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The West Indian Diaspora to the USA: Remittances and Development of the Homeland

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MISSION AND EDITORIAL OBJECTIVES

In the academy in the United States, the study of the Caribbean and its diaspora communities is underserved and underrepresented; there are few departments and programs and just a sprinkling of courses devoted to its study. Concerned about the situation of Caribbean studies, the Caribbean Research Center at Medgar Evers College, CUNY, in celebration of its tenth anniversary in 1997, created *Wadabagei* to fill this vacuum and address, and redress, this problem. *Wadabagei* is solely owned by the Caribbean Research Center.

Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and Its Diasporas is committed to facilitating the exchange of ideas among Caribbean scholars worldwide. It is a multidisciplinary journal that publishes scholarly articles and occasional creative works from diverse fields, including politics, literature, sociology, and religion, and reviews of recent publications in Caribbean studies. *Wadabagei* places special emphasis on the acculturation of Caribbean people in North America but explores the Caribbean experience in all geographic locations where Caribbean people have settled.

Wadabagei is a Garifuna name for the conch shell, which is frequently used as a wake-up call in Caribbean villages and to announce community gatherings. It symbolizes the historic call to action by Haitian slaves and the Caribbean peoples' continuing struggle for self-expression and self-determination.

CONTENTS

THE PROMISE AND THE PERILS: CHALLENGES IN THE BLACK DIASPORA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Guest Editor: Charles Green

CHARLES GREEN
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Editor's Note

The Promise and the Perils: Challenges in the Black Diaspora in the Twenty-first Century

In a global world in which more than 150 million people migrate from one country to another every year, it is argued that within the late twentieth century, and now in the twenty-first, the transnational forces of these new migrations have brought into play a different and new diaspora that contributes more money to the "homelands," has redrawn the political interconnections between the homelands and the host societies, and now plays a pivotal intervening role in the reconstruction of "home."

During May and early June 2007, the 32nd annual conference of the Caribbean Studies Association was held in Bahia, Brazil, home of one of the largest demographic concentrations of blacks in the New World. The conference was well attended, with as many as 900 members present and attending the varied cultural and social events.

The papers presented in this guest-edited issue of *Wadabagei* emanate from a session entitled "The Promise and the Perils: Challenges in the Black Diaspora in the Twenty-first Century," and they provide but a snippet of the rich texture and excellent substantive, theoretical quality of the conference papers. The presenters were professors Charles Green, Hunter College, City University of New York (CUNY) (who also performed the role of chair); Joyce Toney, Hunter College, CUNY; Basil Wilson, CUNY Graduate School and University Center; Aubrey W. Bonnett, College at Old Westbury, State University of New York; and

Anthony P. Browne, Hunter College, CUNY. Due to a scheduling problem, professor Carl E. James of York University, Ontario, Canada, was unable to appear on the panel; however, his paper is included here.

Basil Wilson's paper examines the success of West Indian Americans in the United States by looking at their apparent positive vertical social mobility in an area of New York City, namely, the highly diversified county of Queens, and extrapolating therefrom. His analysis is quite interesting in comprehending this immigrant group—one often labeled as manifesting a successful/typical immigrant odyssey—and corresponds well with a recently published work, *West Indian Immigrants: A Black Success Story?*, written by immigration scholar and sociologist Suzanne Model.

I interrogate the dialectics of race, identity, and labor production in the United States in my examination of the new immigration surge and its challenge to black labor. A central issue that is examined is the question of whether the new immigrants are negatively affecting opportunities for black diasporans (specifically males) in the U.S. labor sector. This and related issues become more relevant in the context of the current dysfunctionality of global capitalism and the disruptive economic meltdown now facing the liberal democracy of the United States.

Aubrey Bonnett's paper discusses the growing influence of new black diaspora/transnational migrants in the economic and political landscape of their "homelands." Bonnett argues that in light of this, it would behoove the countries of origin of these migrants to establish facilitating, structural arrangements at the national governmental levels to ensure that there is transparency, mutuality, efficacy, and accountability in these evolving relationships, especially in an increasingly globally interconnected world.

Joyce Toney addresses the social problems arising from leaving children, known as "barrel children," behind as family members migrate to cope with economic and social deficiencies in their sending societies. Contextually, Americans faced the psychological and other issues frontally as the beltway sniper, young John Lee Malvo, once a barrel child himself, killed many in the nation, which was subsequently gripped in mass fear in certain geographic areas. Joyce Toney's paper helps us to better understand the effect of this migratory phenomenon and nicely augments other important scholarly references already existent.

Anthony Browne uses the theoretical paradigm of collective behavior as well as the comparative framework to analyze the challenges facing blacks in diasporic communities—especially those in the United States and France. The central question he poses is how important a role is the concept of colorblindness in the continuance of white supremacy in the United States and globally? Browne argues that during the 1950s and 1960s in particular, colorblindness was championed by those seeking full equality; however, in the contemporary period it has been successfully deployed to undermine efforts at racial equality.

Finally, Carl James's article discusses the experiences, aspirations, and hopes of Caribbean-Canadians, noting how Canada's immigration policies and programs and federal multicultural policy inform the social, economic, and political realities that confront them. The discussion of their racialization within this context is framed by critical race theory and critical hope theory.

From remittances to identity and economic issues; from social mobility to coping with pressures of migration on family formations, these papers are not the final answer on the many challenges and perils facing diasporic blacks. They do, however, present the readers with some interesting perspectives, ways to reexamine these populations in their newfound homelands, even as Africa ("home") still presents, globally, as a continent torn by wars, famine, pestilence, economic deprivation, and a new global exploitation. The authors must be complimented for their formidable efforts in this regard, and it is hoped that readers' interest will be stimulated to pursue these controversial issues further.

Featured in this special issue is a recent interview that Elaine Savory conducted with renowned African-diaspora literature scholar, Nigerian-born Francis Abiola Irele, who presently teaches in the Department of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. The interview focuses on his life and scholarship. Also featured are reviews of four books that concern issues of immigration, labor, cultural survival, and economic globalization that are relevant to African Caribbeans in the diaspora.

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The West Indian Diaspora to the United States

Remittances and Development of the Homeland

THE CONCEPT OF HOME

It often is said that you can't go home again. Indeed, was it not Stuart Hall who said that "you can go home again, you just can't stay"?[1] Roy Bryce-Laporte continues this argument by contending that because there exists a wide range of differences in the manner and condition in which blacks have left their ancestral or native homelands in the process of being dispersed all over the world, some rather interesting dimensions have begun to develop among blacks in the diaspora with regard to these notions of "home."[2]

Hence the concept of "home" or "homeland" for blacks in the diaspora may refer to different places, real or imagined, in their treks across the continent and passages across the ocean to the city or locality of their present abode.[3] Further, for these diasporic blacks, Bryce-Laporte pointedly contends that "home" "may well be their official country of origin or birth, adopted country of resettlement or nationality, or their intermediate country of passage; for others, it may be a spiritual or biblical reference." For those who seek to "return," it may well refer to a set of conditions or state of being, a condition or state to be striven for, emulated, or constructed, or a place of destina-

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* This article was originally published in the Forum on Public Policy Online, Summer 2007 edition.

tion (not always coincident with their precise place of origin) to which they hope to (re)migrate, (re)settle, prosper, and retire.[4]

Contextually, this debate rings true for many in the black diaspora of old. Initially torn from the motherland (Africa) by greed and profit, initialized by slavery and a new world plantation system, diasporic blacks were forcibly transplanted to strange new homelands in Europe, minimally, and in the New World nations of Latin America; North, South, and Central America; and the Caribbean, maximally.

During slavery, emancipation, and the end of slavery, these diasporic blacks were so forcibly stripped of their culture that they had no realistic notion of "home"—namely Africa—or in some instances had a distorted, and anglicized or Europeanized version of what "home" is (was). To be sure, there were exceptions where diasporic blacks returned to Africa—Sierra Leone and Liberia for example—and became one again with their "sending" societies. And, yes, there were millenarian and nationalistic movements—Garveyism, Father Divine, Black Muslims, and the like—that focused on the glories of the "motherland" (Africa) and worked to spark the liberation of all dispossessed blacks in the homeland and the diaspora. But generally, "home" for diasporic blacks was constituted by the societies to which their forefathers were dragged, subjugated, and resocialized—societies in Jamaica, Brazil, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba for example. This was the homeland for these dispersed peoples. In many of these societies, especially Latin and Central American ones, diasporic blacks formed a minority; they were marginalized and their cultures amalgamated by massive European immigration or incorporation of Native American elements. This was, generally, not so for those blacks in the Anglo-Caribbean nations of Jamaica, Guyana (formerly British Guiana), Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Haiti, in whose societies blacks formed the numerical majority.

Initially ruled by colonial white minorities, these groups became acculturated Creoles, while others held on to remnants or residuals of African cultures—largely nostalgic and symbolic—in societies in geographically-sited areas called the West Indies. Save for the original native Amerindian populations, the West Indies often have been described as migration-oriented societies, inasmuch as they have been

brought into being first by voluntary migrations, later by the process and effects of involuntary forced migrations, and later still by the indentured servitude of other immigrants from Asia and Europe. With the abolition of slavery, the formal ending of colonialism, and the granting of political independence and nationhood, many nationals found that the new status of their nations did not drastically alter their economic relationship with their metropolitan former masters in any meaningful way. In some instances, as a result of larger international macro forces, their economic situations worsened internally as their new national governments were unable to provide them with economic viability, even as they flaunted their political independence and tried to find ways, collectively and otherwise, to become meaningful players on the world stage.

In an effort to deal with these dilemmas, West Indians began to migrate to look for work and economic security. First, these migrations focused internally on moving to countries such as Panama, Costa Rica, and even Cuba, and moving from the smaller islands, such as Barbados and Grenada, to larger land masses such as Guyana to earn their livelihood. Predominantly, however, the greater migrations were to the United Kingdom, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, prior to political independence, and, in even larger numbers, to the United States, after the passage of the sweeping post-liberal national immigration legislation known as the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. The United States, after World War II, had replaced the United Kingdom as the undisputed leader of the free world, and with rapid industrialization and a burgeoning economy, it had shifted its immigration policy to capture immigrants coming from the former colonial territories—albeit ones now touting the new political symbol of being independent nation-states.[5]

Specifically, this essay looks at the post-1965 migration to the United States of black diasporic Afro-Caribbeans from Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados, their adaptations to their new "homes," and their relations with their old sending societies—"back home." It takes as its point of departure the perspective of remittances, cultural, material, and financial; the new political formulations; and the attempt to use human, social, and economic capital to foster homeland development and modernization.

THE HOMELANDS—BARBADOS, JAMAICA, GUYANA, AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

These four nation-states are the four most populous in the Anglo Caribbean, but are quite varied in their populations; their economic, political, and demographic formulations; their levels of political legitimacy and stability; the way they relate to their diasporas; and the levels of interest shown in the diaspora for development "back home."

Jamaica has the largest population, domestically, and also has the largest number—although not percentage—of migrants abroad in the United States. It also has the largest number of Afro-Caribbeans in its local population base. Its economy currently is not as diversified as Trinidad and Tobago's, and its economy is not as well positioned in the global arena as those of either Barbados or Trinidad and Tobago, although much better than Guyana's.

Trinidad and Tobago has been called a "plural society," as has Guyana, in that they both have large segments of East Indians, originally brought to these nations as indentured immigrants to undercut the new, evolving economic and political viability of the emancipated Afro-Caribbean slaves, many of whom had established villages and village systems from which to launch a real version of emancipation.[6] This was not to happen, as the colonial power, England, used both race and ethnicity to "divide and rule" these two groups and to create deep divisions, hatred, and mistrust, much of which still remain in these two nations and have contributed to large Indo-Guyanese political majorities.[7] Conceptually, a plural society is defined thus by anthropologist and Caribbeanist Raymond T. Smith: "The basic idea is that certain societies, among them those of the Caribbean region, appear to be made up of a number of sub-societies, each of which is an integrated entity with its own culture, while relations between these sub-societies are established and maintained solely by political dominance and force." He continues: "No peaceful change in the social system is possible because the sections have nothing in common except involvement in economic and political relations which are essentially antagonistic."[8]

Trinidad and Tobago, with more cross-cutting cultural alliances and allegiances in the form of creolization, a more astute political leadership class, and definitely more geopolitically relevant natural resources

in the form of oil, has been able to build a more robust, more economically viable, and less fractious society than has Guyana.[9]

Barbados, like Jamaica, has a sizeable majority of Afro-Caribbeans; however, unlike Jamaica, since political independence, it has had more political stability—the best of the four nation-states under review. Its economy has been vibrant and growing, it has drawn many internal migrants from the other Caribbean island nations and Guyana, and it has ranked the highest of the four nations on the UN Social Development Index. Barbados, however, is one of the most densely populated regions in the world and has a rigid social stratification system based on a color/class dichotomy that has been largely disadvantageous to Afro-Caribbeans. Historically, this has spurred many members of this group to migrate, first to other Caribbean islands and Guyana, then to Panama, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom, and later to Canada and the United States. Today, even with Afro-Caribbeans in Barbados firmly entrenched in control of the political elite, economic control still is vested largely in local whites and foreign hands, and some commentators on the local political landscape argue that the local political elite still fronts as a shadow government for the white population segment.

In summary, what happened in these four nation-states—and generally in the other microstates in the West Indies—is that the attainment of political independence did not radically improve their economic situation. This became a tremendous and formidable push factor in the migratory thrust. But why choose the United States, given its long history of hostility toward people of color? Historian Calvin B. Holder puts it this way: "Why, given the long history of American hostility toward people of color, have hundreds of thousands of Blacks and other people of color voluntarily emigrated to the U.S.? Economic factors have always been the major motivating reason. Simply put, the U.S., and particularly its northern states, has offered these immigrants opportunities for self-improvement and material advancement that their homelands have proved incapable of providing."[10] Because of this, he continues, immigrants from the West Indies have generally put aside their concerns and reservations about American racism and flocked here when the opportunity has presented itself. And, once in the United States, they have held steadfastly to the view that racism should not be accepted as a legitimate reason for the failure of people of color—

foreign or native born—to succeed.[11] This view, he contends, is especially entrenched among the post-1965 immigrants, now that legal segregation has been dismantled.[12]

To summarize, for Afro-Caribbeans—the modal ethnic grouping in what is commonly known as the West Indies, and clearly a sizeable numerical demographic proportion of the four nations (homelands) under review—poverty, and to a lesser extent political instability and class/color prejudice in their homelands, also have been instrumental "push" factors for immigration to the United States.[13]

WEST INDIAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1965: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Voluntary migration to the United States from the Caribbean began in the nineteenth century, primarily after the abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865. By the end of the nineteenth century, several thousand immigrants from the English and French West Indies resided in Boston, New York City, and Miami.[14] However, it was the twentieth century that witnessed the full bloom of this movement of peoples.

Between 1900 and the Great Depression, well over 150,000 Afro-Caribbeans migrated. Migration was halted by the restrictive Immigration Act of 1924 and the subsequent economic crisis, but resumed after World War II, though it was quickly terminated with the passage of the conservative 1952 Immigration Act. The 1965 Immigration Act liberalized the nation's immigration policy, resulting in new immigration, which still continues today.[15]

As indicated earlier, the major push factors were (are) overcrowding (save for Guyana), a rigidly stratified economic system leading to unequal distribution of wealth and land, limited economic opportunities, poor economic conditions, and, at times, harsh political realities that resulted in perceived political persecution.[16] And it is largely in the United States, and then in Canada and the United Kingdom, that West Indians have sought refuge.

Generally the term "West Indian" refers to immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean, including Anguilla, Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Montserrat, Trinidad and Tobago, St.

Vincent, and the American and British Virgin Islands.[17] The immigrants themselves use this appellation, and so do others.

Since 1965, most of the immigrants have settled in the Northeast corridors, creating urban communities in Boston, Newark (New Jersey), Hartford (Connecticut), and New York City, with large communities in Miami as well. In New York, they settled in Brooklyn and Queens and formed ethnic enclaves in East Flatbush, Flatbush, Crown Heights, Canarsie, and Midwood (in Brooklyn) and South Ozone Park, Cambria Heights, Laurelton, and Richmond Hill (in Queens), as well as in the suburbs of Elmont, Uniondale, Hempstead, and Baldwin on Long Island.[18]

Currently, the United States has two groups of West Indian communities. The first has an Afro–West Indian (Caribbean) majority; small numbers of Indo–West Indians, who are mainly Muslims and Christians; and an indeterminate number of persons of "some other race" or "two or more races." This group was the first to settle, and is found in Fort Lauderdale (Florida), Miami, Boston, and in the greatest part, New York City. The second group, which did not become naturalized until the 1990s, comprises mainly Hindu and Muslim Indo–West Indians and some multiracial persons who are mainly of Indian/black descent, sometimes referred to as "douglahs."[19] This group's residents have come mainly from Trinidad and Guyana. Richmond Hill and Ozone Park in Queens are the best example of this kind of Indo–West Indian ethnic enclave. This group has not had as overwhelming a presence in the United States as have Afro-Caribbeans, especially in their relations with native African Americans. However, whether skilled or unskilled, Afro– or Indo–, these West Indian Americans in the United States tend to emphasize a few key goals: education for themselves and their children, social and economic betterment, family unity, and home ownership.[20]

Historically, many West Indian Americans have allied themselves with native African Americans and other dispossessed Americans in the political fight for civil and economic rights and still play that role, although their interactions over the years have not been without conflict. Many of their children—second- and third-generation Americans—along with the children of African immigrants have outperformed whites, and certainly African Americans, in their entry into and success in elite professional colleges.[21]

I have argued, elsewhere, that this portrait of earlier educational exceptionalism is only part of this group's profile, for structural shifts in the United States economy mean that segments of this community will suffer negative socio-psychological and economic adjustments to migration, coupled with constricted assimilation to American society.[22] Pressures against full assimilation are also greater for lower-class West Indians: while typically middle- and upper-class professionals alternate between a more inclusive West Indian American or a particularistic African American identity, the lower/working class chooses a more "ethnically focused, West Indian one."[23]

West Indian immigrants have made New York state and New York City their principal settlement sites, with more than half of Barbadians, Guyanese, Trinidadians, and Jamaicans settling in New York, especially Brooklyn and Queens.[24] Today, the United States has approximately 2.6 to 3 million West Indians (of all races) or about 1 percent of its population.[25] More than 72 percent of the Afro-Caribbean (West Indian) population is foreign-born, and they represent 4.6 percent of the black population. Entrepreneurs continue to flourish in the community, and the 2000 Census shows that the median household income of Afro-Caribbeans is $40,168, which is higher than that of African-American households, but lower than that of immigrants from Africa.

Within this context, we look briefly at this group's occupational concentration. Professor Calvin Holder, in a recent analysis, points out that West Indians generally have been employed in the private sector of the American economy.[26] According to the 2000 Census, he states, 78.6 percent of the 352,770 employed West Indians sixteen years of age and over were private wage and salaried workers, 16.5 percent were government workers, 4.7 percent were self-employed and 0.2 percent were unpaid family workers. By 2000, the census shows, 28.7 percent of West Indian immigrants worked in managerial, professional, and related occupations; 27.2 percent in service occupations; and 28 percent in sales and office occupations. West Indians also found work in construction (9.3 percent) and transportation (1.3 percent). Holder continues:

> West Indians have achieved greater economic progress in New York City than elsewhere in the country. Tens of thousands of West Indian lawyers, physicians, nurses and medical technicians, teachers and middle-level managers have worked in the city since 1965. Even larger numbers have been employed in the skilled trades. A small class of entrepreneurs and

business people has also developed their enterprises to cater to West Indians, and to a lesser degree to African Americans and Whites. The unemployment rate for this group was 7.3 percent.[27]

Analyzing household income provides insight into this group's current socio-economic situation. The 2000 Census shows that the median household income for West Indians stands at $40,168, which Holder comments, "compares quite favorably with the median household income from the general population, $41,190." [28] He continues: "A noticeably different picture emerges, however, when West Indians' median family income is examined: it was $44,959 as compared with a median family income of $50,732 for the general population."[29] He argues, and I concur, that the larger household income for West Indians is likely due to larger number of earners in their households.[30] The census also indicates that 12 percent of 184,395 West Indian families lived below the poverty line.

