which have to be left by the doorstep. She seems much more trapped by the world and culture of the ‘inside’. He is, perhaps by virtue of his stereotypical male stance, closer to the world of the ‘outside’. He is thus able to free himself more easily from the clutches of the ‘inside’ world and invite the woman to accompany him out into the ‘outside’ world to dance. Most importantly, in his role as calypsonian and public performer, he is the one who is in front, before the public eye, and the woman is the ‘secret force behind’. The song is a tribute to this secret force behind who is celebrated in unrestrained partner dancing at the party, and the injunction in the chorus to, ‘Hol’ on to yuh man an’ leh we do a little, do a little … oi’.

The partner dancing which the song celebrates is appropriate for the purpose of the song. It also is quite conservative on the notion of male initiated dancing, and by extension sexual activity, perhaps deliberately so. The woman is invited to come dancing. The Calypso love song involves the male as initiator in the tradition of partner dancing. It makes the point that male female partner dancing does not subvert the social order but is rather a matter of the season and a time for every purpose under heaven. The dance is portrayed as a vehicle of courtship. There is a procreational outcome which is in turn followed by a caring role and then a return to the beginning. This return, in old age, is a modelling one to ‘show the youngsters how to wine’.

In every way other than its defence of public partner dancing to soca music, the message of the song is deeply conservative. The very traditional frame within which the calypsonian makes the proposition might have been intended to make the message more acceptable to the arbiters of public morality than would otherwise have been the case.

In the song, ‘The Black Man’, the woman being celebrated remains silent. This may be more than mere coincidence or an accident of the discourse structure of the song. The year 1991 was 3 years after the issue of women ‘wining on air’ burst into public discourse in Trinidad. In fact, Miller (1991) points out that 1988 was a special year for Trinidad Carnival. The dominance of women as masqueraders, had moved from them being a small minority in the preceding decades to them

massively outnumbering men in the costumed Carnival parades. Cautious estimates suggested ratios of at least 5 women to 1 man in the late 1980s. As Green and Scher (2007, p. 16) note, this female wave was accompanied by what came to be know as "skimpy mas", costumes which laid the female form almost fully exposed. In addition, as bands sometimes several thousand strong, moved across the stage at the Queen's Park Savannah, the wining gyrations of women came to official public attention. Miller gives us the following quote from the Trinidad Guardian newspaper of 22 February 1988, '… this year's celebration, particularly Carnival Tuesday's presentation has been noted as the most vulgar and immoral display ever witnessed on the Savannah stage. Women, particularly, no sooner spotted cameramen than they began their lewd dance, which brought the bile up from most men's stomachs rather than lured them into pronouncements of the charms of the opposite sex' (1991).

The actual dance movements of the women were described by *The Bomb* of February 26 1998 and quoted in Miller (1991, p. 327) as performed by '… bossy sexy and wassy … women in rut … wining and simulating sex on stage', and, in the case of one costumed band, '… a bevy of meaty belles who appeared to have spent some months in the gym toning and reshaping their love muscles'. In the build up to Carnival 1988 described by Miller, wining involving women and men wining on each other changed over time into that of women wining alone or on each other. He suggests that during the actual street parades during Carnival, the men faded as the women had taken over almost all aspects of Carnival action apart from Jouvert, the opening episode of Carnival.

It was against this background that Black Stalin sang 'Black Man Feeling to Party'. Was Black Stalin's somewhat belated love song an attempt to woo women back from female only dancing and, by extension, into the more traditional relationships which man-woman partner dancing represented? The constant cry in the chorus, 'Hol' on to yuh man' might be aimed at a much wider female audience than the wife with whom he is supposedly dancing and whom he is honouring in song.

The Female Only Dance: Woman Wining on Air

Describing 'Wining on Air'

Miller provides a summary of description of one kind of wining episode as follows:

> '… it consists of a gradual crescendo in the gyration, which is almost autonomous until the last moment. The women who are jumping up more or less constantly will build up towards more systematic gyrations of the hips to lift their legs and to touch, often momentarily before subsiding back into the general 'jump up' rhythm It is striking that at that final point, whether of contact or autonomous climax, there is almost always a look of rapture, a smile as this moment is reached and passes' (1991, p. 333).

