Kate Houlden, *Sexuality, Gender and Nationalism in Caribbean Literature*. London: Routledge, 2017. x + 230 pp. (Cloth US\$140.00)

Sexuality, Gender and Nationalism in Caribbean Literature adds to the growing list of studies of gender and sexuality in Caribbean literature, including Faith Smith (ed.), *Sex and the Citizen: Interrogating the Caribbean* (2011), Donette Francis, *Fictions of Feminine Citizenship: Sexuality and the Nation in Contemporary Caribbean Literature* (2010), Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley, *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism between Women in Caribbean Literature* (2010), and Tanya Shields, *Bodies and Bones: Feminist Rehearsal and Imagining Caribbean Belonging* (2014). Kate Houlden provides important research on Anglophone Caribbean literature as she examines how writers address sexuality, whether in terms of nationalism, black masculinity, or same-sex desire, situating her study "at the intersection of masculinity studies, feminism and queer theory" (p. 6). Following the introduction, the three chapters in Part One take off from the work of Frantz Fanon. The two chapters in Part Two then focus on same-sex desire in Caribbean women's literary texts, but also include briefer discussion of several male writers.

Houlden builds on the point that decolonization tended to instantiate traditional nuclear family configurations in working for the newly independent nations. Drawing on such scholars as Leah Reade Rosenberg and Curdella Forbes, she brings sexuality studies to bear on Anglophone Caribbean literary texts that are often seen as foundational to the field, most of which were written by men. She not only challenges readers to examine these works as decolonial nationalist texts, but also reads how sexuality and same-sex desire are written into the texts. Of the Caribbean literature that she examines, she aims at exploring "what it tells us about the anxieties and fissures beneath performances of apparent masculine assertion" (p. 7). Not only considering how foundational writers wrote in the midst of nationalist movements, she also attends to the more intimate intricacies of the texts.

Houlden situates the works that she examines within the scope of each writer's total oeuvre, so that, for instance, we see the trajectory of the life and politics of a writer such as John Hearne in Jamaica. Similarly, her discussion of Roger Mais's work includes not only his well-known novels but also unpublished texts that she found in the UWI archives. This kind of literary research offers a broader picture of the writer's work. In addition to nationalist novels, Houlden examines others that portray the experience of Caribbean migration to England—Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, V.S. Naipaul's *Guerrillas*, and various books by George Lamming. For example, she analyzes how these

works engage with the trope of black men's sexualization of white women in the metropole as an example of the notion of racialized sexuality that Fanon explored in *Black Skin/White Masks*. As she points out, sexuality cannot be extracted from migration or nationalism.

The use of queer theory for research on Caribbean texts has generated significant debate. Yet even as scholars grapple with questions about the appropriate theoretical tools with which to explore it, same-sex desire in Anglophone Caribbean literature deserves much more attention. Recognizing this, Houlden focuses on "the ways in which sexual nonconformity challenges ideals of Caribbean citizenship" (p. 11) and reflects on the implications of it in several pre-1980 texts. She relies primarily on the work of Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley and Keja Valens when analyzing same-sex women's desire.

The book is elegantly written and well researched. Houlden offers excellent readings of the works in her study and places them within scholarship by others while offering a refreshing lens through which to read both the works and their authors. In the final chapter she explores same-sex relationships in texts by George Lamming, Paule Marshall, and Rosa Guy.

Houlden's provocative readings of well-known texts reflect new, dynamic ways of interpreting well-established literary works. I hope that in the future she will bring her interpretive lens to bear on more Caribbean women's texts. The book does not include an epilogue, but readers are left with many avenues to consider regarding sexuality and Caribbean literature. The book will be useful for scholars, teachers, and students of Anglophone Caribbean literature.

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