Before we examine "remittances sent home," I should comment on the naturalization of West Indian immigrants, which is historically low, for many saw themselves as sojourners, although the rate has increased dramatically in the past decade. For example, of the 359,181 West Indians in the United States in 1990, 35 percent were naturalized American citizens; a decade later, when their population reached 550,480, 53.4 percent were naturalized, Holder reports in a recent article.[31] While continuing to give varied and correct reasons for this shift, he asserts unequivocally that evidence suggests that Afro–West Indians and Indo–West Indians (both Caribbeans) have different attitudes toward naturalization. He states that because racism is less problematic for Indo–West Indians, they feel a less visceral opposition to becoming American citizens. In contrast, Afro–West Indians have been notoriously reluctant to become naturalized citizens because they abhor racism and the negative images it has created of African Americans and blacks generally, and they believe that by retaining their original citizenship, they disassociate themselves from these dehumanizing images.[32]

This is the context in which one should see Afro-Caribbeans' (West Indians') close connections and strong emotional attachments to their homelands. As Holder sees it:

West Indians' close and continuing ties to their homelands have also shaped their assimilation into American society. Each year tens of thou-

sands of immigrants, many of whom have been in the U.S. for decades, regularly travel to their homelands. They go for Christmas; carnival and the Independence celebrations of their native countries; to see their relatives; to reside in their homes during the winter months; and to conduct business. Some have professional practices and businesses in both the U.S. and the West Indies.[33]

Against this backdrop, the following discussion on remittances to the homelands, and their salience, regularity, and applicability to homeland development, takes on added meaning.

REMITTANCES AND DEVELOPMENT: BARBADOS, GUYANA, JAMAICA, AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Writing for the World Bank in October 2003, economist Dilip Ratha indicated that workers' remittances have become a major source of external development finance, providing a convenient angle from which to approach the complex migration agenda.[34] He adds that officially recorded remittances received by developing countries exceeded $93 billion in 2003, with the actual size of the remittances including both officially recorded and unrecorded transfers through informal channels being even larger.[35] Remittances are now more than double the size of net official flows (under $430 million) and are second only to foreign direct investment (around $133 billion) as a source of external finance for developing countries.[36] In 36 out of 153 developing countries, remittances are larger than all capital flows, public and private.[37] In short, remittances have become a significant source of funds for some developing countries.

As one of the most important destinations of world immigration, the United States has emerged as the single largest source of reported remittances—payments sent by immigrant workers to their home countries.[38] For example, remittances sent from the United States grew six-fold from $4.1 billion in 1981 to $25.5 billion in 2003, when they accounted for about one-third of measured global remittances.[39] One of the major areas affected by the sending of remittances has been Latin American and Caribbean nations, and a natural consequence of the large numbers of immigrants from these nations—both first and later generations—residing in the United States. But before

we examine the case of the four West Indian nations, we need to define remittances.

Remittances are basically now seen as money transfers sent to the Caribbean by diasporic others residing abroad. In fact, remittances always have existed as part of the West Indian migratory thrust. Internally, as immigrants left their islands—Barbadians, for example, who migrated to Guyana (then British Guiana)—they would send barrels with food stuff and money back to their societies of origin. The large migration of Jamaicans, Barbadians, and other immigrants to Panama also resulted in the sending of barrels back home. However, it was the migration to England, during the 1940s and later, that caused an upsurge in the analytical and scholarly treatment of remittances. Anthropologists Stuart Philpott and Philip Manners, for example, writing of the West Indian immigration to England, talked about both the "money order" economy and the barrels that were to become a pivotal part of the remittances paradigm.[40] And Bonham Richardson describes the process and practice this way: "Material goods from abroad, sent and brought back by migrating men and women, help reduce spot shortages of staple items at home but, more often represent a quality and diversity of commodities otherwise unavailable or prohibitively expensive in the islands."[41] Indeed, Richardson opines that "remittances of money and gifts play a functional role for migrants themselves, especially if external circumstances force them to return. And those men who have regularly remitted money in their absence invariably receive warmer homecomings than those who have not."[42] So remittances are not only the money transfers but also the large number of foods and sundry other items sent by barrels to the Caribbean. Indeed, many West Indian businesses in the United States and other host societies now specialize in this market niche and are slowly challenging multinational organizations such as Western Union for their place in the money transfer "niche."[43]

But another view of remittances is more relevant to a cultural interpretation. For although remittances are largely viewed as monetary or in-kind contributions, they also can be viewed as cultural and social transfers, argues Puerto Rican sociologist Juan Flores. He describes the process this way:

> Whether in the luggage of exiles or emigrants returning to visit or stay,
> or in stories and experiences recounted by friends and family, diasporas

carry and send back more, however, than money and material goods. Ideas, values, political causes and cultural styles and preferences all make their way from diaspora to homeland settings. In many instances, the financial remittances themselves come with political intentions attached, as in cases of community-to-community monies or resources sent for civic and other benevolent projects to hometowns or regions of origin. Local political participation is often maintained, and even increased, across borders and geographical distances.[44]

And this form of cultural remittance is also circular, in that while hip hop and soul music flourish in Trinidad and Barbados, so do reggae, salsa, and calypso in Miami and New York, for example. Noted diasporic scholar Roy Bryce-Laporte describes it thus:

> The caribbeanization of carnival and the calypso, the internationalization of reggae, Rasta, Rapping, Afro hair styles and soul music, the ghettoization of Santeria, Susu, and capoeira (break dance) and Salsa are outstanding cultural examples. They demonstrate how due to intense interpenetration and continuous cross-fertilization which have resulted principally from migration and mass media, Black people from different parts of the Diaspora have begun to share broader concepts or multiple references of "home" which transcend both place and time.[45]

"In some ways," Bryce-Laporte continues, "'home,' both as a reference and reality has become so transplanted, so diffused, among Blacks that the scope of the black Diaspora may eventually take on new meanings, bring on new tensions, and point to new possibilities."[46]

We have not dealt with the costs of sending these remittances "back home," which can be prohibitively expensive, although much has been done in both the Clinton and now Bush administrations to help provide more competition from credit unions, some national banks, and the selected foreign nationals trained in the money-transfer business and banking. Nor have we addressed the security concerns and new regulations designed to thwart the use of these money trails (sources) by terrorists and supporting procedures and operations now instituted by the United States, Canada, and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom. But these are the new realities of a post-9/11 era.

As indicated earlier, Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the United States have strong attachments to their homelands, now manifested in many ways, including the transmission of goods through the sending of barrels and the remitting of money transfers. Scholars including Manuel Orozco

(The Inter-American Dialogue), Claremont Kirton (University of the West Indies [UWI]), Debra Roberts (Bank of Guyana), and Keith Nurse (UWI), for example, have done extensive research and compiled numerous data on this process and its importance to the Caribbean and Latin American regions, indicating that emigrants from these regions send the largest amount of money to their homelands—in 2000, more than 17 billion U.S. dollars, compared with Europe and Central Asia (more than $16 billion) and south East Asia (more than $15 billion).[47]

For the purposes of this paper, I have extracted some relevant data with specific applicability to Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Here are some highlights:[48]

- Remittances to Guyana totaled $120 million in 2002 and $201 million in 2005.
- Remittances to Barbados totaled $84 million in 2002 and $131 million in 2005.
- Remittances to Jamaica totaled $1.2 billion in 2002 and $87 billion dollars in 2005.
- Remittances to Trinidad and Tobago totaled $50 million in 2002 and $97 million in 2005.
- In 2003 remittances increased these nations' gross domestic products (GDPs) by 18.3 percent for Jamaica, 36.9 percent for Guyana, 4.3 percent for Barbados, and 0.77 percent for Trinidad and Tobago.
- Manuel Orozco (the senior and most prolific researcher on this topic) labels the impact of remittances on these nations as "strong" for Jamaica and Guyana, "moderate/medium" for Barbados, and "low" for Trinidad and Tobago.
- In all of these nations, remittances have been used to strengthen hometown associations, although this is more pronounced in Guyana and Jamaica.
- Remittances in all four nations have had a multiplier effect on the economy leading to an overall expansion in economic health.
- From a macroeconomic point of view, remittances have acquired as much importance as exports, traditionally considered the most important determinant of GDP.
- Although remittances have been used to aid the lower-middle and working classes in these nations, in some—especially Guyana—it has been reported that among Afro-Guyanese they have created a sense of dependency—almost as did welfare among African Ameri-

cans in the United States in the 1960s—thereby depressing initiative and stultifying the desire to seek gainful employment.

- Although remittances have had a positive effect in reducing poverty, the impact is temporary and does not replace the need for long-term structural reform to reduce rampant unemployment and cognate inequality in the region.
- Although remittances generally are quite small and are used to help finance basic living expenses of families in the sending societies, small but increasing portions are used for investment purposes and for development.
- Remittances also have been used to alleviate suffering resulting from floods and other natural disasters, which often befall these developing nations.

In summary, Afro-Caribbean nationals, in their attempts to reconnect with or to reconstruct "home," have used their remittances first to aid their less fortunate brethren and, more directly now, to aid the nation-states formed after the granting of political independence. This concept of "home" is less linear for Afro-Caribbeans than, say, for Indo- or Asian- (Chinese) Caribbeans, in that Afro-Caribbeans now domiciled in the New World nations were taken from many countries in Africa (a continent)—albeit from the west coast thereof. In contrast, Indo- and Chinese-born Caribbeans can refer to specific and somewhat unitary nation-states outside the Caribbean in their "other" or alternative construction of "home." This has been made more complicated or enticing, recently, by India's and China's active roles in reconnecting with their overseas diasporic communities in their quest to maximize national and global development. Lacking this strong linear connection, Afro-Caribbeans and creolized Indo- and Asian-Caribbeans focus on their new Caribbean civilization (sui generis) and the new nations thus formed in this hemisphere.

How then does all this affect development in the Caribbean diaspora?

DIASPORA, DEVELOPMENT, REMITTANCES: RENEGOTIATING HOME

The regional organization CARICOM, led by its Secretary General Edwin Carrington and aided by Dr. Edward Green, assistant secretary,

former head of the Caribbean Studies Association, and former university administrator, has been instrumental in laying the foundation for a more interconnected structural approach with the overseas diaspora.[49] And former Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson has played a pivotal role in charting a new, viable direction for using the overseas diaspora in a positive way. In short, these individuals have acted on the realization that there is a critical need for using immigrants from the diaspora as "development actors," namely persons devoted to catalyzing development activities for their native homeland societies.[50]

The English-speaking Caribbean has been blessed with language facility, and many of its first-, second-, and third-generation "nationals" are well placed in private and public bureaucracies, in state and local governments, and in American colleges and universities as professors and administrators. Some are successful businessmen and businesswomen, and others handle large (at times multibillion dollar) portfolios for global agencies and organizations. So the challenge is how to tap this reservoir of talent, and at times goodwill, to the benefit of former "homelands."

Many scholars and policy makers, including myself, have written on various modalities and paradigms that can serve the Caribbean well as that region looks to capitalize on remittance flows and untapped human and capital resources in the face of a massive brain drain at the secondary and tertiary levels of education and a similar brain drain of trained personnel such as doctors and nurses.[51] I will highlight some of these recommendations, which in my opinion, have much merit for national leaders in the region:

MINISTRIES

Ministries or subministries should be created in the prime ministers' or presidents' cabinets with primary responsibility for overseeing efforts at engaging the diaspora. This has been advocated by CARICOM Secretary General Edward Carrington and by former Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson. Jamaica is the first national government to take the lead in this regard by establishing a minister of state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a lecture at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York, in Brooklyn on October 30th, 2005, Patterson talked about an "engaged Diaspora" as opposed to a "passive Diaspora." He sees

"the connectedness of the engaged Diaspora manifesting itself through one or more of several ways," leading to what he called "an emotional attachment to sustain connectedness." [52] So far, Guyana and Barbados have established similar ministerial "structural" arrangements, and Trinidad and Tobago is set to follow suit shortly.

DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Another key issue is strengthening the collaboration and maintenance of stakeholders in the diaspora by intertwining them via the use of dual citizenship between host and home (sending) societies. Connecting Caribbean diasporas in a practical way via their electorates will bring greater demand for and support of transparency in the political process and a greater level of activity.[53] In some instances, this connection has led to diasporic nationals assuming political office in the home country, with varying measures of success, but, more importantly, it allows for collective lobbying interests between political elites here in the United States and elsewhere in North America, on behalf of the homeland nations.[54]

This position has been supported by several scholars. Anthropologist Linda Basch has argued that dual citizenship augments the power of Caribbean politicians by providing them with a political base in both New York and the Caribbean, each buttressing the other in a transnational social field.[55] Sociologist Nancy Foner also supports this view, positing that extending dual nationality or citizenship provisions may be a way of trying to secure the role of overseas nationals as "advocates of La Patria's interest in the USA."[56] And even a formidable critic of the new immigration, noted political scientist Samuel Huntington, concedes that adoption of dual citizenship by the sending country has been followed by a doubling of these individuals' naturalization rates, with higher increases among citizens of those countries where the initiative has come from the immigrants themselves.[57] These connections would not negate other political associations with the home country; rather, they would invigorate them by giving the diasporic others a stake in the consequences of the political decisions, challenges, and controversies of the home societies. In the final analysis, such efforts would enable the homeland governments to initiate the political integration of the diaspora and, hopefully, build a positive attitude between

host governments and diasporic populations toward vibrant, socially aware ethnic nationalities.

Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago now boast dual citizenship for their diasporic nationals; Guyana, however, does not. One could surmise that the current Guyanese government may recall its charges that the previous PNC government, which lasted for 25 years, was reputed to have extended its political life by using the "overseas vote" to retain its tenure in office.[58] While Indo-Guyanese are migrating in hordes to the United States, Afro-Guyanese are migrating in proportionately larger numbers, and it may be feared that extending this option may shift the political balance in a closely fought election in Guyana.

HOMETOWN ASSOCIATIONS

National governments and the diasporic communities need to both cosponsor and facilitate hometown associations (HTAs), which have worked well in the Latin American context, especially in Mexico. This concept emanates from a new development concept, "virtuous circle," introduced by Dr. Patrick Mendis in 2002 as sustainable development that goes beyond per capita indexes and the calculus of economics.[59] Professor Simon Tay, a Singaporean scholar, further explicated this concept when he contended that the "virtuous circle" would include an activism in development that includes the "little people," such as women, children, the undereducated, and the rural poor.[60] The point is that development ideology and models must be tied to a sort of growth equity, bringing segments of the society together so that they interact with the various engines and resources of development at their own levels of empowerment,[61] in short, to use the late Caribbean scholar Lloyd Best's dictum, helping to "make the small man, a real man."[62] This thematic concept has formed the basis for the national cooperative post-independence banks of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

HTAs result from work between home governments and local participants to extend the development imperative by collaborating on projects that bring needed relief to affected areas identified by local participants. These associations also inculcate a sense of civic involvement and participation by rewarding creativity and innovation. Many such small-scale development projects—wells for potable water and

health centers, for example—have resulted, and Guyana and Jamaica have reported much success and high usage of HTAs, with only moderate usage in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

The region needs to provide more access to secondary and tertiary education. In addition to trade relationships, remittances, and banking relationships, education and an investment in it also can be a clear economic multiplier. A hallmark of the Caribbean and Guyanese diaspora has been its superlative education at all levels, given the size of its demographics as compared to India, China, and other land masses. Caribbean diasporic nationals (especially first, second, and later generations) generally have excelled in student bodies and faculties in many elite private and public universities, which are characterized by meritocracy and universalistic criteria.[63] Much of this earlier educational success was based on the strong skill sets and knowledge base of the region's highly competitive secondary and primary schools. Unfortunately, this competitive edge has been lost at the primary and secondary levels, with a precipitous drop in the universal completion of primary education—one of the ten Millennium Development Goals that has not been achieved in Guyana, for example. This drop has been further illustrated in a World Bank report that notes a diminishing quality of education in segments of the region's primary schools, the existence of "barrel children" (those who are abandoned by parents who go abroad to seek a better life), and a low enrollment in tertiary education, with only Barbados succeeding in continued expansion of tertiary education.[64] Under previous arrangements, Caribbean secondary schools could send their "best and brightest" to study at American and Canadian universities, primarily for their undergraduate degrees, with a view to returning home for some period after completing their studies. The Burnham regime of Guyana, for example, enjoyed a cozy and profitably privileged relationship in the 1960s when it was in the political opposition, because the United States feared Marxist Prime Minister Cheddi Jagan; hundreds of U.S. Immigration Service scholarships were offered to colleges and universities in the United States and Puerto Rico. The students who received these J1 visas were supposed to return home to help in spreading democracy and aiding development. Jagan, who was courted by the U.S.S.R., sent

many students to the Eastern Bloc, and to Cuban and Soviet universities, as the Cold War waxed.

A similar situation occurred on the island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which, during that period of the 1960s, sent its best students to Yale on similar arrangements for undergraduate study. One successful graduate of this arrangement is the current U.S. ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, the Honorable Dr. Roy Austin, who attended Yale University, where he met and befriended President George W. Bush and was tapped to join the prestigious but secret Skulls and Bones society, whose membership includes many of the world's business and political elites.[65]

It would be advantageous for Caribbean diaspora experts to act as de facto agents for their home governments, to make educational linkages with large public and private university systems in New York, Massachusetts, Florida, and New Jersey for example, as well as private proprietary ones. Of course, partnerships would have to be engendered and identified in critical areas of "felt needs." For instance, tourism students could be developed with opportunities at Florida International University and Cornell, or in the area of engineering, relationships with State University of New York, CUNY, or Rutgers University could be pursued. Indeed, some of these initiatives currently are being undertaken, but unfortunately they are piecemeal, segmented, and not well coordinated for maximum effect.[66] Caribbean diaspora experts, now strategically positioned, can, with the correct political posture, appeal and use their structural affiliations to persuade immigrants to aid the development goals of their former homelands, particularly with regard to the dangerous slippage in education. If embraced and used as pivotal stakeholders, Caribbean and Guyanese diaspora experts can play a highly positive role in this regard. Barbados has done extremely well, with success at all levels of education, on which it spends significant proportions of its GDP; Trinidad and Tobago also has made moderate progress, but Guyana and Jamaica have not done as well, with Guyana showing the least progress in reaching the education goals international organizations have set for it.[67]

CONCLUSIONS

There is more that can be stated, as the list above is not exhaustive. We have not discussed family breakup and gender imbalance, with

the resulting "barrel children," about which I have written elsewhere. Nor have we discussed extensively the growing culture of emigration, the massive brain drain, and the valleys of dislocation it leaves in the region. So, although remittances can encourage some improvements in economic stability, often short-term, they must be viewed within the historical context adumbrated earlier and in the context of the challenges still facing the West Indies (Caribbean), including the four nations under review: Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Professor Neville Duncan, political scientist at the University of the West Indies, in a 2005 conference in Panama,[68] reminded us that despite some decline in the first decade, unemployment is still high in the region, with rates of 10.3 percent in Barbados, 12.5 percent in Jamaica, 10.8 percent in Trinidad and Tobago, and 17 percent or more in Guyana.[69] These high unemployment rates have negatively affected out-migration, resulting in the brain drain that is collectively weakening skills and capacity in these countries. An extreme case is Guyana, which is losing nurses and teachers at high and unsustainable rates. In Jamaica, 80 percent of tertiary graduates leave (migrate), as do large numbers of secondary graduates.[70] Both Guyana and Jamaica have high levels of crime and political violence. In addition, enrollment in tertiary education has been historically low in the Caribbean, in contrast with Latin America and, as Professor Duncan argues, is a major obstacle to the Caribbean region's achieving a knowledge-driven economy.[71] Only Barbados spends a high of about U.S. $860 per student on education, and Caribbean governments averaged a lamentable 4.9 percent of their GDP on education during the period 1999–2002.[72] Further, the region's debt ratio is very high, standing at 96 percent of GDP; in 2003 the percentage of GDP that financed public debt was 84 percent in Barbados, 54 percent in Trinidad and Tobago, 142 percent in Jamaica, and 142 percent in Guyana. Along with Haiti, Guyana and Jamaica have been two of the region's slowest-growing economies over the last four decades.[73] In the recent past, Guyana has benefited from debt relief and is making slow progress in eliminating its public debt. (It was included under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and a sizeable proportion of its debt forgiven.) Whether this will spur development and lower the economic inequality between Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese and blunt the political charges in some quarters (especially in the diaspora) of economic and political marginalization of Afro-Guyanese is still an open question.[74]

This region with sending "homeland societies" has many microstates struggling to survive in an increasingly hostile and highly competitive global environment, losing many of their preferential tariffs stemming from colonialization and early political independence, ridden with high debt, cursed with unsustainable brain drain and out-migration, and beset with high rates of crime and political instability. In varying degrees, all these problems and more affect the four nations under review.