In an attempt to find an explanation, Miller (1991, p. 333) suggests that the winer women tend not to be particularly interested in whom they happen to wine on and so '… they will wine on men, they will wine on each other, most often on no-one at all (Miller 1991, p. 333). I suggest that the answer lies in the notion that these displays represent a manifestation of a fertility cult. This is certainly the explanation proffered by Rohlehr (1998 in Premdas) when he states, 'Liberation from domestic routine seems to involve both the unmasking of female sexuality for the ancient fertility ritual that Carnival has never ceased to be, and the herding of women into a collective space …' For Miller (1991, p. 333) the wining practices he describes involves a species of what he calls 'auto-sexuality', an expression of sexuality which is dependent on no other person.

This is What We Do

'Auto-sexual' wining amongst women in public space on a mass scale is routine across all of the former British territories of the Caribbean, from Guyana to Jamaica. Though this phenomenon had long existed in these cultures, the scale of it and its broadcast on the electronic media has made it the focus of ongoing public discussion and debate. The case of Barbados is typical. In the late 1990s, the National Cultural Foundation (NCF), the state financed agency which has responsibility for the annual Crop-Over festival was confronted with this issue. Their response was an attempt at censorship. They had stewards appointed whose responsibility it was to monitor and seek to constrain excessive 'wukkin up', a Barbadian synonym for wining, amongst masqueraders in the costume band parade during the annual Grand Kadooment. This was responded to with great amusement, with the stewards so appointed being popularly deemed the 'Wuk-up Police'. There was a response in song by a male Barbadian calypsonian, the Mighty Gabby, in a song aptly entitled 'Wukin Up is we Culture', i.e. 'Wukin Up' is our culture. The debate has continued right up to 2010. Thus, we see the following in an editorial in the Barbados Saturday Sun of 31 July 2010, 2 days before the scheduled Grand Kadooment parade on the 2 August 2010.

'Here we urge revellers to control the level of "wukking-up" and to keep it as decent as possible. It is this restraint that should be our watchword for the entire weekend. That said, we must express our concern about the level of "wukking-up" that permeates every aspect of Crop-Over and the way we dance in general. Gyrations like "wukking up", though popular, are simulations of sex, as some have said. Such behaviour is not an expression of our identity, and should definitely not define what our largest national cultural event is about. Crop-Over is supposed to showcase Barbados' cultural diversity and we would like to see more of this and less of the lewd gyrations' (Saturday Sun p. 8).

Significantly across the Caribbean, paralleling the phenomenon of mass 'wining on air', has been the rise of the female calypsonian, or more precisely female soca performer. In this situation, it is often women who are the source of the singing that accompanies this female auto-sexual dance display. It has also given women a direct voice in responding to the ongoing criticism of wining or 'wukkin up' amongst the establishment upholders of public virtue such as the press. The song, 'This is What We Do' by Natahlee is a classic example of such a response.

The premise of the song is a hypothetical question from a detached onlooker, presumably female. This persona is taken to embody the perspective of religious moralists and newspaper editors who condemn wining. In the song, this onlooker is described as being 'bourgie', i.e. stuck up and, more importantly, lacking in understanding. The demeanour of the onlooker is indicating that she feels that the singer, in her dancing persona, must be 'crazy'. The song anticipates the question in the onlooker's head, by enjoining her to '*Doan bother to aks me why ah wine-in*'/ 'Don't bother to ask me why I am wining'.

One answer is an existential one. In the line, '*Don't just stand up there, watching me like I'm crazy*', the onlooker is presented as lacking in understanding precisely because she is not participating. By contrast, the singer's persona is in the middle of the party with her posse who are dancing without inhibitions to intoxicating music. 'Wukkin up' or wining is part of her very being. As the song spells it out, 'Dis ting livin inside me', 'This thing is living inside me.' She is compelled to be what she was born to be, in the same way that 'water must be wet'. This existential explanation is hammered home, at the end of every verse, by the line, 'This is what we do.' This is the natural state of affairs for 'us'. By contrast, she sings, 'I don't know about **you**.' The logic of the chorus flows from this assertion in song. It is a command chorus directed specifically by the singer at each female dancer, each 'gyal'. Each is instructed to roll, shake and wine their 'bumpers', i.e. buttocks. This becomes a live demonstration to the sceptical, detached onlooker that 'This is what we do.' We do it because this is what we do. The 'we' includes the singer, her posse and by extension all Barbadian females.

The other answer provided in song complements the first. It proposes that '*… we all know the reason…*' which is that '*… it is 'wukkin up' season*'. This is an explanation which identifies the season as the reason. The present Barbadian Crop-Over is a 1970s remake of a traditional but by then defunct end of harvest festival. This fact lends force to the seasonal explanation for the public wining performances of women during the festival. It also brings one back to the association between fertility rites, associated as these tend to be with both agricultural and human reproduction, and these wining performances.

