

ABSTRACT

Transcultural Transmission in Diasporic Festivals: Mas Traditions
in Brooklyn Labour Day and Notting Hill Carnival.

Andre McEachnie

This study focuses on the transcultural transmissions of mas (masquerade) traditions of Trinidad-type Carnivals in Brooklyn and Notting Hill diasporic communities. It employs a diachronic approach, situating the research within a multi-theoretical framework including postcolonialism, diasporisation and globalisation, while it examines the history of Carnival as a traditional festival through establishing its original roots, and its contemporary manifestations.

This research explores how members of both diasporic communities have utilised their culture to create and reinforce their unique identity (identities), and to resist cultural, sometimes social, and even political hegemony in these spaces. It employs primarily ethnographic methodologies, and engages the voices of many carnivalists who are intimately associated with each festival as the main texts. It also records the numerous challenges that most culture bearers have experienced, and how they have employed various strategies to transmit the Carnival cultural heritage to others with varied degree of success in each festival.

Keywords: Andre McEachnie; Transcultural transmissions; mas traditions; Brooklyn Labour Day; Notting Hill Carnival; diasporisation and globalisation.