These are the compelling factors that push West Indians, and Afro-Caribbeans especially, to attempt to reconnect with their "homelands," not only nostalgically, but in order to reconstruct "home" and use their remittances, in cash and in kind, and whatever other skill sets, contacts, and opportunities they have, to help their less fortunate "brethren" and aid their societies to stay anchored in a global environment that is hostile on many fronts. Therefore, it behooves Americans and those interested in promoting democracies and thriving market economies in this region on our doorsteps to work for politically, economically, socially, and ethnically inclusive diasporic communities that have the potential to catalyze development in these nation-states—at times at their own expense and sacrifice—thus sparing the American taxpayer some of the financial burden.

At a recent historic three-day Heads of Governments conference held in June with leaders of the Caribbean nation-states as represented by CARICOM, President George Bush and the U.S. State Department, and the Caribbean Diaspora Fora (comprising the Experts Forum, Private Sector Dialogue, and the Diaspora Forum), an agreement was finalized on many of the conclusions made in this paper.[75] Thus, Stuart Hall may have been wrong: Afro-Caribbeans and other West Indians can and must go "home" again; and yes, they can even *stay*.

NOTES

Throughout this essay, the terms "Afro-Caribbeans" and "Afro–West Indians" are used interchangeably as are "Caribbean" and "West Indian."

1. Grant Farred, "You Can Go Home Again, You Just Can't Stay: Stuart Hall and the Caribbean Diaspora," *Research in African Literatures* 27, no. 1 (December 1996, special issue on Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*): 28–48; see

also Stuart Hall, "Culture Identity and Diaspora," in *Colonial Discourse and Post Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 392–403 and Camille A. Nelson, "Carriers of Globalization: Loss of Home and Self within the African Diaspora," *Florida Law Review*, 539 (2003): 539–81.

2. Roy Bryce-Laporte, foreword to *Emerging Perspectives on the Black Diaspora*, ed. Aubrey W. Bonnett and G. L. Watson (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990), xv.

3. Bryce-Laporte, foreword to *Emerging Perspectives on the Black Diaspora*, xvii.

4. Bryce-Laporte, foreword to *Emerging Perspectives on the Black Diaspora*, xvii.

5. Howard Dodson and Sylvanie A. Diouf, *In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience* (Washington D.C.: National Geographic, for The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 2004), 166.

6. It should be noted here that I agree that the disconnect between Afro-Caribbeans (also called Afro–West Indians), and Indo-Caribbeans with regard to "home" is much less nuanced, and that the creolized Afro-Caribbeans tend to focus more strongly on "home" in the Caribbean as opposed to the ancestral "home" in Africa. For Indo-Guyanese, especially, given their nature of arrival, their numerical modal minority in the West Indies, their general lack of adaptation to Creole, hybrid culture, their largely rural status, and the recent attempts by India to woo them both culturally and economically, the connection with the Caribbean "home" is less linear. Professor Calvin B. Holder elaborates on this point much later. See note 10.

Creolization, according to sociologist and Caribbeanist Raymond T. Smith involves two processes: "In the first place it involves the creation of some area of common culture corresponding to the social relations in which people of varying ethnic groups are involved; and second, it is an integral part of the process of creolization to stress the differences between groups identified as racial groups." Raymond T. Smith, "People and Change," *New World Fortnightly* May 1966 (Guyana Independence Issue): 51; see also Eric Doumerc, *Caribbean Civilization: The English-Speaking Caribbean since Independence* (France: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003), 6.

7. See for example, Maurice St. Pierre, *Anatomy of Resistance: Anti-Colonialism in Guyana 1823–1865*, Warwick Caribbean Series (New York: Macmillan Press, 1999); David Lowenthal, *West Indian Societies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972); Stephen Grabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Raymond T. Smith, "People and Change."; and Ivelaw Griffith, "Country

Report: Guyana," in *Countries at the Crossroads* (Lanham, Md.: Freedom House and Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 166–87.

8. Smith, "People and Change," 40, 166–87.

9. Although Trinidad and Tobago has not been bereft of ethnic conflict and racial incidents, I argue that the carnival, calypso, and other creolized West Indian cultural symbols have made more inroads among Indo-Guyanese there than in Guyana, and this has alleviated the razor-sharp divisions now found in Guyana.

10. Calvin B. Holder, "West Indies: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Martinique, St. Kitts, Trinidad," in *The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration since 1965*, ed. Mary C. Waters and Reed Ueda, with Helen B. Marrow (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 674.

11. Holder, "West Indies," 675.

12. Holder, "West Indies," 675.

13. Holder, "West Indies," 675.

14. Dodson and Diouf, *In Motion*, 157–70.

15. Holder, "West Indies," and Fiona R. Barnes, "West Indian Heritage," in *The African American Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., ed. Carl L. Bankston III et al. (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2001), 2662–64.

16. Holder, "West Indies," and Fiona R. Barnes, "West Indian Heritage," 2662–64.

17. Aubrey W. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," in *Racial and Ethnic Relations in America*, 1st ed., vol. 3, ed. Carl L. Bankston III (Pasadena, Calif.: Salem Press, 2000), 1037–39 and Holder, "West Indies."
Finally, one of the earlier works to use the remittances perspective in analyzing and developing a perspective on Caribbean societies is William F. Skinner, Klaus de Albuquerque, and Roy Bryce-Laporte, *Return Migration and Remittances: Developing a Caribbean Perspective*, RIIES Occasional Papers No. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, Research Institute on Immigration and Ethnic Studies, 1982).

18. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," 1037–39.

19. Holder, "West Indies," 676.

20. Holder, "West Indies," 678 and Barnes, "West Indian Heritage."

21. Holder, "West Indies"; Aubrey W. Bonnett, "Commentary: Why Do They Hate US?" *CaribVoice*, 6 August 2004; and Aubrey W. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans: Why Do They Hate US?" *Caribbean Graphic Online*, 5 July 2004.

22. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," 1037–39.

23. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," 1037–39.

24. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

25. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

26. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

27. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

28. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

29. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86.

30. Holder, "West Indies," 674–86 and Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," 1037–39.

31. Holder, "West Indies."

32. Holder, "West Indies."

33. Holder, "West Indies."

34. See Dilip Ratha, "Workers' Remittances: An Important and Stable Source of External Development Finance," in *Global Development Finance* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2003), 157–75; see also Dilip Ratha, "Understanding the Importance of Remittances," *Migration Information Source*, 1 October 2004, at http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/print.cfm?ID=256 and Robert Shackleton et al., *Remittances: International Payments by Migrants* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Budget Office, May 2005).

35. Ratha, "Workers' Remittances."

36. Ratha, "Workers' Remittances."

37. Ratha, "Workers' Remittances."

38. Ratha, "Workers' Remittances."

39. Ratha, "Workers' Remittances."

40. Stuart Philpott, "Remittance Obligations, Social Networks, and Choice among Montserratian Immigrants in Britain," *MAN* 3, no. 3: 465–76 and Robert A. Manners, "Remittances and the Unit of Analysis in Anthropological Research," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 21, no. 3 (1965): 179–95.

41. Bonham Richardson, "Caribbean Migrations, 1838–1985," in *The Modern Caribbean*, eds. Franklin W. Knight and Colin Palmer (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 224–26;

42. Richardson, "Caribbean Migrations," 224–26.

43. Holder, "West Indies."

44. Juan Flores, "The Diaspora Strikes Back: Reflections on Cultural Remittances," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 39, no. 3 (November–December 2005): 21–25.

45. Bryce-Laporte, foreword to *Emerging Perspectives on the Black Diaspora*, xviii.

46. Bryce-Laporte, foreword to *Emerging Perspectives on the Black Diaspora*, xviii.

47. See Keith Nurse, *Remittances and Beyond: Diaspora and Development in the Caribbean* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, forthcoming); Keith Nurse, "Diaspora, Migration, and Development in the Americas," policy paper (Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Foundation for the Americas, September 2004); Claremont Kirton, "Remittances: The Experiences of the English-Speaking Caribbean," in *Beyond Small Change: Making Migrant Remittances Count*, eds. Donald F. Terry and Steven R. Wilson (Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank, 2005); Debra Roberts, "The Development Impact of Remittances on Caribbean Economies: The Case of Guyana" (paper presented at Crisis, Chaos and Change: Caribbean Development Challenges in the 21st Century, the 8th annual conference of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social & Economic Studies, Trinidad and Tobago, 26–28 March 2007; Manuel Orozco, "The Impact of Migration in the Caribbean and Central American Region," policy paper (Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Foundation for the Americas, 2003); Manuel Orozco, *Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean: Issues and Perspectives on Development* (Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, September 2004); Manuel Orozco, *Distant But Close: Guyanese Transnational Communities and Their Remittances from the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Agency for International Development, January 2004); and Global Equity Initiative, *Beyond Money: Diaspora Engagement in Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 2003), http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~acgei/caribbean.htm.

48. All monetary figures given in U.S. dollars. Also note that data utilized in this section is drawn from items listed in footnote 47.

49. H. E. Edwin Carrington, keynote address on the occasion of the United Nations Population Fund Media Awards (Mona, Jamaica, 2 December 2006, described in CARICOM press release 226/2066, 4 December 2006).

50. P. J. Patterson, "CARICOM Beyond Thirty: Connecting with the Diaspora" (CARICOM 30th anniversary lecture, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York, 30 October 2004).

51. Aubrey W. Bonnett, "Creating a Cohesive and Substantive Platform of the Caribbean Diaspora in North America That Would Contribute to the Development of the Caribbean" (lecture at the Caribbean Diaspora Project Experts' Meeting, UN Secretariat, New York, December 2005).

52. Patterson, "CARICOM Beyond Thirty," and Bonnett, "Creating a Cohesive and Substantive Platform."

53. Bonnett, "Creating a Cohesive and Substantive Platform."

54. Bonnett, "Creating a Cohesive and Substantive Platform."

55. Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and the Deterritorialized Nation-State.* (Langhorne, Penn.: Gordon and Breach, 1994).

56. Nancy Foner, "Engagement across National Borders, Then and Now," *Fordham Law Review* 75 (2007): 2483–93.

57. Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 209.

58. See St. Pierre, *Anatomy of Resistance*; Grabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana*; Joy Moncrieffe, *Ethnic Diversity and State Response in the Caribbean* (London: Overseas Development Institute, January 2004); and Griffith, "Country Report: Guyana."

59. See "Achieving Sustainable Development," *Global Issues* (U.S. State Department) 7, no. 1 (April 2002).

60. See Holder, "West Indies," 678 and Bonnett, "West Indian Americans."

61. See "Achieving Sustainable Development."

62. Lloyd Best, Oxford and Cambridge universities–trained Trinidadian intellectual and scholar, coined this phrase even as he championed microlending/savings emanating from an African (Nigerian) cultural retention called "susu" and the establishment of a workers bank funded and sponsored by the government to help alleviate gross levels of inequality in Trinidadian society.

63. Bonnett, "West Indian Americans," 1037–39 and Bonnett, "West Indian Americans: Why Do They Hate Us?"

64. See World Bank, *A Time to Choose: Caribbean Development in the 21st Century*, especially chap. 7, "Building Skills for the Knowledge Driven Society," (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2005), http://go.worldbank.org/Q6CLMHE8G1.

65. See U.S. Department of State, "Roy L. Austin Biography," at www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/biog/7061.htm. Other Internet and book references and *The Trinidad Express* newspaper speak to the issue of Skull & Bones and Austin's Yale days and friendship with President Bush.

66. Over the years, numerous piecemeal efforts have been made to bring Caribbean students and faculty to American universities, often at the behest of college and university presidents who are looking to expand cultural and educational experiences for American students. At least in New York, where many Caribbean nationals reside, such efforts have been made, for example, under chancellors Murphy and Reynolds at CUNY and Wharton, and Bartlett and King at SUNY. In my opinion, to get the maximum effect from these efforts,

they need to be streamlined and coordinated at the regional level of the sending societies.

67. World Bank, *A Time to Choose*.

68. Neville C. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean: On Overcoming" (address to the 7th annual assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, Panama City, 9–16 June 2005), www.ccc-caribe.org/eng/genassem05/index.htm.

69. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean."

70. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean."

71. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean."

72. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean."

73. Duncan, "The Challenges of the Contemporary Caribbean."

74. Guyana, with a large out-migration of highly skilled and unskilled individuals, growing crime rate spurred by international narcotics, and the deep social and political division of a plural society, seems unfortunately locked in perennial conflict. See also Griffith, "County Report: Guyana."

75. See "Caricom Leaders Pleased with Conference on the Caribbean," *Caribbean Current*, 28 June 2007, at www.caribbeancurrent.com/Archives/2007/issue026/easterncaribbean/story_id_001.html.

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Caribbean Immigrants in New York City and the Rise of a Black Middle Class in Southeast Queens

On the island of Jamaica, in the West Indies, the potential emigrant never states the specific place of his or her place of abode, but the departure from Jamaica in popular parlance is referred to as "him a go foreign." Even before the twentieth century, Caribbean people have been trekking the globe. Since investment capital only came to the Caribbean sparingly, Caribbean labor followed the flow of investment capital. When the Americans assumed control of the Panama Canal project, West Indians migrated in droves to sell their labor to American construction firms. When the United Fruit Company expanded production of bananas in Central America, Caribbean workers seized the opportunity to work for wages that were better than what was available on their respective islands. When World War I erupted and European labor could no longer supply the factories in the north with unskilled labor, black labor from the southern United States and Caribbean workers moved to fill that vacuum in the proletarian ranks.

Immediately after World War II, Britain experienced a shortage of labor in particular areas of its economy and Caribbean workers migrated to fill that void. The civil rights movement precipitated a change in American immigration policy. The 1965 Immigration Act completely changed the complexion of American immigration and allowed an influx of Caribbean workers to seek occupational upliftment in a highly industrialized America. This paper assesses how Caribbean workers have fared since those immigration changes in 1965 and particularly examines the rise of a Caribbean working class and middle class in New York City.

THE CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANT IN NEW YORK CITY

New York City remains the mecca of immigrants to the United States. In the post–civil rights period, since 1965 when the immigration laws were changed, the complexion of the immigrant stream changed dramatically. European immigrants have become a minority and the majority of immigrants, legal and illegal, originate from Mexico and other parts of Central America. As a nation, as is the case in Europe, the United States is having difficulty in adjusting to the new demographic dynamics. That is certainly the case in the west and southwest regions of the country. The immigrant population on the East Coast has a lower concentration of Mexicans than the West does. In the East, Caribbean immigrants, particularly when Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean are included, constitute a plurality of the mass influx.[1]

In the 2000 Census, 11.1 percent of the United States population was foreign-born. For New York City, the foreign-born population was 35.9 percent (Lobo and Salvo 2004). The immigrant population has mushroomed since the 1990s. During the decade of the 1990s, the last decade of the twentieth century, the foreign-born population of New York City spiraled to 2.9 million, an increase for the decade of 788,000.

The non-Hispanic Caribbean foreign-born population amounts to 5.3 percent of the United States population, according to data from the 2000 Census. When those macro-data are disaggregated and New York City is isolated, the Caribbean foreign-born compose 20.8 percent of that population. That figure supersedes the figure of European foreign-born, at 19.4 percent. Both in the nation and in New York City, the Latin American foreign-born predominate. Nationwide, their percentage is 46.6 percent and for New York City, it is 32 percent.

Dominicans from the Dominican Republic constitute the largest immigrant group in the last decade. The 2000 Census signified that there were 369,000 Dominicans residing in New York City. In the decade from 1990 to 2000, Jamaican immigrants stood at 178,922, Guyanese at 130,648, Haitians at 114,000, and there were 88,000 immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago (Lobo and Salvo 2004).

How has the Caribbean population fared in material terms in highly competitive and technologically advanced New York City? One way of assessing the efficacy of the Caribbean adaptation to American society is to examine the structure of the family. Throughout the United States,

there is a strong correlation between families living in poverty and single-parent families, particularly female-headed families. Other criteria included in the New York City Department of Planning document are home ownership, median household income, percentage living below the poverty line, and gender income disparities.

The Caribbean population, when assessed in accordance with the mentioned criteria, has not done badly, although other immigrant groups have outperformed them.

Of the Jamaican population in New York City, 33.1 percent of households are female-headed. Among the Guyanese population, it is 21.9 percent; among the Haitian population, 30.7 percent; among those from Trinidad and Tobago, 31.6 percent; and among Dominicans, 38.6 percent. In contrast, among Chinese immigrants, only 9 percent of households are female-headed, and among immigrants from the Philippines, 15.9 percent (Lobo and Salvo 2004).

For the entire city of New York, female-headed households amounted to 18.8 percent of all households. Caribbean immigrants superseded that threshold. Despite the shakiness of the family structure, Caribbean immigrants have managed to accumulate capital and acquire homes. In 2000, 36.9 percent of Jamaicans lived in their own homes. For those immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago, it was 32.3 percent, and in the Guyanese community, it was an impressive 48.5 percent. In the Haitian community, 30.2 percent of households were owner-occupied.

There were some immigrant groups, including Greeks, Italians, and Filipinos, whose home ownership exceeded that of Caribbean immigrants, but the Caribbean English-speaking immigrant has had a profound impact on home ownership in New York City.

New York City, despite its opulence, has been plagued with a high poverty rate far in excess of the national poverty figures. The poverty rate in New York City for most of the twenty-first century has hovered around 20 percent, while the national poverty rate fluctuates around 12 percent. The disparity in wealth possession is staggering in what is regarded as the financial capital of the world, particularly in Manhattan. The Dominican community is heavily concentrated in Washington Heights, a neighborhood in Manhattan, and the poverty rate among that Spanish-speaking community exceeds the norm for New York City. Poverty in that community in 2000 was estimated at 30.9 percent. In the Chinese community, it was 21.7 percent. Poverty among Russian

immigrants was a sizeable 22.2 percent; among Ukrainians, it was 20.8 percent; and for Pakistani immigrants, it was 26.1 percent.

Despite the prevalence of female-headed families in the English-speaking Caribbean community, poverty in those communities, although not miniscule, falls below the norm for New York City. In the Jamaican community, the poverty rate is 14.6 percent. In the Guyanese community, 13.4 percent, and among the Trinidad and Tobago community, 16.5 percent lived below the official poverty line. In the Haitian community, 19.1 percent fell below the poverty line.

Caribbean immigrants fared fairly modestly in the measure of household income. Despite the increase in the rate of productivity, wages in New York City have been falling. That is also the case nationwide. The average annual household income in New York City was $38,500. For the Guyanese immigrant, it was $41,960. For those from the twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, the median household income in 2000 was $36,300.

Other immigrant groups fell significantly below the city's median income. In the Dominican community, median income was $25,310. In the Mexican community, it was $32,000. In the Russian community it was $28,000, and among the Ukrainians, it was $23,100.

Caribbean women are heavily represented in the labor force and the differentiation between male and female income is quite miniscule. In the Jamaican community, the participation rate of women in the labor force was 64.7 percent, in contrast to their male counterparts, where the rate was 70 percent. The gender gap in the Guyanese community was much larger, as the participation rate of women was 60.7 percent while for men it was 72.9 percent. For the Trinidad and Tobago community, the male and female participation rates were 71.1 and 63.6, respectively. In stark contrast, only 22.2 percent of Pakistani women were in the labor force, 29.4 percent of Bangladeshi women, 46.4 percent of women from the Dominican Republic, and 39.2 percent of women from Mexico.

Workers from the Caribbean have competed fairly well in New York City. Their poverty rates are below the norm, their home ownership rates have become renowned, and their labor-force participation rate, particularly for women, is quite impressive and is a critical factor why Caribbean household income is slightly above, or hovers around, the

city's norm. However, even though Caribbean home ownership and household median income are higher than those of immigrant groups from Russia and China, that does not mean that the upward mobility of those groups will not be more accelerated than that of the Caribbean working-class immigrant.