There is a single reference to partner dancing. This is in the final verse which is the only point in the song where there is a shift to a third person description of events. Here, as a result of the season, dances have to be packed and '… every gyal pon a man', i.e. every woman on a man. The women, in this cross-sexual dance interchange, are very much presented as the agents in this dance interaction, as if to suggest that this is merely a choice which they exercise from time to time. In this context, their dancing is presented as especially aggressive, with their waistlines loaded with more shots than an Uzi sub-machine gun.

The More Things Change, They Don't Remain the Same

In the public performance of 'This is what we do' in the Sweet Soca Monarch Finals competition of July 2010, we get some additional insight into the underlying arguments embedded in the song. Nathalee is accompanied by six back up female dancers dressed in traditional Barbadian folk costumes consisting of long dresses in

bright floral designs and white petticoats. The dancers wear large amounts of padding on the breasts and buttocks. On command from the chorus, they wine, roll and shake their exaggeratedly large behinds. Towards the end of Natahlee's singing performance with the back up brass band, a small traditional Barbadian Tuk Band, made up four men playing drums and fiddle, file on stage. They join the back up dancers as the music ends. They begin to beat the drums and blow the fiddle in the style of the Tuk Band. The back up dancers and Natahlee then begin to move off stage to the music of this band, the dancers rolling their padded bottoms.

It is at this point that everything falls into place for the audience. One of the characters in the traditional Tuk Band is a figure referred to in Barbados as 'Mother Sally', elsewhere in the Caribbean by the more evocative name, 'Bum-bum Sally', with 'bum-bum' meaning 'buttocks'. This Tuk Band dancing character wears a traditional folk costume such as the back up dancers were wearing, along with the large breast and buttock padding. She dances to the drum and fiddle music in the Tuk Band and is known for her 'wukkin up' or wining, with her padded buttocks creating an entertaining public spectacle. The point in the musical performance by Natahlee, when the modern, soca music ends and the Tuk Band picks up is the juncture where the point about continuity is being made. This is not just 'What we do' but what we have always done. This is a link to the Barbadian past, back through slavery and back to Africa, the line of continuity provided by the Tuk Band and Mother Sally. The more things change, the more they remain the same. But is this really so?

The traditional Mother Sally character in the Tuk Band was a man dressed as a woman. In the Natahlee performance of 'This is what we do', her six dancers dressed up as Mother Sally were all obviously female. Things had changed. From the proxy female fertility figure of a traditional Mother Sally, female sexuality in public dance performance is being embodied in the person of the present-day winer women. Even though the symbols of the past are being manipulated as a justification for the seizure of public space to express mass female sexuality, things have not remained the same.

There is a strong view in the literature on modern Caribbean music that things have actually remained the same, that what we think we see is an illusion. Typical of such a position is Rohlehr (1998) who claims that the male soca performers of 'command' songs assume '… an almost totalitarian power over the movement of female bodies in the Carnival fete.' He further suggests that what is involved is '… the herding of women into a collective space where under the illusion of empowerment they are still moving to the shouted orders of soca men.'

When thousands of women pay to enter a mass Soca party/show, and male performers instruct them on when to jump, when to wine and when to roll, who is in control? The most logical conclusion in this situation is that who pays the soca man, calls the tune. The soca men at the microphone are hired hands, paid to entertain, paid to shout the orders that the predominantly female patrons are paying them to shout. In any case, the emergence of mass female public wining of the sort described in this paper, has been paralleled by the development of prominent soca performers. In Trinidad, Denise Plummer, Destra and Faye-Ann Lyons represent just a few. In Barbados, Allison Hinds and Natahlee, the performer of 'This is what we do' are just some of this emerging group.

‘This is what we do’ is a female performed song which, in performance, captures and feminises an originally male embodied female fertility symbol, Mother Sally. The use of a traditional symbol suggests that things have remained the same. However, the fact that the Mother Sally character is danced and performed by women indicates, at the symbolic level, that women have taken control of this symbol. The song asserts the right of women to what Miller (1991) refers to as auto-sexual dance expression even while allowing for traditional male–female partner dancing as an option that women can choose. The enduring popularity of Black Stalin’s calypso love song, ‘Black Man Feeling to Party’, points in the opposite direction, to the wish and hope for the continuation of male directed sexual expression as the dominant form of public dancing. This has to be interpreted as pure nostalgia, a wish, a hope, on the part of a male with ‘inside’ values.

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