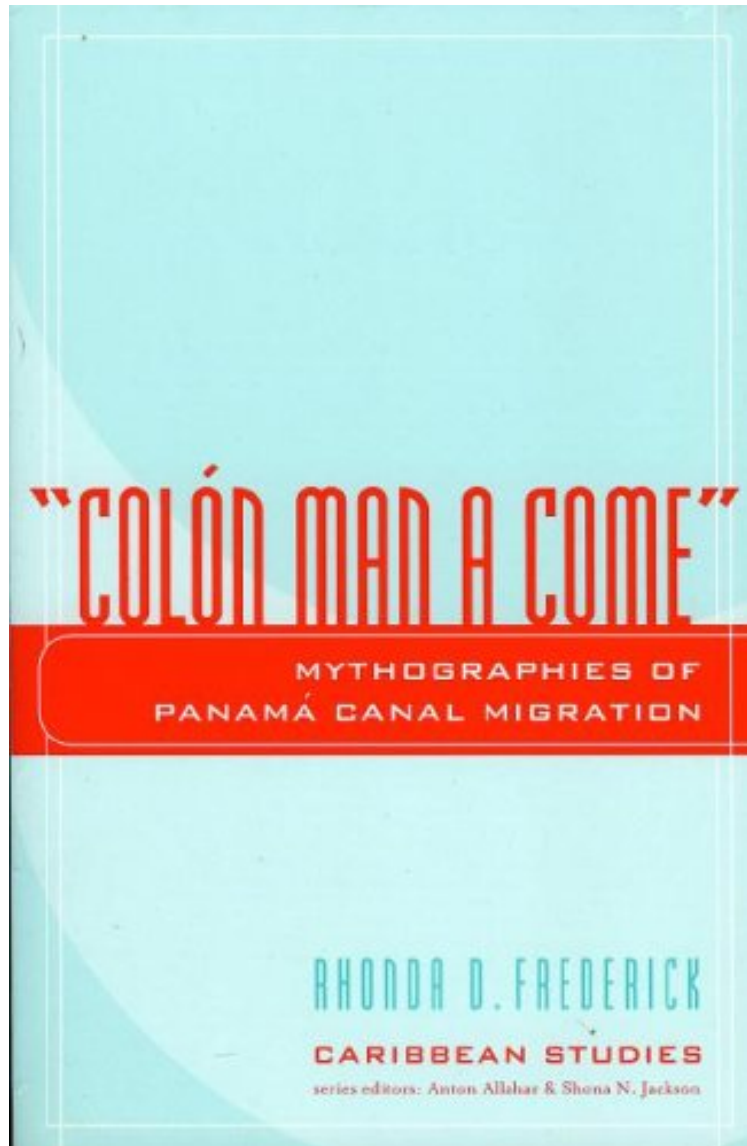


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Colon Man a Come: Mythographies of Panama Canal Migration (Caribbean Studies)

Rhonda Frederick

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Rhonda Frederick : Colon Man a Come: Mythographies of Panama Canal Migration (Caribbean Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Colon Man a Come: Mythographies of Panama Canal Migration (Caribbean Studies):

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By Sheila Hector If you are at all interested in Caribbean Studies and the cross between migration, labor and narrative then this book is a MUST HAVE! The author does a great job of telling us about migration to Panama but also about the impact that work on the canals has on cultural narratives--arguably throughout the Caribbean but especially--in Panama.

To date, there has been no literary examination of the Col-n Man even though he recurs in 19th and 20th century Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean Literatures. Named for PanamO's Caribbean port city, the Col-n Man has been the subject of historical, sociological, and geographical scholarship. He, however, has escaped the domain of literary investigation until now. Author Rhonda Frederick brings us the first ever book-length study of the literary representations of the Col-n Man. Fictive accounts of PanamO migration draw on precisely what has been little documented or not at all. In other words, this region's literature and songs, as well as Col-n Men's recollections, complicate existing studies. These first person accounts and creative narratives--in the form of song, stories, literature, etc.--of isthmian migration suggest that fictive renditions of canal work and workers represent Col-n Men's undocumented, unknown, and/or ignored realities. 'Col-n Man a Come:' Mythographies of PanamO Canal Migration examines several works of fiction: George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, Michael Thelwell's *The Harder They Come*, Eric Walrond's *Tropic Death*, Claude McKay's *Banana Bottom* and Maryse Conde's *Tree of Life*. And, perhaps most significantly, this book relies on the personal narratives and songs of Col-n Men to support the forgotten, lost, ignored and yet imaginable truths of PanamO Canal migration.

In combining literature-based 'mythographies' with path-breaking archival research, Frederick portrays vividly the aspirations and travails of early labor migrants to the Panama Canal. Interdisciplinary research at its best. (Bonham C. Richardson, profesor emeritus of geography, Virginia Tech) Rhonda Frederick's *Colón Man a Come*, cogently and superbly written, challenges standard negative interpretations of West Indian Canal workers, and expertly interweaves history and literary narrative in moving these workers center stage as she and they retell a story of dignity and agency. (George Priestley, Queens College, CUNY) The middle section of this book in particular provides a welcome supplement to existing historical treatments. (New West Indian Guide) In *Col-n Man a Come*, Rhonda Frederick successfully combines historical documentation, oral narrative, and literary representation to produce a work that examines the construction of the Panama Canal in all its harrowing mythological and existential contexts. In doing so, Frederick's text allows us to see the transformation of a historical feat of human engineering into a triumphant Caribbean construction of transcendent humanity. (Glyne Griffith, professor of English and Africana studies, Florida Atlantic University) About the Author Rhonda Frederick is assistant professor of English at Boston College.