A recent study of second-generation Americans conducted by John Mollenkopf, Philip Kasinitz, Mary Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway provides us with a wealth of data to assess the upward mobility of different immigrant groups. The authors published a paper, "Becoming American/Becoming New Yorkers: The Second Generation in a Majority Minority City," in the online journal *Migration Information Source.* They examined the higher-education attainment of people twenty-five years and older from the second generation of the following groups: South Americans, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, West Indians, African Americans, Chinese, Russians, and American whites.[2]

Mollenkopf et al. looked at high-school dropout rates and rates of obtaining an undergraduate degree. Despite the low median household income and relatively high rate of poverty among Chinese immigrants, their second generation's educational achievement is quite spectacular. They have the lowest high-school dropout rate of any of the groups under review and the highest completion rate at college. Only 1.1 percent of second-generation Chinese were classified as high-school dropouts and 73 percent completed an undergraduate degree.

The educational performance of second-generation Russians is equally impressive. A mere 2.4 percent of that second generation dropped out of high school and 61.2 percent acquired an undergraduate degree. The indigenous white population's educational achievements are also commendable. Their dropout rate was 5.2 percent and 63.6 percent completed college.

Among the various Latino groups, the South Americans, although falling below the educational achievements of those groups previously mentioned, performed above both Dominicans and Puerto Ricans. The dropout rate of the South American group was 11.9 percent and the college graduation rate was 30 percent. Of the Latino groups, Puerto Ricans achieved the least in educational achievement. The Puerto Rican dropout rate from high school was greater than their college graduation rate. The Puerto Rican college graduation rate was 13.2

percent, while the dropout rate was a disturbing 22.8 percent. The second generation of Dominicans had a dropout rate of 14.6 percent and a college graduation rate of 25 percent.

West Indian educational achievement is modest and falls far below that of the second generation of Chinese and Russians. The high-school dropout rate is placed at 5.6 percent, .04 percentage points above the native white population. Nonetheless, the white college graduation rate is 63.6 percent, and the West Indian college graduation rate is 32.7 percent. The indigenous black population falls below the other groups with the exception of the Puerto Ricans. The dropout rate of the black population is 16.3 percent, and 20.3 percent completed college.[3]

The educational performance measure is an accurate instrument to assess the extent of upward mobility that will take place in the second generation. Caribbean immigrants have paid less attention to educational achievement than the Chinese and the Russians. The high poverty rate in these communities and the modest household median income reflect language difficulties, but based on the educational achievements of the second generation, that language barrier has not been an impediment for the second generation of Chinese and Russian immigrants.

The educational achievement data reveal that some special intervention programs are needed for what are essentially indigenous groups. In the case of the African Americans, African-American females have made giant strides in increasing the number of African Americans who enter college. African-American females tend to have higher retention and graduation rates than their male counterparts.

UPWARD AND DOWNWARD CLASS MOBILITY
IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The previous sections dealt with the totality of the Caribbean immigrant community irrespective of class. Much of the research on the black historical experience has focused on the black poor and the impact of racism on the black condition. Since E. Franklin Frazier wrote *The Black Bourgeoisie* in the post–civil rights era, there has been a growing literature on the black middle class. In her 1999 review essay on the black middle class, Mary Pattillo-McCoy of Northwestern Uni-

versity compared the black middle class with the white middle class. A critical mass of black middle class was not achieved until after the civil rights movement. The class structure in the United States was transformed after World War II. The American economy after World War II grew exponentially, and there was a sizeable increase in those defined as middle class. Pattillo-McCoy points out that as early as 1910, 20 percent of white workers were defined as middle class. Up until 1960, only 10 percent of the black community was defined as middle class (Pattillo-McCoy 2000).

After World War II and in the post–civil rights era, the black class structure has become more variegated. At the beginning of the twentieth century, black women worked predominantly as domestics. As Pattillo-McCoy points out, by the 1980s, only 6.2 percent of black women were employed as domestics (Pattillo-McCoy 1999; 2000).

One of the main points of Pattillo-McCoy's work on the black middle class is that the black middle class is juxtaposed with the black poor. For example, in respect to crime, the black middle class is more interwoven with criminal elements than the white middle class. That was one of her findings in her major study of the black middle class in a neighborhood in Chicago (Pattillo-McCoy 1999).

The divisions within the black middle class make it far more brittle than its white counterpart. The composition of the white middle class entails a solid percentage of upper-middle class, while the black middle class is predominantly composed of the lower-middle strata. The black middle class benefited from the economic expansion of the 1960s, but by the 1970s, the growth in the black middle class began to taper off. According to Pattillo-McCoy, another growth spurt occurred from 1980 to 1990. Black middle class ranks grew from 39.6 percent to 44.9 percent. There was further growth in 1995, when the black middle class jumped to 49 percent (Pattillo-McCoy 1999).

The black middle class benefited from public-sector jobs in America's multitiered governmental structure. Whether in the federal, state, city, or municipal bureaucratic spheres, blacks are disproportionately represented. Consequently, the growth of the black middle class has been stymied by the streamlining and contracting of the growth of government since the 1990s.

In a presentation to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on July 15, 2005, titled "The Economic Stagnation of the Black Middle Class," Prof.

Douglas J. Besharov of the University of Maryland and the American Enterprise Institute argued that since the 1980s, the black middle class has hardly grown. According to Besharov, there is growth in absolute numbers but not in the percentage of the totality. Besharov argues that betwixt 1980 and 2003, black household incomes above the median increased from 29 percent to 40 percent.[4]

Besharov does not attribute the stagnation in the black middle class to racism, rollbacks in the public sector, or to the changes taking place in the economy, but to dysfunctionalities that have taken place in the black family since the 1960s. Besharov also points to the difference in educational achievement vis-à-vis the white community (Besharov 2005).

Also of concern is the extent to which the black middle class can transfer assets from one generation to another and institutionalize some degree of professionalism. It is not unusual for the assets of the black middle class to be limited to automobiles and a house. Pattillo-McCoy takes the position that the transfer of wealth from one generation to another is affected by the inability of the black middle class to accumulate assets. The census data show that the percentage of blacks condemned to a life of poverty has diminished, but as Pattillo-McCoy points out in her review essay, lower-status black workers experience great difficulty in moving their offspring to an elevated middle class status. Equally problematic is the difficulty that middle-class blacks experience in transferring middle-class status to their children. Pattillo-McCoy writes: "Sixty percent of whites, but only 36 percent of African-Americans from upper white collar backgrounds are able to maintain their parents' occupational status. Whites are also more likely to improve their parents' occupational status. Fifty-three percent of whites from lower white collar background move into upper white collar jobs, compared to only 29 percent of blacks. Downward mobility is also more prevalent among African Americans" (Pattillo-McCoy 2000).

The study of class mobility, upward and downward, is quite complex, but it is clear that the black middle-class experience is far more hazardous than that of the white middle class. American research institutions have become more interested in the study of class in this new age of globalization.

THE CARIBBEAN MIDDLE CLASS IN SOUTHEAST QUEENS

New York City is considered the most ethnically diverse urban space in the world. The city is presently 35 percent white, 24.5 percent black, 27 percent Hispanic, and 9.8 percent Asian. The West Indian population, based on 2000 census data, is estimated at 549,664. The only larger ethnic group is the Italian community with 692,000.

Perhaps with the exception of Staten Island, Queens County is considered the city's citadel of the middle class. Despite New York City's affluence, median earnings have been falling for males and essentially stagnant for females. Median female earnings for 1989 amounted to $31,317, and in 1999, amounted to $32,949. The median earning for male workers in 1989 was $39,074, but in 1999 it had fallen to $37,435. Median family income has also fallen. In 1989, median family income was $44,828, and by 1999, there was a decline to $41,887. Median household income for that ten-year period remained essentially stagnant at approximately $38,000 (Lobo and Salvo 2004).

Queens and Staten Island have the lowest percentage of residents trapped below the poverty line. The Bronx, which has the distinction for being the poorest borough, for the decade of the 1980s and 1990s had poverty rates of over 25 percent. In Queens, the poverty rate in 1989 was below 10 percent, and in 1998 it climbed to approximately 12 percent (Lobo and Salvo 2004).

Queens has the largest and most diverse foreign-born population of the boroughs that make up New York City. Of the 2.2 million people in Queens, 45 percent are white, 20 percent are black, 21 percent are Asian, and 26 percent are Hispanic. Queens has the highest concentration of black middle class in the country, and that black middle class includes a heavy concentration of Caribbean immigrants. Southeast Queens in the 1960s was predominantly Jewish and Italian. Caribbean immigrants began purchasing single-family homes in the late 1960s in Queens Village, Cambria Heights, Laurelton, and Rosedale.

The 2005 community survey by the Census Bureau revealed that in Queens, black median household income exceeded that of whites. The black median household income is approximately $52,000 per year, and white household income is $50,960. Hispanic median household income in Queens is $43,927, and Asian median household income is $52,998

(Roberts 2006). Nowhere else in the country with a population in excess of 65,000 has black median household income superseded white median household income. Sam Roberts, journalist and demographer at the *New York Times*, attributed this phenomenon to the strength of two-parent families and the triumph of Caribbean immigrants in a competitive global environment.

Black non-Hispanic households with native-born heads of household had a median household income of $45,864. Where the black head of household was foreign-born, the median income was $61,151. For comparable whites, it was $45,861, and for Asians it was $51,979. For the Hispanic population, it was $41,960.

When married-couple households are compared, black non-Hispanic median household income is estimated at $78,070. Married-couple white non-Hispanic household income was estimated at $74,503. For the Asian population, where females were not prominent in the workforce, it was $56,361, and for Hispanics, where females also have a low labor-force participation rate, the household income for married couples was $50,960.

From the preliminary findings of the *New York Times*, there is some evidence that there is a high level of professionalism within Caribbean households and despite the macro changes taking place in family life, two-parent families are intact. With the racial and ethnic transformation in Southeast Queens, real-estate values have soared and improvement in property is strikingly discernible.

Further insight on the black and Caribbean middle class in Southeast Queens can be extrapolated from the data on Community District 13, which encompasses much of that community. Of the 196,000 residents, 75,580 are foreign-born, approximately 38 percent. That figure would be greater if second generation immigrants were included (U.S. Census 2000). Seventy-two percent of the district is owner-occupied, making it what the Rev. Floyd Flake referred to as a bedroom community. Of the family structure, married couples composed 51.6 percent and female-headed households amounted to 20.4 percent. Of the 73 census tracts, only 6 registered families below the poverty line in double digits. Median household income was above the national and New York City norms (U.S. Census 2000). A high percentage of households had both parents in the labor market and the unemployment rates, for a black community, was relatively low. After a forty-year stretch, the black

middle-class community was able to maintain neighborhood stability concomitant with rising property values.

CONCLUSION

The economic performance of Caribbean immigrants has been largely based on anecdotal chatter. This paper has attempted to place that discourse in a larger context and with an examination of empirical data. The majority of Caribbean immigrants are hardworking people with high levels of participation in the labor force on the part of males and females. The family structure is not as strong as other migrant families such as the Chinese or the Russians. When the educational achievement data are examined, Caribbean immigrants outpace Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, African-Americans, and South Americans but are outpaced by indigenous whites, Chinese, and Russians. The Chinese and Russians have a remarkable record in attending and completing higher education. There is clearly a correlation between higher education and upward mobility and the upward mobility trajectory of these immigrant groups supersede that of the Caribbean working class in New York City.

As for African Americans, the ranks of the Caribbean middle class have become more expansive in recent decades. Their record on home ownership is remarkable, but there is a lot that is not known. Further empirical studies are needed to access the level of professionalization taking place in the Caribbean middle class. There is very little data to assess if wealth and occupational status are passing from one generation to another. This paper has relied heavily on the Census datasets. What is needed to further the understanding of the black and Caribbean middle class in southeast Queens is further scholarly research of an intergenerational nature to determine the extent of professionalization and class stabilization that has taken hold in this community.

NOTES

1. After each census, the Department of Planning produces a document rich with data about the foreign-born in New York City.

2. The authors, Mollenkopf et al., did an exhaustive empirical study using a large telephone sample and buttressed by interviews with focus groups.

3. There has been a significant increase in black college attendance over the last forty years. *The Minorities in Higher Education* (Harvey and Anderson 2004) chronicles this progress, but still disconcerting is the outpacing of black females of the black males.

4. The analysis of the black middle class further illustrates the difficulty among scholars in assessing race objectively. Right-wing scholars invariably place the blame on black folks and exclude the variables of white privilege and the incapacity of the capitalist economy to create sufficient jobs at a living wage, particularly in this new age of deindustrialization and globalization.

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The New Immigration and the Challenge to Black Labor in the United States

Some Reflections

Reminiscent of the great nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigration waves, the present immigration wave is accompanied by increased xenophobic sentiment across the country, with many Americans viewing the immigrant community as "undercutters" who are willing to take on any job at any price. While immigrants to the United States continue to arrive from literally every corner of the world, attention is focused on the problem of illegal or undocumented persons, mainly Mexicans, who violate border regulations. A recent poll conducted by the Pew Research Center, a Washington, D.C.–based fact tank, found that Americans overwhelmingly view the problem of illegal immigration rather than legal immigration as a national priority (Kohut et al. 2006, 1–4). It is reported that as many as 11–12 million undocumented immigrants—disproportionately Mexicans and other Latinos—presently reside in the United States.

The New York City–based Community Service Society, in a report entitled *The Unheard Third* dated January 2007, found divergent viewpoints held by native-born blacks on the question of whether immigrants negatively affect their economic security. It found that 40 percent of native-born blacks strongly believed that immigrants are stealing jobs from them. An even higher proportion (45 percent) believed that new immigrants are suppressing wages for all Americans (Benjamin and Reiss 2008; Community Service Society 2007).

This essay addresses the question of the impact that this latest immigration wave is having on black males who have been variously defined as America's most vulnerable subgroup. Moreover, it argues that the historic intersection of race and class must be considered in order to answer the following questions: Are immigrants taking away jobs from blacks? Why are blacks reluctant to perform work that immigrants are willing to do? And are blacks being intentionally squeezed out of the labor force?

THE DEBATE

A debate exists in public opinion over the question of the impact the new immigration is having upon black males' unemployment. At one end of the spectrum are the conservatives. Included among them are the leading African-American conservative, Ward Connerly; Indian-born conservative writer and critic, Dinesh D'Souza; the late historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.; and scholar Samuel Huntington to mention a few. They fail to see the new immigrants, both legal and undocumented, as at fault for taking jobs away from black males. Rather, at the root of the problem is the same old issue of blacks' lack of social capital, which so many immigrants appear to possess upon arrival to this country. Not to be overlooked is the growing realization that blacks are no longer willing to work the menial, low-skilled factory, restaurant, and custodial jobs that they once filled in decades past because they feel that the pay is too low, the work too hard, and the indignities too great.

The response from these conservatives is to dismiss race as a likely explanation for American-born blacks' tenuous position in the labor market. As they note, most immigrants to the U.S. shores today are people of color from the developing world who are determined to take advantage of the vast opportunities available to them. Armed with these facts, conservatives commonly ask, "If Asians, Latinos, and even black West Indians can make it, why can't African Americans?"

At the other end of the debate are the liberals who purport to understand the plight of the immigrants, but whose analysis of the problem falls abysmally short of a real solution. Journalist Roy Beck in his article "The Case Against Immigration" epitomizes the liberal school. According to Beck, arguments for sustaining today's high levels of im-

migration come from a powerful group of conservative business interests and leaders of civil libertarian and religious groups. But Beck says their premises are wrong. He argues that technically trained workers are not in short supply and that high U.S. immigration fails to bring about humanitarian relief and often harms the sending countries of the Third World. He adds that immigrants do not fill jobs Americans won't do, but instead flood occupations, drive down work conditions and wages, and create workplace cultures that often bar native-born Americans from access to jobs (Beck 1996). Unchecked legal immigration is no less harmful than the problem of undocumented immigration. Beck calls for a 50 to 75 percent cut in legal immigration in order to ensure sufficient jobs at competitive wages for black males, but also for all Americans. That would mean a shift from the current 1 million immigrants annually down to 250,000 (Beck 1996). Beck's argument is compelling, but it does not specifically address the role of capital or the fact that the immiseration of the people from the so-called "Third World" is a creation of the so-called "First World."

But we are still left with the questions: Are new-wave immigrants pushing out black males to the point that they are becoming superfluous? And if that is the case, should it be dismissed as a simple case of benign neglect or the result of a natural evolutionary process?

Sociologist Stephen Steinberg introduced his 2005 article "Immigration, African Americans, and Race Discourse" with a cartoon drawing by Melvin Tapley that appeared in a 1971 *Amsterdam News* article. The article was critical of the nation's immigration policy, which has always worked to the detriment of black people. The cartoon portrayed a downtrodden black man crouched on the ground and labeled "US Folks." A chain of other figures representing Latino Americans and other foreign-born persons was shown climbing on the back of the crouched figure in order to pluck fruit off the tree of opportunity (Steinberg 2005).

The displacement of black men by newly arriving groups, which was the message in Tapley's cartoon, is a historic fact that is consistent with America's racist practices. In the early part of the twentieth century, the arriving Europeans needed work, so blacks had to vacate in order to facilitate white labor. Thus, scores of Irish, Italian, Jewish, Polish, German, Scottish, Greek, Spanish, and other European immigrants began to replace blacks as longshoremen, street car motormen,

construction workers, jockeys, street side vendors, blacksmiths, and able-bodied seamen. Racial discrimination has been the chief mechanism implemented by European oppressors to deprive blacks of work throughout the course of history. It was passage in 1965 of the Hart Cellar Act—credit for which must be directed to the African-American-led movement for rights and justice in the 1950s and 1960s—that brought about immigration reform by abolishing the natural origins quota system. This in turn led to the influx of immigrants from outside northern and western Europe. At first glance it was a trickle, but over the next four decades as many as 25 million immigrants were estimated to have arrived on America's shores. In time, scores of immigrants, legal as well as undocumented persons, arrived and began to settle in the urban locales where black Americans were highly concentrated.

One century ago, immigration was a hot issue among black leaders such as Marcus Garvey, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, and, a little later, A. Phillip Randolph, all of whom railed against eastern European immigrants that were crowding northern cities where blacks were concentrated. Booker T. Washington exhorted America's industrialists to "cast down your buckets not among new immigrants but among the 8 million Negroes who have without strikes and labor wars—tilled your fields, cleared your forests, laid your railroads and cities" (Washington 1901). In 1882, when the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was the first time in the nation's history that a group was singled out for legal exclusion, blacks, fearing the continued loss of jobs, registered their support for the act. To bring it up to the present, in 1994, when Californians battled over the passage of Proposition 187, which sought to deny entitlement programs and other social benefits to immigrants and their children, nearly 50 percent of blacks voted in support of the measure. Blacks gave Pete Wilson—a staunch supporter of the proposition—20 percent of their votes in the gubernatorial race at that time. This background sheds some light on the absence of blacks at the mass rallies that took the nation by storm during the spring of 2006 and were sponsored by undocumented persons who were fighting for their rights to jobs and the opportunity to remain unconditionally in America (Hutchinson 2006 and 2007; Malanga 2008).

Presently, the black community's frustration with exploitation due to increased immigration is evidenced by their history of support for certain anti-immigration measures. Such action by blacks to save their

jobs challenges contemporary antagonists who argue the case of black shiftlessness and detachment from doing real work. Based on recent Pew data, the growing tensions between black and Latino community residents is an outgrowth of the rapid change that legal and undocumented Hispanic immigration is bringing to longtime black locales (Kohut et al. 2006). Places like South Central Los Angeles and Compton have transformed—virtually overnight—into majority Latino communities. The new immigrant surge that is taking place in the South (e.g., North Carolina and Georgia) surpasses well-known places like New York and California. The southern growth has brought change to communities where blacks had gained economic and political power after years of struggle against Jim Crow laws. Since 1990, North Carolina's Hispanic population has exploded from 76,726 people in 1990 to nearly 600,000 in 2006—the majority of them ethnically Mexican. As a result, the feelings expressed by blacks that they are losing economic and political ground to immigrants is intensifying (Malanga 2008).

