

Claudia Jones

Claudia Jones was a journalist and campaigner who worked for equal rights and helped bring Caribbean carnival celebrations to Britain. She believed that newspapers, music and dancing could help people understand one another and challenge racism.

Claudia was born in Trinidad, a Caribbean island, in 1915. Her birth name was Claudia Vera Cumberbatch. When she was nine, she moved to New York with her family. They hoped for a better life, but faced poverty and unfair treatment because they were black.



As she grew older, Claudia became a writer and political campaigner. She spoke up for workers, women and black people. She joined the Communist Party, which supported major changes to how society and wealth were organised. Her political activities led to imprisonment and, in 1955, the American government forced her to leave the country. She settled in London.

In Britain, Claudia continued challenging discrimination. Many Caribbean people faced difficulties finding homes and jobs because of racism. In 1958, she founded the *West Indian Gazette*, a newspaper that reported on these problems and shared news important to Caribbean communities.

That year, racist violence in Notting Hill and Nottingham frightened many black families. Claudia wanted to bring people together and celebrate Caribbean culture.

In January 1959, she helped organise an indoor Caribbean carnival at St Pancras Town Hall in London. It included music, dancing and performances, and part of it was shown on television. Further indoor carnivals followed.

These celebrations helped lay the foundations for the outdoor Notting Hill Carnival, which developed later. Claudia died in 1964, before that street festival began. She is remembered for using both campaigning and culture to support fairness, community pride and belonging.



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Questions

1. Where and in which year was Claudia Jones born?
2. What was Claudia's birth name?
3. How old was Claudia when she moved to New York?
4. Which groups of people did Claudia speak up for?
5. Why did Claudia leave the United States in 1955?
6. What difficulties did many Caribbean people face in Britain?
7. What newspaper did Claudia found in 1958?
8. What happened in Notting Hill and Nottingham in 1958?
9. Where was the indoor Caribbean carnival held in January 1959?
10. How did Claudia's celebrations influence the later Notting Hill Carnival?



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Answers

1. She was born in Trinidad in 1915.
2. Her birth name was Claudia Vera Cumberbatch.
3. She was nine years old.
4. She spoke up for workers, women and black people.
5. The American government forced her to leave because of her political activities.
6. Racism made it difficult for many people to find homes and jobs.
7. She founded the West Indian Gazette.
8. Racist violence frightened many black families.
9. It was held at St Pancras Town Hall in London.
10. Her indoor celebrations helped lay the foundations for the later outdoor carnival.



activist	belonging	campaign	carnival	community	culture	deportation
discrimination	equality	heritage	journalist	performance	poverty	racism

1. A person who gathers information and writes or reports news.

2. Someone who takes action to bring about changes they believe are needed.

3. An organised effort to achieve a goal or make a change.

4. The idea that everyone should have the same rights and opportunities.

5. Unfair treatment of someone because of who they are, such as their age, religion or whether they are a boy or a girl.

6. Unfair treatment of people because of their skin colour or ethnic background.

7. The situation of not having enough money to meet basic needs, such as food and a safe home.

8. The act of officially forcing someone to leave a country.

9. A group of people who live in the same area or share something in common.

10. The customs, beliefs, languages and ways of life shared by a group of people.

11. The family background, traditions and history that help shape who someone is.

12. A celebration that often includes music, dancing and colourful costumes.

13. An act of singing, dancing, playing music or acting for an audience.

14. The feeling of being accepted and included in a group or place.



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Timeline Challenge

Claudia Jones was a journalist and campaigner who stood up against racism and inequality. She worked hard to improve the lives of Black people and women. After moving to Britain, she started an important newspaper for the Caribbean community and helped bring Caribbean carnival celebrations to London. Her work helped inspire what later became the Notting Hill Carnival.



Can you put these key events from Claudia's life into chronological order?

Claudia starts the West Indian Gazette, a newspaper that gives Britain's Caribbean community a voice and speaks out against discrimination.	Claudia is born in Trinidad. She later moves with her family to New York in the USA.	Claudia organises a Caribbean carnival in London, with music, dancing and celebrations. Her work helps inspire the Notting Hill Carnival that develops later.	Claudia becomes involved in campaigning in the USA. She speaks out against racism and unfair treatment and campaigns for workers' and women's rights.
Claudia dies in London at the age of 49. She is remembered for her work for equality and the Caribbean community in Britain.	Claudia moves to New York with her family. She grows up in Harlem and experiences poverty and racism.	Claudia is deported from the USA because of her political activities. She travels to Britain and begins a new life in London.	Claudia leads a march in London supporting the struggle for civil rights in the USA and continues campaigning against racism.

Link each event with one of the dates below. Use the information to make a timeline.

1915	1924	1936	1955	1958	1959	1963	1964
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