THE LOSS OF BLACK LABOR

A recent study by Harvard economist George Borjas and colleagues from the universities of Chicago and California found that while the introduction of new technology, insufficient government programs, and a stagnant real minimum wage have all been blamed for the poor labor-market performance of low-skilled and minority workers, not to be overlooked is immigration. Using census data from 1960 to 2000, the researchers trace the evolution of wages, employment, and incarceration rates for particular skill groups in the black and white populations. They then relate the trends observed in these variables to the increases in immigration experienced by each skill group. The observed correlations suggest that immigration is an important underlying factor influencing the observed trends. In particular, their analysis found that a 10 percent rise in immigrants in a particular skill group significantly trimmed the wages of black and white men alike. For African Americans, the decline was 3.6 percent. For whites, it was actually slightly higher: 3.8 percent. Beyond that, however, the black-white experience differed markedly, especially for low-skilled workers. Consider employment rates: From 1960 to 2000, black high-school dropouts saw

their employment rates drop 33 percentage points—from 88.6 percent to 55.7 percent. The decrease for white high-school dropouts was only roughly half that—from 94.1 percent to 76.0 percent. One reason offered for this differential is that black employment is more sensitive to an immigration influx than white employment. For white men, an immigration boost of 10 percent caused their employment rate to fall just 0.7 percentage points; for black men, it fell 2.4 percentage points (Borjas, Grogger, and Hanson 2007).

In their 2003 book, *How the Other Half Works: Immigrants and the Social Organization of Labor*, Roger Waldinger and Michael I. Lichter point out that in the past, certain jobs or occupations were the domain of blacks (e.g., meat packing, auto repair, hospital work, house work). Some Latinos were present as well. But by the time the 1990s rolled around, the shift was already under way. Blacks were making only limited progress in the construction industry, whereas Latinos were able to make inroads by circumventing the Anglo establishment, doing odd jobs, working for small non-union firms, and standing in the parking lots at most Home Depot retail outlets waiting to be picked up as day laborers. We also witnessed an expansion of globalization and the reduction in the number of jobs in which African Americans were concentrated. As some of these jobs became upgraded in terms of the requisite skills, others were being downgraded. Those African Americans who were better prepared in terms of experience and education were able to qualify for the upgraded positions. However, those least prepared blacks were forced to compete with the new immigrants for the remaining lesser skilled jobs. Presently, whites continue to dominate the shrinking pool of "good jobs" that do not require large amounts of formal education but provide attractive rewards in dollars or social standing. They also dominate low-level managerial positions and craft jobs in the lingering manufacturing sector. Less educated blacks find themselves squeezed into a narrow and shrinking segment of the labor market where competence in basic skills (i.e., literacy, numeracy, and communication) is a must. But as Waldinger and Lichter put it, "up the ladder is where schooling is greater—while concentrated further down immigrant densities grow. Thus, as unemployment and labor force participation statistics continue to show, many African Americans are being squeezed out" (Waldinger and Lichter 2003, 205–17).

Katherine Newman's study *No Shame in My Game*, which was conducted in New York's Harlem community and deals with the question of why blacks are being left behind, can be applied to the larger question of blacks vis a vis the newer groups of Latino immigrants. Newman joins other scholars in underscoring the cultural, social, and psychological importance of work to the individual. She informs: "Work like no other dimension of life—community, family, religion, voluntary organizations—qualifies Americans for the designation of citizen. Adults who work become full-fledged citizens in the truest sense; in other words, those who find themselves outside the employment system are perceived as unworthy and are made to feel so by their exclusion from various systems of support" (Newman 2000, 62).

Newman dislodges the belief held by some Americans that blacks lack a basic understanding about the significance of work. This misunderstanding, as she points out, rests not with blacks, but rather with the societal contradiction concerning work. This contradiction is that even though the society honors the gainfully employed over the unemployed, all jobs are not created equal. Fast-food jobs in particular are notoriously stigmatized and denigrated. As Newman observed, "McJob" has become the common epithet for work without much redeeming value. One of her findings about inner-city low-wage workers was that many young workers are easily intimidated by the people they know from the "hood" who come into Burger Barn (a fictitious name she created in the book for the fast-food chain) and proceed to insult and make fun of them in the presence of other patrons. In most instances, these hecklers are angry that they are unemployed and seek to transfer their own feelings of guilt on to the low-wage worker. This is quite similar to what we hear today when an academically promising student is ridiculed by peers for "acting white." During training sessions, Burger Barn employers, aware of this situation, try to help young workers to overlook these insults and not fight back (Newman 2000; Wilson 1996, chap. 5). But this is easier said than done. Because the avoidance of hecklers can be extremely difficult, some of these young workers opt to quit their jobs. This is an example of what Newman addresses as the social costs of accepting low-wage work. We should note that this is not the experience of new wave immigrant workers, and this fact alone contributes to their label as more reliable workers who are more congenial and easier to control than their native black counterparts.

Newman also debunks the myth of blacks' intolerance for work. She cites numerous cases where black men and women, upon learning of a job opening, lined the pavement with the hope of achieving gainful employment. For example:

- When Disneyland took applications following the Rodney King riot in South Central Los Angeles, some six thousand neatly dressed young people—largely black and Latino—waited in line to apply.
- In January 1992, when a new Sheraton Hotel complex opened in Chicago, three thousand applicants spent the better part of a day in blowing snow huddled along the north bank of the Chicago River hoping for an interview.
- Four thousand anxious job seekers stood in lines that wrapped around the block in March 1997 when the Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan, New York, announced that it would take applications for seven hundred jobs. (Newman 2000, 63; Wilson 1996, chap. 5)

BLACK RAGE

Addressing the question about undocumented immigrants' replacement of black workers and why black males in general are under-represented in the labor force is no simple matter, as some would have us believe. For starters, one must consider that the immigrants are coming to a host society for which they have had no prior social or cultural experience. It is a far different matter for African Americans, who have a historic attachment to the land and are victims of virulent racism. This fact alone makes it difficult to compare African Americans with other groups. Moreover, their direct link to American soil and the extreme conditions under which they were forced to live fuels the community's feeling that a huge debt is owed them alongside other special considerations from the American state. In 1903, just forty years after the end of slavery, the great scholar and sociologist W. E. B. DuBois wrote *Souls of Black Folk*. His description of black civil society at that juncture parallels, disturbingly so, the conditions of black civil society at the foot of the twenty-first century. The point being made here is that the historical baggage that is borne by blacks falls outside the experience of the newcomers. When we hear of blacks' reluctance to accept meager wages or to work in substandard

settings, it must be contextualized against the backdrop of centuries-old exploitation. The promise of forty acres and a mule to former slaves remains unfulfilled. Because white civil society has no understanding of this chapter in its history, blacks' rage and unwillingness to accept low-wage employment and poor work conditions is generally cast off as irresponsible, ungrateful, or tantamount to childlike behavior.

In their chapter in Ronald B. Mincy's *Black Males Left Behind*, economists Harry J. Holzer and Paul Offner add to the discussion about the reasons for black males' absence from the official labor force. Among them are: the declining availability of blue-collar jobs; the declining availability of manufacturing employment; and the steady rise of women in the work force. The latter deserves a brief explanation here. Labor-force participation among women without a high-school diploma increased by 6 percent between 1989 and 1999, and single mothers with children increased their labor-force participation by over 10 percent during the same decade. Unfortunately, this upward trend was not observed among black men with similar educational and economic handicaps (Holzer and Offner 2006). Credit for this is directed to the 1996 welfare reform under then-President Clinton. While the federal government abolished Aid to Families with Dependent Children, it gave states much more discretion over cash assistance. Federal funding was converted to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant. The new measure (1) forced welfare recipients from welfare to work; (2) created incentives for work alongside penalties for noncompliance and; (3) discouraged women from entering welfare through various diversion efforts. So the emphasis of the new policy was placed on women, who were always more highly represented than men in the welfare system (Blank and Gelbach 2006).

As Holzer, Raphael, and Stoll (2006) suggest, this begins to explain only part of the problem. Other changes were beginning to take place that affected black male employment and concerned the normal supply and demand factors in the labor market. But there were also changes in the nature and enhancement of child support orders that might have led some fathers to avoid the official labor sector altogether, and there was the steady build-up of black male incarceration (Holzer and Offner 2006; Holzer, Raphael, and Stoll 2006). On that latter point, it should be noted that roughly 1 million young black men are currently incarcer-

ated, with scores more either ex-inmates or felons who are or have been on probation or parole.

This brings us to the matter of employers' reluctance to hire young men with criminal records. Persons re-entering society with criminal records—even those with no prior arrests or criminal record—are affected and find themselves outside the labor force. This is the case because some employers too frequently cannot distinguish or are reluctant to distinguish between those who do and do not have criminal backgrounds. Consequently it is easier for them to suspect all black males of having criminal records, limited educational achievement, and relatively limited work experience. This practice, whereby employers make employment decisions based on unempirical evidence, is discussed in the sociological literature as a form of institutional or structural discrimination (Feagin and Feagin 2003, 15).

An important matter that too few scholars choose to point out is that at the end of the Civil War, America had the opportunity to correct the past. In other words, it had the opportunity to purge its negative skeletons from the closet and make amends to African Americans for their mistreatment. At the end of the war there were approximately 4 million emancipated slaves who could have been easily drawn into the rapidly growing industrial economy in the cities of the North and the West. But they were disregarded. Robert Blauner makes this same argument in *Racial Oppression in America* when he states:

> Although their labor was exploited at least the European immigrants were employed mostly in industry; they had a foot in the most dynamic centres of the economy and with time could rise to semi-skilled positions. Instead, blacks were relegated to the preindustrial sectors of the national economy. It was not until the flow of European immigrants was cut off due to World War I that blacks were given an opportunity to gain access to coveted industrial jobs. Once the War ended, they were forced to retreat and make way for the preferred European worker. All groups started at the bottom but the bottom has by no means been the same for all groups. (Blauner 1972, 62–63)

Blauner's work, alongside other scholarly works, demonstrates the ability of blacks to perform industrial-sector jobs. But who cared? They would have to wait until the 1940s and 1950s before they could reap some benefits from the burgeoning manufacturing and automobile industries and amass greater numbers into the ranks of the middle class.

THE ELUSIVE SYSTEM

In the last analysis, black diasporans, as well as members of the wider
society, find themselves at the doorstep of that other peculiar institu-
tion, the American capitalist system. Throughout much of the discus-
sion on labor problems between blacks and new wave immigrants,
limited if any attention is directed to the source of the problem or the
system itself. The situation we find ourselves at this juncture in the
post–Cold War period is that to criticize capital, even in the face of
compelling contradicting evidence, is tantamount to blasphemy. How
to persuade blacks and other Americans from the shopping malls and
attract them to the political corridors is the number one challenge
facing the left in this country today. A distracted people are incapable
of understanding the underlying contradictions of their nation's immi-
gration policy. Immigrants, according to sociologist Douglas Massey,
provide a convenient scapegoat for the system to absorb voter anger
about the erosion of wages, the instability of unemployment, and the
declining access to social benefits (Massey 1998). The United States
offers a contradicting model of global economic openness. It promotes
open commerce, leading the way by freeing its own markets to foreign
investment, trade, and travel. America's own borders have become
increasingly open for flows of capital, goods, commodities, informa-
tion, and certain favored classes of people: entrepreneurs, scientists,
students, tourists, and corporate employees. But when it comes to the
movement of ordinary labor, however, America has not sought open-
ness. A restrictive immigration policy only fosters desperation. A des-
perate people are predisposed to accept meager wages under the worst
conditions. A more liberal policy would embrace legitimate émigrés
who would be in a better position to negotiate their wages and work
conditions. Needless to say, such an arrangement would not serve the
interests of corporate elites.

Far too many analysts today continue to eschew the role of the
capitalist state in their analyses and because of that bypass the oppor-
tunity to take their analyses to the next stage. One example is political
columnist and writer Earl Ofari Hutchinson, whose comments and
summaries are usually quite progressive but consistently fall short of
taking us to the next level. In 2006, commenting on the immigration
question in "Blacks and the Border," he had this to say: "Then and

now, illegal immigration is not the prime reason many poor young blacks are out of work and on the streets, and why some have turned to gangs, guns, and drug dealing to get ahead. A shrinking economy, failing public school, savage government cuts to job training programs, a soaring prison population, and employment prospects in inner-city black neighborhoods [are the culprits]" (Hutchinson 2006, 2). To single out Hutchinson would not be fair. The majority of conventional liberal scholars and journalists offer eloquent descriptions and summations of the problem, but are without vision or clarity about either the cause or the solution.

CONCLUSION

From this brief account, we can begin to see some of the implications of a misguided immigration policy. While black males are identified as one of America's most vulnerable subpopulations in terms of their disproportionate incarceration, unemployment, and school drop-out rates, to mention just a few, the impact of a failed immigration policy cannot be denied in the effort to address their condition. As long as immigration policy is guided by the hands of economic elites whose central concern is the maintenance of surplus labor in order to drive up profits, the problem is destined to prevail.

An immigration policy is needed that is sensitive to the plight of those so-called "Third World" residents who are victims of economic globalization and are seeking hope and economic stability for themselves and their families. On the other hand, a policy is needed that is also sensitive to the plight of groups who have established roots in this land but historically have found themselves at the margins of society. Ironically, undocumented persons from the developing world who brave the elements and take extraordinary risks in order to arrive on American soil are victimized by the very policies of globalization that are formulated and controlled by the United States at the G8, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank summits. The problem is not limited to the United States, as other major G8 nations are also challenged by the problem of undocumented immigrants. We need only turn to the present conditions in France and Italy to understand this phenomenon.

Economic globalization is the force behind the movement of people across continents and regions (Wilson and Green 2005). It has the potential to bridge cultures and enable disparate peoples to become more aware of and sensitive to each other and to the nemesis that threatens them all.

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The Caribbean and the Feminization of Emigration:

Effects and Repercussions

The theme of migration and gender is now recognized as an important avenue through which immigration and emigration are studied (United Nations 2006). Women, today, account for 50 percent of the world's migrants and, increasingly, scholars recognize gender as a "social construction that organizes relations between males and females [and] can greatly differentiate the causes, processes and impacts of migration between the two sexes" (Omelaniuk 2006, 161). Tied to this analysis is the underlying assumption that gender influences the outcome of the migration process and can have a lasting impact on the migrant's family as well as on the sending and receiving societies. When one considers immigration through the lens of gender there is also a recognition that the motives for emigration from the home country are influenced by the position of women in the sending society (United Nations 2006).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: EMANCIPATION

Immigration and emigration have been integral to the history of the Caribbean. After slavery was abolished in the mid-nineteenth century, migration was one of the real possibilities available to the freed people who were seeking economic viability and options for survival. Women left the plantation in large numbers. Actually, they were more likely to leave than men (Brereton 1999). Women generally moved to urban areas

on their islands, where they occupied positions as domestic workers and hotel workers. By the mid-twentieth century, they acquired jobs as factory workers in the new industrial sector (Shepherd 2006, 161). The more upwardly mobile women left the fields and focused on the domestic sphere as wives and mothers.

Women were less involved in the out migration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There were several factors that discouraged emigration. From a practical perspective, it made sense for men to emigrate. The jobs available at that time were considered to be traditional male occupations. They were largely in agriculture, in construction, and in industry. Men did railway work, canal digging, and cane cutting in the host societies. Women worked in the fields and performed hard physical labor during slavery, but the sexual division of field labor was more evident after emancipation.

Furthermore, the influence of missionaries, magistrates, anti-slavery advocates, and other agents of Western culture was evident in the culture of the newly freed people. Black men were reminded "to spare your wives from heavy field work . . . make them attend to their duties at home, in bringing up your children, and in taking care of your stock" (Brereton 1999, 104).

Particularly for those who had become Christians, the social norms of Victorian respectability frowned on independent activity by the newly emancipated female. European patterns of family life and behavior discouraged women from leaving their homes to be exposed to the corrupting influences of life in the wider world. This was a perspective that was readily accepted by the males of the freed population. They saw the "binding down of married women as unacceptable" (Brereton 1999, 106). Former male slaves of Chester Castle Estate in Hanover, Jamaica, were not the only ones who believed that freedom should insure that their wives performed only light work. The black men "could not give their assent to make their wives work always, and at all sorts of work" (Brereton 1999, 106). Ironically, those women who had the wherewithal to emigrate were the ones who were least likely to do so. The women toiling in the fields would be unlikely to have the financial means to emigrate. When upwardly mobile women migrated, they usually joined husbands or left the islands to meet relatives who were expected to lodge them indefinitely (Watkins-Owens 2001).

FEMALE MIGRATION AND METROPOLITAN NEEDS

After World War II, Caribbean emigration underwent major changes. There was a shift from the Americas to heed the call to rebuild post-war England. West Indian men left home to occupy positions in industry and the transportation system in that country. It is at that time that there was a huge response from Caribbean women to work for the National Health Service in England. Young women, just out of school, grabbed the opportunity to leave home under what were considered honorable circumstances (Western 1992, 103–6). They went directly to hospitals where they were trained, and where they experienced more social freedom than they had at home. Other women, mostly from the working class, emigrated to find work in the factories, and less frequently, in domestic work. The emigration of Caribbean health workers to England did not represent the feminization of immigration, but it helped to equalize the numbers of women to men.

The beginning of the 1960s witnessed the decline of the massive immigration to Britain from its former colonies. The Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 introduced laws that curtailed the numbers of immigrants into the United Kingdom. Almost by coincidence, the United States re-emerged as the center of immigration for West Indians. The United States Immigration Act of 1965 (Hart-Cellar Act) dropped the openly discriminatory aspects in prevailing immigration laws and, subsequently, made it easier for the citizens of the newly independent West Indian countries to immigrate to the United States. After the act went into effect there was a noticeable change in the face of immigration by the early 1970s. We also witnessed at that time the emergence of a largely female-dominated immigration from the West Indies. During the decade of the 1970s, women were 56 percent of emigrants from Trinidad, 54 percent of those coming from Jamaica, and 51 percent of Grenadian emigrants (Shepherd 2006).

The new approach to immigration was accompanied by other social and political changes taking place in the United States. The civil rights movement and the women's movement were revolutionizing the United States. African Americans were demanding rights denied to them since the abolition of slavery. The southern civil rights movement and the black power movement had managed to pry open the door, albeit in a limited way, to improved economic and political opportuni-

ties for black people. More black people were admitted to colleges, and there were increased job opportunities. Black people were employed in arenas formerly closed to them, including the banks, government, and Wall Street. The African American with a high-school diploma was no longer limited to employment in a home as housekeeper or babysitter, or in a factory. This sociopolitical development left a vacancy for immigrant labor that included West Indians. In the 1940s, 60 percent of the domestic workers in the United States were African Americans. Since 1965, Caribbean, Latino, and other immigrant workers have replaced them (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002). In New York City, the West Indian as babysitter or housekeeper continues to be a common occurrence today (Ehrenreich and Hochschild).

The improved opportunities for native-born African Americans occurred simultaneously with the exodus of white women from the homes. The 1970s marked the period of second-wave feminism, which called for women to follow careers commensurate with their education and abilities. Educated middle-class white women joined the working class in finding employment outside the home. They were partly pushed by economic necessity and partly encouraged by the new social awareness.

The pressure to achieve in all spheres led many American women to look to Third World women to clean their homes and take care of their children. Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild (2002) argue that instead of the natural resources that northern countries traditionally extracted from the Third World, the emphasis today is on female labor. Caribbean women, many who had hired housekeepers at home, accepted jobs as domestic workers to earn the coveted green card that was necessary if they were to make any economic progress in the United States.

As was the case in England, Caribbean women also played a major role in providing professional health care in the United States. Professional nursing was also a victim of feminism. Nursing was a respectable profession for American women before the feminist movement of the 1970s. It became less attractive as other career options became available (Rangel 2002). In addition, many proponents of second-wave feminism initially saw nursing as a predominantly female profession where women were subordinate to male physicians (Malka 2008).[1] The West Indian trained nurse was rigorously recruited to replace these missing

American nurses. Hospitals in the United States quickly provided the necessary papers. Soon the nurse in many New York City hospitals was a West Indian or Filipina. The more prestigious hospitals continued to hire white nurses, but inner-city hospitals and nursing homes were staffed, almost exclusively, by foreign-trained nurses.

THE SUCCESS OF FEMALE IMMIGRATION

Forty years later, it is appropriate to look at some of the effects of this gendered immigration to understand its impact. A glance at the most recent census data reveals what these trends had clearly predicted. There are more women than men involved in immigration to the United States from the Caribbean. Today, 57 percent of New York City's Caribbean population is female (Scott 2003).

The most common information indicates that Caribbean societies at home and the women abroad benefit greatly from this new development in West Indian immigration. The local New York City data certainly give that impression. West Indian women are more likely than other women in the city to be full-time workers: 63.8 percent of West Indian women over age sixteen are in the work force, compared to 51.9 percent for New York City women in general. Other signs of success are evident in the fact that West Indian women are more likely to live in their own single-family homes (Scott 2003). The story of Trinidadian Beulah Reid, as it was portrayed in the *New York Times* in 2003, is the prevailing narrative of the West Indian woman's success story. Reid worked her way up from domestic worker to earning her GED, becoming a bank worker, and later opening her own licensed day care. In the process, she raised three children and bought a two family home in Brooklyn (Scott 2003).

The current subprime mortgage woes that have affected New York City and other areas have undoubtedly led to a setback in the financial situations of immigrants, including Caribbean women (Fessenden 2007). There is evidence that the foreclosed houses are mainly in minority neighborhoods. The hard numbers are not yet available for this still ongoing financial problem.

Professional Caribbean women have a similar success story. Caribbean women who arrived as nurses and other professionals now oc-

cupy positions of leadership in those same health institutions that they entered in the 1970s. The current executive director of Kings County Hospital, Jean De Leon, is a former nurse from Trinidad. She is one among many West Indian women who are paid high salaries and command prestigious positions in New York City. Caribbean women are also successful in the political world, as evidenced by the career of Jamaican-born Una Clarke, who served in the New York City Council. She was succeeded by her daughter, Yvette Clarke, who was subsequently elected to Congress as a representative from Brooklyn (Cooper 2006).

Yvonne Graham, also from Jamaica, is Brooklyn's deputy borough president. She plans to run for the borough presidency when the current borough president, Marty Markowitz, vacates that office in 2009. The New York City term-limit law prevents Markowitz from running again in 2009. Markowitz has had a good relationship with the Caribbean community, and Graham's supporters believe that, as his deputy, she stands a good chance of being elected. In general, West Indian women are among the most successful of immigrant groups in New York (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002). This may be a result of Caribbean women's access to education at home and in New York. There is no cultural obstacle among Caribbean people to discourage women from availing themselves of education or training.

Caribbean societies and their leaders also tend to take a positive view of female emigration. One of the most obvious benefits to the home countries is the role of remittances in the migration exchange. Testimony before the International Migration Development Fund revealed in March 2007 that Latino and Caribbean migrants in the United States sent over $60 billion to the region in 2006 (International Migration Development Fund 2007). In Jamaica and Guyana, remittances accounted for 10 percent of the gross domestic product (Rhyne 2007).

Governments in the sending societies recognize this largess and see emigration as an advantage to the society. To a large extent, the recipients are women who use the remittances for education, housing, health care, and other consumer products (Pessar 2005). The authorities also recognize that women are likely to send home remittances to their countries to care for children, parents, and siblings (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002). Similarly, women are more involved in churches

and voluntary organizations whose goal is to send remittances, in cash
or in kind, to the home society.

It appears, therefore, that there is nothing to lose from female mi-
gration. Policymakers are divided on how the remittances should be
utilized, but generally they all recognize the benefits. Some believe the
governments should be more vigilant in managing the flow of remit-
tances so that they could benefit the economic development of the
entire sending societies. For example, more money could be channeled
into savings and investment than into consumer goods (Ehrenreich and
Hochschild 2002). Others argue that the remittances should be left in
the control of the women and family members who are the caregivers
and decision-makers at the household level (Pessar 2005).

THE UNDERSIDE OF FEMALE EMIGRATION

Beneath all of this optimism one recognizes, however, that there is
another side to the female migration that we see today. Some of these
areas call for serious consideration from scholars and policymakers.
A much-discussed result in the Caribbean centers around the loss of
nurses to emigration. Emigration to the United States and elsewhere
has resulted in the loss of at least one-third of the nursing graduates.
The foreign hospitals and their agencies placed ads in the newspapers
or visited the Caribbean countries to do on-the-spot recruiting. An
international recruiting firm, O'Grady Peyton, offered $2,000 to $3,000
to a nurse who recruited another nurse. Nurses who were highly spe-
cialized in surgery, trauma, and intensive care were especially coveted.
The effects on the Caribbean are clearly obvious. Barbados currently
experiences a nursing vacancy rate of 20.6 percent; St. Kitts, 26.6
percent; Jamaica, 58.4 percent; and Trinidad and Tobago, 53 percent
(Public Services International 2006).

Another area concerns relationships between the sexes. Whereas
in the past a man would begin the emigration for the family, it now
made practical sense for the woman to migrate first. A woman who
was trained as a nurse had a guaranteed job in her chosen profession
even if she was required to take some extra courses. A man trained as
a teacher or a policeman, for example, would suffer downward mobil-
ity as he accepted a position as a security guard or some other less

prestigious, low-paying job. Situations arose where the man, upon visiting New York before the final emigration, refused to join his spouse (Toney 1989).

Also damaging is the impact of migration on family life in the host society. Some of the immigrants who planned to spend only a limited time in domestic work continued to work in that field until they retired. The time, up to eight years, that it took to receive a green card often did not allow time for the training that would lead to other occupations. Furthermore, the work hours on the job rarely provided time to attend school or to develop skills. In the United States, women sometimes leave their children with the fathers, relatives, or friends while they live at their place of employment. Children may see their mothers on one day of the week. Many of these children, particularly teenagers, get into trouble involving gangs and other types of delinquency.

Caribbean nurses usually leave home during their most productive stage in life. They often leave children behind. When they do send for their children, both parents and children must face the demands of long hours, night work, and the rigors of North American working life. Because of the nursing shortage in New York City, many Caribbean nurses have two jobs and work double shifts and overtime. This constitutes valuable time spent away from their children.

The question of children left at home in the Caribbean is even more of a pressing problem when one considers female immigration. Leaving one's children behind is not a recent phenomenon in Caribbean life. Indeed, the early literature is filled with information on parents who emigrated and left the children with relatives, or parents who sent American-born children to be raised by relatives in the Caribbean. Shirley Chisholm, United States presidential candidate and the first black woman to be elected to Congress, is an example of a child who was born in New York City and lived with her grandparents in Barbados before she rejoined her parents. Chisholm has cited her Barbadian education as a positive factor in her achievements (Chisholm 1970).

In the early migration there was no stigma attached to leaving one's children behind. Most of the migrants were from the middle class, especially after 1917, when literacy was a criterion for entering the United States. Generally, grandparents and other kin provided a measure of stability for the children even as they appreciated the remittances that they received from abroad (Watkins-Owens 2001).

For all of the success stories, however, this area is rife with the negative effects of the feminization of migration. A Harvard Immigration Project study conducted by Marcelo Suarez-Orozco revealed that 85 percent of children from the Caribbean and Asia who migrated to the United States were separated from their parents for long periods before they rejoined them (Suarez-Orozco et al. 2002). Social workers and counselors find that these children are often damaged psychologically by the separation. They show problems connected to grief, loss, and attachment. The parents show signs of sadness, guilt, and anxiety. Advocates of the so-called attachment theory believe that there could be future difficulties with adjustment (Pottinger and Brown 2006).

The families at the lower end of the socioeconomic pole are even more likely to suffer the consequences of parental migration. While middle-class parents may send for their children a year or two after migration, the poor are often unable to send for their children at any time (Pottinger and Brown 2006). In both cases, when the family is reunited, the adorable child that the parents left behind has turned into a teenager who often does not see the parents as the authority figures that the parents would like to be. These children have come to regard their surrogate parents as the adults whom they love and respect. The newly arrived youngster may also have to contend with stepparents, new siblings, a new language, and problems with accent and race. All of these stressful conditions encountered at the same time can create or aggravate family problems (Pottinger and Brown).

Women who are undocumented are in worse positions than those who have legal status in the United States. They often hear from neighbors, other family members, and friends that their children are abused or neglected by the surrogate parents. They must decide whether they should leave their improved economic situation in the United States and return to the poverty and deprivation that drove them away in order to prevent their children from abuse (Rojas 2006). This situation leads to an enhancement of the already present barrel-children situation where parents shower the children with material goods as a compensation for their absence.

Undocumented immigrants also live in fear of immigration authorities. Since the new, more stringent immigration laws of the mid 1990s, there are greater chances of being deported. In this case, the decision

to leave concerns children born in the United States. Some mothers leave their American-citizen children with surrogate parents rather than have them return to societies where education is not available and their material conditions are drastically reduced. This situation is relatively new, but it predicts a series of developments that are not healthy for family solidarity (Bernstein 2004).

In the earlier immigration to the United States, single women with children were a minority. Female immigrants were usually single women without children or married women who came with a family. Since 1965, many of the female migrants have been single mothers who left children at home. Those who were undocumented could not return home to visit until they had regularized their immigration status. It could be eight to ten years before they were finally sponsored as nannies by the employers where they generally lived as sleep-in helpers. Acquiring the green card and providing for their material needs occupied the mothers, who had little time left for children at home or in the United States (Adams 2000, 20).

Several years ago, I had a young woman student in my college class. She told me that her goal was to do a documentary on rape and sexual abuse of young girls in St. Vincent. I was, of course, aware that these issues exist in our society, but I understood her passion more clearly when she stated that she had suffered abuse herself. I was, however, struck by her insistence that all of her Caribbean friends in high school in Brooklyn had been abused. When I inquired deeper I found out that all of her close friends, like herself, were children whose mothers had left them behind on different islands as the mothers established themselves in New York. They later sent for these daughters who, as my student admitted, had a difficult time discussing the problems with their mothers.

It is in this light that a recent report from UNICEF addressed the subject of migrating parents and the children that were left at home. While recognizing the value of remittances to children they concluded that "migration had some harmful effects . . . including the disintegration of the family . . . the absence of their parents implies the loss of their most important role models, nurturers and caregivers and this has a significant psychological impact that can translate into feelings of abandonment, vulnerability, and loss of self-esteem, among others" (Pierri 2006).

CONCLUSION

This paper looked at some of the unanswered questions raised by the feminization of migration. It considers the impact of gendered migration on Caribbean society at home and abroad. It is a subject that calls for more research and for policy intervention. It can be argued that Caribbean people have a history of leaving children behind. Consequently, most children raised in that culture accept what is often inevitable. As a result, the disruption in family life is not as traumatic. While female migration is a new situation for other countries, because of its peculiar history, West Indian families have put in place a long legacy of child-minding by extended family members. West Indian mothers have largely been the breadwinners in their families and they continue to be so today. Beginning with slavery, grandmothers and other family members have played integral roles in raising grand-children.

On the other hand, there are obvious negative ramifications even for West Indian parents. In today's globalized world, children are introduced to other views of "normal." The notion of the family is perceived as the Western nuclear family with at least a mother in it. Sending and receiving societies should be aware of the potentially harmful situation that can arise when children cannot join their migrating parents.

NOTE

1. As the feminist movement matured in the 1990s and beyond, some feminists re-examined their position on nursing, but ambitious women had begun to leave the field. The increasing number of men who became nurses also helped to improve the image of nursing to the public.

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Denying Race in the American and French Context

Both France and the United Sates had social revolutions that supported equality, freedom, and democracy—and each professed a special destiny as a nation. Some researchers have described France as a "universal fatherland" whose role was to help every nation be born to liberty, while in the United States, recent surveys indicate an overwhelming number of Americans support teaching children that America from the beginning "has had a special destiny to set an example for other nations" (Lamont 2003). In the United States, progress toward full citizenship for blacks was a protracted and contentious process taking approximately 350 years, with the most significant progress occurring over the past 50 years as the civil rights movement ended state-sponsored white supremacy and successful efforts were made to open the opportunity structure to blacks. Conversely, without a history of slavery, the French maintain that their ideal of republicanism militates against racism because it emphasizes civic participation irrespective of group differences. Nevertheless, like in the United States, France's racial and ethnic minorities face deep inequalities. Currently both countries extol colorblindness and equality, yet are socially stratified, with people of color experiencing severe social and economic inequality. To make sense of these persistent contradictions, it is critical that we examine the role of colorblind ideology in both societies in legitimating the status quo while denying the role of racism in the perpetuation of inequalities.

WHY COLORBLINDNESS?

Colorblindness has been the subject of increasing attention in both academia and media circles. Many scholars have labeled it the "dominant racial ideology" of the late twentieth century. In the United States, case researchers have documented the transformation from the once-dominant racial ideology that was hegemonic from the seventeenth century to the 1960s, which was blatant and overt, such as the state-sanctioned "Jim Crow" racism of the pre–civil rights era (Fredrickson 1997), to the subtle and covert "colorblind" racial ideology of today (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Bonilla-Silva 2003; Dovidio 2001; Lewis 2004). In contrast, although France never officially recognized race as a category, race, particularly as it relates to France's colonial past, has certainly affected its political, cultural, and social structure. The French elite have pointed to the country's republican ideal, which does not officially recognize races, to claim that racism does not exist.

Colorblind ideologies, like other ideologies, are "amorphous and flexible" (Jackman 1994). Still, some common elements persist over time, despite differing historical periods. Certainly since the mid-twentieth century, broad-based social justice movements in both societies forced the elimination of formalized and state-sanctioned discrimination and a steady decline in overt expressions of racism. Both countries passed anti-discrimination laws in the 1960s and early 1970s that condemned racial and ethnic discrimination and affirmed the colorblind principal of equal rights (Lieberman 2004). The colorblind approach is predicated on the view that "formerly" racialist societies are now beyond race, post-race, or raceless. Colorblindness can be defined as ideological assertion of the fundamental equality of all racial groups that not only includes rights, but also life chances. Therefore, subscribing to a post-race, colorblind perspective allows members of the dominant white majority in both societies to contend that race no longer affects an individual's or group's social or economic well-being. This assumption reinforces the widely held belief that both societies are meritocracies where the material success enjoyed by whites relative to racial minorities is a function of cultural and behavioral differences—especially with regard to work habits, delayed gratification, persistence, and the value placed on education (Bonilla-Silva 2003). Since it focuses on perceived individual and group shortcomings, the colorblind perspective

is widely embraced by many whites who not only view themselves as politically progressive but also profess their adherence to an ideology that does not see or judge individuals by the "color of their skin." Moreover, in both societies, those who support this premise, which essentially denies the existence of white privilege, also contend that race-based programs and policies foster racialized thinking and thus racial division that is injurious to the social fabric (McDermott and Samson 2005).

Perhaps somewhat paradoxically, colorblindness has become the fulcrum around which members of the dominant white majority in both France and the United States have developed a discourse where multiple and sometimes conflicting notions of race have emerged. The irony of the contemporary usage of colorblindness is that instead of being used to alleviate long-standing racial hierarchies, as had been the case in prior decades, in the current conservative political epoch, it is now deployed to deligitmate discourses that seek to render salient the persistence of race and racism, while concomitantly deflecting attention from durable racial hierarchies and attendant racial privilege. In other words, in both societies, the colorblindness is currently utilized by members of the dominant group to assert a leveled playing field while simultaneously denying the nexus of race, public policy, and racially coded socioeconomic status. This rearticulation of colorblindness not only reaffirms the status quo by erasing whiteness of its privilege content but also reinscribes widely held notions about supposed cultural and moral deficits people of African descent as the primary causes in their continued inequality (McDermott and Samson 2005).

By way of contrast, for a majority of blacks (North Africans are included in this category) in both societies, this view of a society blind to color is not equally shared (Kimmelman 2008). Blacks differ significantly from their white counterparts in perceptions of their life chances. This includes persistent inequalities in the areas of educational and employment opportunities, fairness of the criminal justice system, access to quality housing and healthcare, pejorative perceptions about competence, and blocked or constrained opportunities. In addition, social welfare indicators suggests that race continues to shape life chances in both France and the United States, through public policy, racial framing, and private forms of discrimination that serve to reinscribe and possibly harden racial hierarchies in both societies.

This article examines the social and political functions colorblindness serves for whites in both countries. Drawing largely on secondary data, I argue that colorblind depictions of these societies (and their race relations) serve to maintain white privilege by negating the persistence and significance of race-based inequality that in turn undercuts social-justice efforts. This paper presents a comparative analysis of how colorblindness ideology is deployed by dominant groups in both societies to expand and deepen the burgeoning literature on the topic. Only recently have researchers begun to move beyond the United States to examine the concept through a transnational lens. A comparative framework is indispensable for apprehending how the ideology and practice of colorblindness is mobilized in disparate contexts and its impact. This approach provides a unique opportunity to uncover the political, social, and cultural dimensions of colorblindness by rendering salient those aspects that are context-specific and those that are generalizable.

COLORBLINDNESS LITERATURE

Due to the successes of global social movements of the 1950s and 60s, state-sponsored white supremacy (namely Jim Crow in the United States), as well as publicly pejorative white attitudes and policies, became unacceptable in France and the Americas. However, in the early part of the 1980s, researchers began to point out a new mechanism of white racism, differentiated from traditional forms in that it was not only coded, but also couched in the discourse of "traditional" liberal values. This utilization of ostensibly liberal tenets was successfully deployed to reaffirm white privilege while questioning whether the capacities of blacks undermined their efforts at equality. This profound transformation in the articulation of contemporary racism represented a significant departure from earlier public discourses, which invariably took the form of overt racialist appeals to white fears and prejudices. In their groundbreaking book, Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1986) observe how goals of the American civil rights movement such as colorblindness, individualism, and equality of opportunity were rearticulated by a conservative movement that sought to reverse the successes of the civil rights movement as it continued to seek full

racial equality. Other scholars have focused more substantively on the phenomenon alternately labeled "laissez-faire racism," "cultural racism," and "color-blind racism" (Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Taguieff 2001) Leslie Carr suggests the roots of colorblind ideology are found in classic liberal doctrines of freedom—the freedom of the individual created by the free capitalist marketplace (1997). Preferential treatment on the basis of race, or any violation of race neutrality in determining policy, is denounced as a violation of the equal protection clause and labeled "reverse racism." The rhetorical tool of colorblindness, absent anti-black sentiment or prejudice, allows a segment of the dominant white majority to oppose key items on the minority black agenda while adhering to dominant constitutional principles and liberal cultural codes. Within the context of a free-market model, colorblindness has come to mean that ignoring or attending to one's racial identity race is a matter of individual choice, much like the ways in which whites can choose to emphasize their ethnic background. The utilization of tenets of traditional liberalism also include emphasizing the importance of the work ethic, equal opportunity, merit, and individualism. This in turn, allows members of the dominant group to seem reasonable and moral while simultaneously opposing policies designed to alleviate de facto racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva 2003). This tendency often results in a naturalization of racial inequality as simply a matter of chance.

A cursory examination of French society would suggest that it is an exemplar of a colorblind egalitarian society. Unlike the United States, where state-sanctioned white supremacy was not outlawed until 1965, the French constitution and political practices have promoted a universal egalitarianism based on notions of inclusion that remains part of the ideological and political fabric (Kohn 1967; Kellas 1998; Jenkins 1990). The official position in France is that the only salient distinction is between French nationals and foreigners. The assumption is that foreigners would be denied certain rights, but when they acquire citizenship they would become full and equal members of the nation. In this assimilation perspective, France's colorblindness suggests that there are no races, only citizens and foreigners. But this perspective erases the import of race—in particular the role of whiteness—as a proxy for French citizenship and attendant privileges. In other words, the rhetorical commitment to colorblindness and equality has masked how the social construction of French citizenship is also a de facto

construction of whiteness which has marginalized or excluded those of non-European extraction.

Most recently, the sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2003; 1997; Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2005) employs a structural theory of racism to argue for the salience of "racism without racists." Bonilla-Silva's work arguably represents the most cogent critique of the shortcomings of the dominant individual and attitudinal approach to the study of racism. Bonilla-Silva makes the persuasive case that researchers should instead focus on the ideological processes by which whites minimize, deny, legitimate, defend, and protect their advantages. The rearticulation of ideological forms of racism, particularly as it relates to race-neutral language is a crucial tenet of contemporary colorblindness. Proponents of colorblindness contend that it is crucial in eliminating racism and discrimination and in improving the economic and social climate (Ryan et al. 2007). Central to this premise is the assumption that a colorblind stance would improve race relations since racial and ethnic distinctions would be ignored as people would be treated in an identical manner. The attraction of colorblind ideology to large segments of the dominant white community is predicated upon the denial of the persistent role of race in life chances—whether that is in wealth, education, healthcare, social networks, or housing. This perspective is often coupled with opposition to race-specific policies to address these and other long-standing markers of accumulated disadvantage. To be sure, these inequalities are not generally denied in either society, rather they are on the whole, explained by members of the dominant group as largely resulting from cultural and behavioral deficits of people of African descent. This explanation largely eschews efforts to change the social and political structures (i.e., education, public policy, policing) that reproduce inequality by asserting that not only does engaging in race-based thinking undermine social relations, it also violates liberal ideals of individualism, equal treatment, and limited government intervention (Omi and Winant 1986). By proffering a view of society where racial harmony is paramount, the colorblind perspective functions to make white privilege invisible, while removing from public discussion the need to maintain or develop race-based programs. Colorblindness, at least in terms of public policy, remains the ultimate goal of many social-justice organizations; however, in the contemporary context of severe and persistent racial inequality in both countries, the prevailing

understanding of the concept has limited utility for social-justice orga-
nizations in either country.

THE UNITED STATES AND COLORBLINDNESS

In the United States, the colorblind ideal remains a normative frame-
work through which many Americans understand race relations. The
principle of colorblindness has been nearly emptied of its progressive
potential and instead co-opted by forces on the right wing (Ansell
1997). Key tenets of anti-racist discourses have been circumvented
and appropriated by the right in its effort to undermine black demands
for redress. In their drive to abolish the system of Jim Crow, liberals
and anti-racists demanded that the nation deliver on its promises of
equal citizenship for its black minority in the wake of the egalitarian
amendments to the Constitution during the Reconstruction era. In the
post–civil rights era, the demise of state-sponsored white supremacy
resulted in the emergence of a pervasive ideology that America had
become a racial meritocracy. This perspective ignores how whiteness
continued to be a source of advantage for whites, whereby colorblind-
ness conceals white privilege behind a mask of assumed meritocracy
while rendering invisible the institutional arrangements that perpetu-
ate racial inequality (Frankenberg 2001). This contributes to the wide-
spread notion among many of the dominant groups that their place in
the racialized social structure was earned through merit.

The belief and practice of colorblindness the United States allows
dominant group members to construct an imagined egalitarian soci-
ety where institutional racism no longer exists and racial barriers to
upward mobility have been extirpated. The use of group identity to
challenge the existing racial order by making demands for the allevia-
tion of racial inequities is viewed as racist because such claims violate
the belief in individual rights. Embracing colorblindness allows whites
to be blind to or ignore the fact that racial and ethnic minorities lag
behind whites on almost every quality-of-life measure (McArdle 2008).
This ideology allows whites to think about contemporary race rela-
tions as a clean slate where slavery, Jim Crow, institutional racism,
and white privilege have been ended and the sins of the past have been
rectified.

Colorblindness has emerged as America's newest racial mythology because it provides a level-playing-field narrative that allows members of the dominant group to inhabit a social and psychological space that is free of racial tension (Storrs 1999). Convinced that racist attitudes and practices are essentially over, whites today are able to define themselves as racially progressive and tolerant. Viewing American society through the prism of race neutrality serves to compartmentalize past historical practices and social conditions from contemporary racial inequality. Social theorist David Theo Goldberg (1997) sees this narrative as part of the continued insistence on implementing an ideal of colorblindness that either denies historical reality and its abiding contemporary legacies or serves to cut off any claims to contemporary entitlements. It also suggests that the dominant group can portray themselves as victims of reverse discrimination and racism at the hands of those who continue to seek social remedies based on race.

The beliefs voiced by white members of the dominant groups in national surveys raise an empirical question: to what extent is the United States a colorblind nation? U.S. Census data suggest that in the areas of educational opportunity, occupational advancement, and health, America is a long way away from being a colorblind nation. For instance, in 2007, over 75 percent of white households owned their own homes, compared to 47 percent for blacks and 49 percent for Hispanics (U.S. Census 2007). In 2002, whites had a median household net worth of $87,000, which was approximately sixteen times that of black households ($5,400) and eleven times that of Latino households (U.S. Census 2008). Median family income in 2006 was approximately $51,000 for whites, $32,000 for blacks, $37,000 for Latinos. In 1997, almost 25 percent of whites over the age of twenty-five had at least four years of college, compared to less than 14 percent of blacks and Latinos. In 2007, 8.2 percent of whites, compared to 24.5 percent blacks and 21.5 percent of Latinos, lived at or below the poverty line (U.S. Census 2008). Health statistics tell a similar tale. Whites have lower rates of diabetes, tuberculosis, pregnancy-related mortality, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and are more likely to have prenatal care in the first trimester than blacks or Latinos.

In sum, a privilege of dominant-group status is the capacity to either ignore or be oblivious to the ways in which American society is shaped by race. The logic inherent in the colorblind approach is circular: since

race no longer shapes life chances in a colorblind world, there is no need to take race into account when discussing differences in outcomes between racial groups. This approach ignores America's racial hierarchy by implying that social, economic, and political power and mobility are equally shared among all racial groups. Ignoring the extent to or ways in which race shapes life chances validates whites' social location in the existing racial hierarchy while legitimating the political and economic arrangements that perpetuate and reproduce racial inequality and privilege.

COLORBLINDNESS IN FRANCE

French nationalism is predicated on a pan-European political ideology along with a strong sense of blood lineage (Brubaker 1992). This blood lineage highlights the concept of whiteness, in which white descendants had a greater access to rights. In this vein, during the 1940s, the country's unofficial policy reflected a preference for European immigrants from Italy, Germany, and Spain because these populations were thought to be easier to assimilate than their North African counterparts (Bleich 2004). This policy led to a large discrepancy of rights between nationals, European immigrants, and the North African (mostly Algerian) population. Over the last fifty years, European immigrants who had no link with France, but whose presence was welcome, became fully integrated in to French political, social, and economic institutions. In contrast, in the post–World War II era, immigration has been largely from non-European sources, particularly from North Africa, Southern Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa (Bleich). These changing demographics have raised the saliency of the non-white population and, particularly over the past two decades, have resulted in increasing racial, ethnic, and religious tensions, as the dominant white majority's discriminatory actions have consistently abrogated the citizenship rights of nonwhites and their progeny, who continued to be perceived as alien and inferior (Hargreaves 2004).

The French state has resisted using the term "race" when addressing these social problems. The promotion of colorblindness in France is widely contradicted by the inequalities rooted in the non-white status of immigrants and their descendents. In particular, French citizenship

has arguably been one of the most contentious issues, highlighting how colorblindness and whiteness congeal to limit life chances of non-whites. Legal and political articulations of citizenship and nationality have gradually evolved in peculiar ways in France, largely in response to political pressure by the far right (Davies 1999). On its surface, French citizenship refers to the social unity of citizens in a common nationhood and political agenda. However, the politics of French identity and citizenship appear to be predicated on the cultural and ethnic proximity of non-Europeans to the dominant white majority, whereby those deemed as "other" or too "foreign" are subject to marginalization or exclusion.

France's political concept of membership essentially excludes non-whites in part because their social (racial, cultural, religious) characteristics are antithetical to those of the dominant group. The political meaning of nationalism appears to be based on a normative white ideal that fosters a binary conceptualization. Scholars have been critical of this dichotomy because it is largely based on the "us" and "them" binary, and therefore provides antithetical definitions of national identities (Said 1979). Moreover, as nationalism evolves, the definition of "us" and "them" also changes, which reinforces the binary opposition that places whites and non-whites in contradistinction. For instance, while European immigrants (largely white) enjoy the right to vote, non-European immigrants are often relegated to secondary status and lack political voice in local elections (Kimmelman 2008). On the one hand, and perhaps ironically, the participation of non-whites in local civic life (e.g., soccer) tends to be celebrated in integrationist and assimilationist terms, as though racial, ethnic, and nativist oppression remain absent from French society. On the other hand, this sentiment is contradicted by how social problems in France are commonly attributed to immigrants and other marginalized populations. In recent election cycles, calls for tougher criminal laws have emphasized differences between those who look like "regular" French people, and those who don't look French, also known as "strangers," facilitating a pattern of double standards (Seljug 1997).

French politics of race and whiteness are especially pernicious yet amorphous. The apparent universality of the colorblind concept and its tenet of inclusive citizenship can be appealing. Nevertheless, the French/foreigner binary is embedded in the universal definition of

French citizenship that emphasizes citizenship as the path to equality. In addition, once citizenship is attained, nationality is not formally recognized, since citizens are considered equal regardless of race or ethnicity. However, people of color, particularly those of African descent who do not fit the "special" characteristics required to become French find themselves in the foreigner category (Kimmelman 2008). This inclusive definition of universality translates into a new form of exclusion for Third World non-European populations. Theorists such as David Brown (2000) have made the distinction between civic nationalism, which is a commitment to the civil society, and ethnocultural nationalism, based on an ancestral kinship or bond. The claim for national integration assumes a superior civilization that has become the yardstick to measure the success of "others." The problem lies in the definition of citizenship and who is able to obtain it without giving up his or her cultural identity. The prerequisite of ethnoculturalism based on a color-conscious white standard requires that non-whites extirpate their cultural distinctiveness in the hope of the rights of full citizenship.

COLORBLINDNESS, IDENTITY, AND THE INCOMPATIBLE OTHER

In France, like in the United States, whiteness is an inherited privilege and the invisible norm against which all other cultural and racial groups are defined and subordinated (McIntosh 1995). Whiteness is that special property (Harris 1993) representing the supposed characteristics, traits, or essential qualities of the racially privileged (Lamont 2003). Whiteness, in France, is difficult to identify because of the country's official commitment to colorblindness. Yet whiteness is embedded in the current politics of citizenship and institutional discrimination. Gerard Delanty (1996) argues that Western Europe is currently facing a new kind of nationalism that can be opposed to the old type. While the old type was a nationalism of inclusion, the new form of nationalism is of exclusion. The discourse of inclusion within the assimilation framework of nationalism is promoted on the basis of exclusion. Delanty also observes that in the post-colonial era, ideas of nationality have been replaced by a new ideology stressing the incompatibility of

cultures. Historically, the incompatibility of cultures argument was initiated during the colonial period but over the past two decades, it has witnessed a marked resurgence as the dominant ideology of nationalism and patriotism has seemed to harden the binary between real French citizens (read white) and the "other," where the belief is that the cultures of non-European immigrants are immutable and incompatible, therefore disqualifying them from the privileges of full citizenship (Chapman and Frader 2004).

The notion of French identity as it appears in the French assimilation perspective dominates the French political arena. Since France is conscious of its level of integration (Brubaker 1992), its goal is to assimilate all French citizens in terms of culture, civility, and thought. Through custom, those not born French are required to adhere to a set of values to become French. Unlike in the United States, the French assimilation model demands that those seeking citizenship must erase their cultural past. Each culture, language, or religion that does not reflect the dominant white ideology can be interpreted as a refusal to assimilate and by extension a refusal to be French. Yet still those non-whites who subscribe to the assimilationist perspective are still viewed as "other." As Paul Gilroy (2000) observes, calculating the relationship between identity and difference, sameness and otherness, is an intrinsically political operation. It happens when political communities reflect on what makes their binding connections possible. It is fundamentally part of how "others" comprehend their kinship, albeit imaginary, yet powerful. The French assimilation perspective leaves no room for difference; one has to be born French or become it. The political discourse does not celebrate differences but rather condemns and criminalizes those who refuse French "sameness." Through the promotion of colorblindness and cultural conformity, the "other" is intrinsically denounced and condemned, as opposed to being truly integrated.

Colorblind arguments in France usually rest on two assumptions. First is that if the state recognizes race it may reinforce social divisions among its citizens. Second is that colorblind policy militates against backlash movements since non-white groups are not perceived to be benefiting at the expense of the majority. As part of its ostensible commitment to colorblindness and egalitarianism, under French law, openly racist discourses can be punished through statutes that prohibit

the promotion of hatred. There are no policies in France that are directed at groups based on their race and no systematic data collected on racial and ethnic groups, as exist in America. In fact, a 1978 law essentially outlawed the collection of such data (Bleich 2004). Nonetheless, as in the United States, stark differences in the life chances of non-whites are pervasive in French society. For instance, the general metropolitan white population of France has a significantly lower unemployment rate than blacks and people of Arab descent (Model et al. 1999).

RACISM IN PRACTICE

While overt references to race are largely absent from mainstream political discourse, an examination of policies reveals how the rhetoric of colorblindness is contravened. Consequently, in reality, the notion of cultural difference in France is closely linked to racial difference and public policy. While cultural differences within French regions are celebrated, cultural differences that encompass foreign French or non-French populations create fear. The politics surrounding non-white immigrants is perhaps the most salient example of the conflation of whiteness and colorblindness. Unlike in the United States, French citizenship does not automatically accrue to those who are born in France of immigrant parents, but citizenship is granted to those born abroad whose parents are French citizens. The idea of territorial citizenship and citizenship by blood lineage has not been consistent, and has created a double standard in which minority groups face discrimination. This view of citizenship is inextricably linked with the conception of whiteness. T. K. Oommen (1997) draws attention to this by outlining a hierarchy of citizens and nationals: the white, Catholic, French-speaking citizens from France at the top and the "Frenchified" black Muslim immigrant citizen at the bottom. The ideology of nationalist citizenship is closely linked to racism. Arabs and Africans must strive to be culturally indistinguishable from their white counterparts, but due to their non-white status are not fully accepted as French. In addition, by refusing to give French nationality to the children of immigrants at birth (until the age of eighteen), the French government consigns them to the social and economic margins.

THE FAR RIGHT AND THE UPRISINGS

Until very recently, the colorblind republican ideal worked against ef-
forts to study race relations in France in a manner similar to the United
States, in part because anti-racist groups generally view the concept
of race as a construction of racism. But the emergence of the National
Front during the 1980s and the efforts by second-generation North Afri-
cans to point out the failure of the "French melting pot" to provide them
with opportunities similar to those of earlier European immigrants has
caused a reevaluation by several sectors of French society (Chapman
and Frader 2004). The emergence of the right-wing politician Jean-
Marie Le Pen proclaiming "France for the French" was a shock to most
in the country because of his overtly racist appeal. As a result, many
argue that the French identity has been redefined by Le Pen, as his
discourse has called for the restoration of the national cultural identity
(read white) that was purportedly threatened by immigrants (Davies
1999). His anti-immigrant sentiment advocates immigrant repatriation,
while jobs should be awarded to "French" people first. Nonetheless, in
the face of youth uprisings and increasing social tensions over the past
decade, the French political elite, with much trepidation, has rebuffed
Le Pen by attempting to address some of the contradictions between
the colorblind ideal and myriad social dislocations facing North Afri-
cans. Several government initiatives have been developed to alleviate
these conditions without either violating the republican ideal or fuel-
ing resentment on the right. Namely, by targeting geographic locations
based on socioeconomic status, these policies have become a de facto
example of racial targeting (Lieberman 2004). Job programs for youth
and housing initiatives are two areas where targeting has been most
visible. What is more, in the name of anti-racism, French leaders have
commonly employed a colorblind approach to address ethnic conflicts.
Over the past decade, several anti-racist laws have been passed, includ-
ing acts that ban discrimination and racist acts in private and public
life. Like the United States, France outlaws active, intentional discrimi-
nation on the basis that differential treatment on the basis of race or
ethnicity infringes on basic norms of equality and fairness (Lieberman
2004).

The dedication to colorblindness complicates efforts to confront
the marginalization of non-whites by prohibiting the collection of data

on racial and ethnic disparities. Nonetheless, scholars, researchers, and activists have begun to investigate its failings and their impact on those who face deep inequalities in life chances, including employment, social isolation, and education. The most salient exception to this mandate was a controversial official survey in the mid-1990s that pointed to the exceedingly high rates of unemployment among non-whites. For instance, the unemployment rate among second-generation Algerians surpassed 40 percent, compared with 20 percent for their Portuguese counterparts who possessed similar skill levels. Apparently, the European ancestry of the Portuguese shielded them from racial discrimination, unlike their Algerian peers (Hargreaves 2004). While politicians from both sides have claimed open-mindedness and heavily criticized the far right for its racist positions, they have, nevertheless, been angered and disappointed by Muslims on over the use of veils (Asad 2000). Furthermore, moderate parties allowed the right to define the immigration issue by not presenting a compelling counter-narrative on issues of immigration, unemployment, and ethnic tensions. The large number of immigrants in certain regions of France, along with rising unemployment rates, created the niche Le Pen needed to advance racist arguments. With increasing economic anxiety in France, the language used by the far right became increasingly vicious, to the point of stoking racist attitudes in the general population. In particular, as the National Front became more visible in elections, anti-immigrant and nativist sentiment became more pronounced. As Miriam Feldblum (1999) argues, the National Front ideology has to be situated within the changing political opportunities in the party system and the shifting context for framing or interpreting issues of immigration and pluralism. Not only was the political discourse altered by the right, but the policies enacted in France tended to exacerbate the situation of non-white immigrants. European immigrants have enjoyed many more rights and benefits than non-European immigrants (e.g., political participation, positive stereotyping). In 1993, a law was passed ostensibly to halt illegal immigration by giving police the right to randomly check IDs anywhere in France; as could be expected, this resulted in racial profiling of those who "appear" to be foreigners (Feldblum). The law allowed police to question any individual because of their ostensible foreign status. Similarly, the nativist ascendancy produced the controversial

2005 law suggesting that history classes should reflect the positive effects of French colonization in Algeria. Historians challenged the government's effort to prescribe an "official" historical interpretation of colonialism into the classroom. This represented an institutionalized attempt to impose the perspective of the dominant white majority on the role of French colonialism.

In sum, colorblindness in the French context suggests a commitment to racial equality because no color classification is applied (unlike Great Britain and the United States). However, this official position is undermined by the durable inequalities faced by the non-white population as institutional practices continue to advantage members of the dominant group.

CONCLUSION

France and the United States share an analogous struggle to deal with the tension between colorblind universalism and racially and ethnically coded inequality. Both face a similar challenge in moving beyond the concession of formal civil and political equality to the achievement of substantive racial equality. However, through the promotion of colorblind ideologies, whites in both societies display a curious ignorance of the history of racial oppression and the established social order that continues to consign large numbers of people from the black diaspora to the economic and social margins. The colorblind narrative is especially seductive because it allows racial identity to be acknowledged in individual and superficial ways, while in contrast, utilizing race to assert group demands for social justice is perceived as violating the ideology of individual rights. Consequently, dominant groups in both societies utilize the obfuscating language of free and open societies to reaffirm their dominant position. Furthermore, the contemporary use of the concept has been rearticulated away from a social-justice framework to a conservative one that seeks to delegitimate social-justice efforts at equality while reaffirming the status quo. In other words, the ideology of colorblindness that undergirded the struggle against white supremacy in the 1960s and 1970s is now appropriated and circumvented by its beneficiaries in order to oppose substantive efforts to overcome racism's legacy.

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African-Caribbean Canadians Working "Harder" to Attain Their Immigrant Dreams: Context, Strategies, and Consequences

For the most part, people emigrate to a new country with the hope of having a better life that might be gained through economic, social, and educational opportunities to which they expect to have access. Such individuals tend to summarize that these opportunities are not available in their home countries. This perception of available opportunities leading to a "good life" in Canada can be found among Caribbean immigrants. But research has shown that Caribbean immigrants are not experiencing the same kind of integration into the Canadian society as to European immigrants before them, and relatedly do not experience the kind of economic success, and by extension upward social mobility, that is commensurate with their qualifications in relation to their education, profession, and skills. In fact, Ostrovsky (2008, 17) writes that "more recent immigrant cohorts experienced much higher earnings inequality in the first several years after arrival than did previous cohorts." This is atypical of the norm for immigrants generally. For as Ostrovsky also states:

> A basic theory of immigrant assimilation emphasizes the difficulties experienced by new immigrants in finding employment in their host country. Immigrants, who may face linguistic, information and social barriers, initially have fewer employment opportunities and receive lower wages compared with Canadian-born residents. As they become more knowledgeable about the labour market conditions in their new country, acquire more country specific skills and establish an employment record,

their earnings begin to rise and the slope of the immigrant earnings pro-
file is often steeper than that of the Canadian born (Ostrovsky 2008, 8).

In this article, I discuss the social and economic context in which
English-speaking Caribbean Canadians find themselves in their bid
to attain the immigrant dream of upward social mobility. I argue that
insofar as race operates as a marker of "difference" and foreignness,
for racial minorities, particularly for African-Caribbean Canadians, this
"difference" serves as an obstacle to their integration[1] into the society
and to the realization of their immigrant dreams. In doing so, I reference
the employment and educational experiences of Caribbean Canadians
generally, and African-Caribbean Canadians in particular, and the situ-
ation of those living in Toronto where well over 70 percent of African-
Caribbean Canadians live (James and Lloyd 2006). With qualitative data
from a recent (2004–2007) comparative study of African Canadians living
in Halifax, Toronto, and Calgary, I discuss their perceptions and sense
of their possibilities even as they admit to experiences in which racism-
related stress is affecting their health and well-being. Critical race theory
and critical hope theory are used to frame the discussion.

Critical race theory calls attention to the relevance of, and the circum-
stances and cultural contexts, by which race is made consequential in
individuals' interactions and experiences. It makes explicit the role that
liberal ideological constructs such as democracy, color-blindness, race
neutrality, multiculturalism, equal opportunity, and meritocracy play
in maintaining and perpetuating racism within and across institutions,
communities, and society (Taylor 1998; Stanley 2006). According to
Taylor, "The normalization of expected, race-based practices in employ-
ment, housing, and education makes the racism that fuels it look ordi-
nary and natural, to such a degree that oppression no longer seems like
oppression to the perpetrators" (123). And as Aylward (1999) contends
in relation to the Canadian legal and social context, an examination
of the lived realities of marginalized people necessarily involves ac-
knowledgement of not only their rights, but also of the centrality of the
systemic and subtle forms of racism that have had the effect of subordi-
nating people of color. In effect, critical race theory is grounded in the
realities of racial minorities' lived experiences with racism and as such
rejects the color-blind approach to policies and legal regulations which
on the one hand are expected to address oppressive situations of people
of color, but on the other hand simultaneously function to oppress.

In a context where racism likely operates to limit social and economic opportunities and possibilities, hope provides individuals, in this case African-Caribbean Canadians, with what Paulo Freire (1994) describes as a "possible dream" or "strategic dream" that can counter despair. According to bell hooks (1999), hope is a life force that can help sustain those living in a world of pain by pulling them back from the "edge of despair" (9; also hooks 1995/2004). Freire (8) also refers to hope as a "concrete imperative," a necessary life force without which people succumb to paralyzing hopelessness and pessimism. And as Marcel (1962, 11) declares, hope is like spiritual oxygen or nutrition without which the human soul "dries and withers." Connected to hope is a conviction that the future holds possibilities for better circumstances, and to this end, individuals learn to juggle hope and despair (Kovan and Dirkx 2003).

The critical theoretical lenses of critical race theory and critical hope theory are useful to examine the economic and social conditions that will affect African-Caribbean Canadians' attainment of their immigrant dreams. And in a society where race matters, their opportunities to realize their aspirations or dreams are likely to be affected by the racialization—a process by which their values and practices are perceived to be rooted in their racial and geographic origin, and hence "different" from those considered Canadians—that occurs in the society. Hence, Canada's policy of multiculturalism does not enable full social, economic, and cultural integration into the society whereby participation and social mobility might be attained.

In what follows, I give a brief account of the immigration of Caribbean people to Canada, followed by a discussion of the employment and educational context and related conditions. Using qualitative data from the recent study, I discuss African-Caribbean Canadian's perceptions of their educational and employment opportunities and the consequences of racism on their well-being. I conclude by noting how the social and cultural context in which they reside speak to their realization of their aspirations.

AFRICAN-CARIBBEAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

It was not until Canada changed its restrictive immigration policy in 1967 that the number of Caribbean people coming into Canada in-

creased significantly. This accounts for why most of the 503,800 people of Caribbean origin listed in the 2001 Canadian census as residing in Canada are either immigrants or first- and second-generation Canadians. However, even prior to 1967, and amid claims as late as the 1950s that blacks were mentally, morally, and socially inferior, unable to tolerate cold climates, and likely to become a social problem (Calliste 1994), Caribbean black men and women came to Canada seeking work and educational opportunities. Many women came through the Caribbean Domestic Scheme of 1910, and later in 1955, through the Household Service Workers Scheme. But the number of women who came into Canada under these schemes was restricted, based on the perception that they were or would become single parents and likely welfare recipients. These schemes brought hundreds of African-Caribbean women to work in the homes of middle- and upper-class families (Silvera 1984); though the women were only expected to have a minimum of grade eight education, many of them were professionals—teachers, nurses, civil servants—back home.

Starting in 1967, immigrants to Canada, particularly those entering as independent immigrants (as opposed to members of the family class), were required to score 70 to 80 points out of a possible 100 based on, among other things, level of education, job skills, occupational demands, knowledge of English and French, and age. All subsequent changes to Canada's immigration policy, especially the requirements of language proficiency, previous work experiences, and education attainment (Green and Green 1995), have been about insisting on or strengthening the occupational orientation in the immigration policies and furtherance of the "fitting in principle" that is part of its subtext.

And although prospective family-class immigrants—those sponsored or nominated by husbands, wives, and fiancé(e)s—are not expected to meet these requirements, many tend to be skilled and have high levels of education. This tends to be the case for many Caribbean immigrants. Specifically, whether sponsored, nominated, or independent immigrants, many come with postsecondary education and professional credentials in the medical field, such as nurses and doctors, and in the field of education, mostly teachers (James, Plaza, and Jansen 1999). Those without such credentials often come to Canada with the expectation of furthering their education, and they usually do. So while social networks, family ties, and the convenient geographic location

of Toronto make travel between the Caribbean and Canada easy, it is largely the economic and occupational opportunities and possibilities that Caribbeans perceive that they will be afforded in Toronto that account for their presence in this most populated and diverse of Canada's metropolitan cities.

According to the 2001 Census, 28 percent of Caribbeans who immigrated to Canada did so during the 1990s, while 25 percent came between 1981 and 1990, 14 percent in the 1960s and 1970s, and 2 percent before the 1960s. The majority of Caribbean Canadians (about 60 percent) live in the greater Toronto area[2] and most of them (about 3 percent) are of African origin.[3] The census of 2006 indicates that about 11 percent of Canada's immigrant population is from the Caribbean. As table 1 indicates, Jamaicans constitute the majority of Caribbean immigrants to Canada.[4]

THEY COME TO WORK:
EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

One of the most enduring legacies of the domestic worker schemes is that despite more than a quarter of a century since their elimination, many African-Caribbean Canadian women continue to work as caregivers and unskilled employees (many in the service industry) despite their level of education. Similarly, despite their occupational abilities and trade skills, most of the men who came in those early years were restricted to unskilled and service jobs; for example, many worked on the railroads as porters (Calliste 1994). Generally, like other immigrants, especially immigrants of color, Caribbean immigrants continue to be framed in terms of the impact that they are likely to have on Canadian economy, especially in the area of employment—as in finding employment or being self-employed (see Collacott 2002; Li 2001 and 2003; Nakhaie 2006 and 2007; Stoffman 2002; Verbeenten 2007; Henry 1994). The fact that racial minorities, especially blacks, continue to do poorly in the Canadian job market points to an unfavorable context, especially in the area of employment, which they are forced to confront.

Data from the 1996 Census shows that Caribbeans in Toronto were more likely to be in the labor force (working and/or looking for work) compared to the general population. In fact, there was a 5–6 percent

Table 1. Landed Immigrants in Canada by Country of Birth, 1981–2007

Country of Birth of Landed Immigrants	1981	1986	1991	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Caribbean and Bermuda Total	8,800	8,873	13,116	9,397	8,230	6,406	6,809	7,168	8,463	7,567	6,589	6,684	6,941	6,788	7,975
Haiti	3,702	1,730	2,850	1,977	1,657	1,316	1,445	1,648	2,423	2,189	1,943	1,684	1,700	1,637	1,617
Jamaica	2,688	4,669	5,136	3,308	2,868	2,268	2,364	2,463	2,781	2,479	2,008	2,159	1,918	1,710	2,134
Trinidad and Tobago	947	921	2,985	2,207	1,759	1,199	1,189	923	932	953	726	758	869	813	1,005
Others	1,463	1,553	2,145	1,905	1,946	1,623	1,811	2,134	1,327	1,946	1,912	2,083	2,454	2,628	3,219

Source: Statistics Canada (2008, 60).

difference between Caribbeans and other Torontonians, with and without postsecondary education (85 percent compared to 80 percent and 73 percent compared to 67 percent, respectively), who reported to be working for the census period. At the same time, data show, Caribbeans, compared to other Torontonians, were more likely to be unemployed, less likely to be self-employed, and less likely to be employed full-time. The situation varied according to the ethnic background of the Caribbeans. For instance, blacks were far more likely to be unemployed (22 percent) compared to Indians (15 percent) and Chinese (10 percent), and 76 percent of Caribbean blacks and 81 and 82 percent of Indians and Chinese, respectively, were in full-time employment (James 2007; James, Plaza, and Jansen 1999).

The 2001 Census data showed a similar economic picture for Caribbean Canadians (Lindsay 2007). As table 2 shows, the employment situation of Caribbean Canadians had not improved by 2001, even though they were more likely than other Canadians to be in the labor force and to be employed. The data showed 66 percent of them were working in 2001, compared to the national average of 62 percent. Yet their unemployment rate was nearly 2 percentage points higher than the Canadian average (9.3 percent compared to 7.4 percent). This rate was higher for youth—individuals between the age of fifteen and twenty-four, as defined by Statistics Canada. For young Caribbean-Canadian men, the incidence of unemployment was 19 percent, compared to 14 percent for young men of similar age in the general population. For young women in the same age bracket at the same time, the corresponding rates were 17 percent for Caribbean Canadians and 13 percent nationally (Lindsay, 14). For the Caribbean Canadians who were working,

Table 2.   Percentage of the Population Employed, by Age Group and Sex, 2001

Age Group	Caribbean Canadians			Total Canadian Population		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
15–24	47.2	51.4	49.3	56.1	55.6	55.9
25–44	84.9	76.7	80.4	85.6	75.2	80.3
45–64	79.6	70.9	74.6	74.8	60.8	67.7
65 and over	14.7	6.2	9.5	13.0	4.8	8.4
Total	69.5	63.8	66.4	67.2	56.1	61.5

Source: Lindsay (2007, 14).

most continued to be employed as health-care workers and care-givers (9 percent compared to 5 percent of all Canadians who were working in the same field) and as factory workers (11 percent compared to 8 percent of all Canadians). Comparatively, only 6 percent of Caribbean Canadians were in any type of management position while 10 percent of the total employable population of Canada was employed in management (Lindsay).

Predictably, the employment situation of Caribbean Canadians is likely to be reflected in their incomes and economic status. According to the 1996 Census data, most of them, like other Canadians, earned their incomes from wage labor (James 2007). However, African Caribbeans, compared to their counterparts with postsecondary education, were more likely—14 percent compared to 9 percent—to obtain their income from government sources. In general, they earned $3,000 less than the average Canadian. But this income differential was significantly less ($5,000) for those African Caribbeans with postsecondary education compared to their counterparts with similar levels of education. This earning differential suggests that the economic return on education for African-Caribbean Canadians is considerably less than it is for other Canadians. Indeed, as table 3 indicates, African-Caribbean Canadians tend to have the same, and in some cases, higher rate of participation in the education system, resulting in similar or higher educational credentials as in the general population; even so, their earnings are less. But despite their earnings, African-Caribbean Canadians continue to participate

Table 3.   Educational Attainment of the Caribbean Community and Overall Canadians Age 15 and Over, by Sex, 2001

	Caribbean Community			*Total Canadian Population*		
	Men	*Women*	*Total*	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*
Less than high school	29.1	26.3	27.5	31.4	31.1	31.3
High-school graduate	13.7	12.2	12.9	13.1	15.1	14.1
Some postsecondary	14.2	13.6	13.9	10.7	11.0	10.8
Trade certification/diploma	12.6	9.9	11.1	14.1	7.8	10.9
College graduate	15.6	23.4	19.9	12.5	17.3	15.0
Below bachelor's degree	2.4	2.9	2.7	2.1	2.9	2.5
Bachelor's degree	8.6	8.7	8.7	10.6	10.6	10.6
Post-graduate degree	3.8	3.0	3.3	5.4	4.2	4.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Lindsay (2007, 13).

in the education system in ways that they believe will enable them to gain respect and be competitive in the employment market, thereby attaining the social and economic successes they seek. Their pursuit of education is reflective of their value for, and the confidence they place in, the social, economic, cultural, and political potential and power of education.

The economic picture for Caribbean Canadians painted above did not improve between 2001 and 2006 (the year of the last census). In reality, it deteriorated. By 2001, African Caribbeans were earning $4,000 less than other Canadians—a $1000 drop in a span of four years. Understandably, given their level of income, many more Caribbean Canadians in general were classified as living below the poverty line than other Canadians; within the Caribbean subgroup, African Caribbeans did less well than both Indo- and Chinese Caribbeans (Lindsay 2007; see also Anisef et al. 2008). Further, although both the employment and earning information of immigrants contained in the 2006 Census (see table 4) is not broken down by ethnicity or by place of origin, the information suggests that as part of the immigrant group, African-Caribbean Canadians are earning less, and in some cases, much less, especially females, than their Canadian-born counterparts.

Moreover, as the table indicates, since 1980, earnings differentials between immigrants and Canadian-born seem to suggest that university education for both male and female immigrants, compared to their Canadian-born counterparts with equivalent levels of education, does not produce the same earnings in the Canadian job market. Even so, as already mentioned (and will be discussed later), African-Caribbean

Table 4.   Median Earnings of Male and Female Immigrants Compared to Their Canadian-born Counterparts

| | Recent immigrant earnings ratio (earnings for every dollar earned by a Canadian-born) | | | |
| | With University | | Without University | |
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female
1980	.77	.59	.84	.86
1990	.63	.63	.67	.77
2000	.58	.52	.65	.66
2005	.48	.43	.61	.56

Source: Statistics Canada (2008, 60).

Canadians, particularly the recent immigrants, continue to value university education and work to obtain university degrees. Indeed, as Frenette and Morissette (2003) have shown, immigrants to Canada are generally more educated than their Canadian-born counterparts. But Ostrovsky avers that "the earning fortunes of immigrants have declined in more recent times" (2008, 24). In the section that follows, I present what African-Caribbean Canadians had to say about education, their employment experiences, and how racism is affecting their employment and aspirations.

THE HOPE IN EDUCATION, THE PROMISE OF EMPLOYMENT, AND THE STRESSES OF RACISM

In our interviews with ninety African Canadians in Halifax, Toronto, and Calgary about the effects of racism on their health and well-being, we asked about their aspirations, achievements, and successes and about the strategies they employed to ensure their success.[5] As one participant noted, getting an education has been, and still is, "the key to climbing the social ladder." It was viewed not only as a means of upward social mobility, achieving financial well-being and security for individuals, and allowing for a "better life" for their children, but also as a "tool" or a "ticket" and central to transcending the limits posed by systemic racism. In the words of another participant, "Education has been the key to our salvation and it will continue [to be]. . . . An educated black person is somebody who has more options than the average black person has access to and even when the doors don't open easily, you're in a better position to work. You've got something. It's awful when you have a discriminatory society and you don't have any education. It's just that much harder."

But there was the reality that individuals did not realize the benefits they expected from education. Participants understood education to be "one of the tickets" that would make opportunities possible for blacks, but as one participant recalled, "Very few of us were able to jump on that train. It hasn't come in the way we had hoped. Very few of us have the jobs that we see our white counterparts with who have less education." Many of the participants attributed this failure to obtain the jobs or employment opportunities they wished for to the stereotyping of

them as "lacking work ethics" and being "uneducated," "unintelligent," "uninventive," and "incapable of abstract thinking." And many reported that in the work environment their ideas were constantly "played down" or "overlooked." Furthermore, on the rare occasion that these ideas were recognized, they were often denied credit by their bosses for them.

Some respondents also reported that they felt pressure, both direct and indirect, to justify their merit in employment. This pressure, and related close scrutiny, obviously was taken up differently by respondents. For some, it meant staying at work well after others had left or getting to work much earlier than others; for others, it meant having to work extra hours without being paid for these hours in order to demonstrate their commitment to work and their work ethic, as well as to counter the effects of other stereotypes of them. For others, it meant having to work "extra hard" or "harder than" their peers. In the words of one participant, "I have to work ten times as hard in order to keep my job." Participants who were unemployed or underemployed at the time of the interview reported that they had become so disillusioned that they "no longer even bother applying" for jobs. Ironically, these individuals will probably not be included in the calculation of the unemployment rate for African-Caribbean Canadians because they would be considered by the formulation of Statistics Canada not to be in the labor force. This is a form of "pushing out" that remains under-analyzed and therefore under-theorized.

Many African-Caribbean Canadians in our study talked about the cumulative effects of their work experiences and their need to be "strong on the inside" and "not to show emotion." This means that for many of these research participants, there was never "a point of rest" in their work environment. Because of this and "being emotionally drained for having been on guard for so long" in the work environment, the result was, as many reported, stress. Interestingly, in Toronto, more African-Caribbean Canadian men than women reported feeling stress as a result of their work. This idea was expressed by one African-Caribbean Canadian in the following way:

> It kind of hurt you inside. You probably internalize it, but then you say to yourself, "You are qualified. You have other options." It has affected my health to the point where I have to be medicated because I am going through a very stressful period. I have to make a career change because

of my health. What am I going to do! It is very painful. I think you never
expect something like this.

African-Caribbean Canadian participants who were working and not
working at the time of the study reported feeling stressed. This was
true for participants working in jobs that matched their educational
qualifications as well as those working in jobs below their qualifica-
tion and skill levels. In addition, participants reported that low-paying
jobs and unemployment contributed to the loss of self-love, feelings of
anger and depression, and lack of self-confidence. Many of the partici-
pants recognized the interrelationship of their employment, familial,
social, and economic situation and the resulting increase in health risk
for them.

CONCLUSION: "FOREVER FOREIGN, FOREVER IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA"

Despite the number of years Caribbeans have been in Canada, and re-
gardless of their educational and occupational attainment, skills, and
aspirations and their contribution to the economic and cultural life of
the society, they continue to be characterized "outsiders" or "foreign-
ers." This social construction informs the ways in which Caribbean
people are treated, their participation and opportunities in the society,
and their economic and social attainment. This is part of a racialization
process that is fostered by immigration policies and programs and the
federal multicultural policy that promotes a discourse of identity in
which bodies are used to denote origin and belonging. The construc-
tion of the Caribbean people, in this case Africans, as "foreigners" and
therefore "different" is captured in the many stories that Caribbean
people tell about their lives in Canada. In some of their stories, they
recount questions they are asked, such as: "Where are you from?" or
"Which island are you from?" Sometimes the question comes in the
form of a statement or assertion: "You must be from the islands. Aren't
you?" It is not simply because these Canadians "look" Caribbean—
because there is certainly no "Caribbean look," and furthermore, we
know that Caribbean people are racially and ethnically diverse. But as
Hazelle Palmer writes, such questions point to the need of the ques-
tioner, typically a white Canadian, "to match us to a country that he

or she thinks is more representative of what we *do* look like: if we are Black, it probably means Jamaica. . . . This probing of our ancestry keeps us forever foreign, forever immigrants to Canada" (1997, vi).

This social construction belies Canada's claim to being an inclusive society, for if indeed differences was accepted as part of Canada's reality, then Caribbean people's difference, in terms race, ethnicity, and national origins, should have no effect on their integration into Canadian society and hence the realization of their aspirations. In fact, as the federal multicultural policy promises, Caribbean Canadians, like immigrants before them, and/or other Canadians, should be enjoying cultural freedom, equitable treatment, and full participation in the social, cultural, economic, and political life of the country. But in practice, Canadian multiculturalism has helped to establish a paradigm of Canadians who are neither British nor French, as people from elsewhere with values and practices that are static and "foreign" and based on their experiences in their country of origin. Hence, in the case of Caribbean Canadians, based on their (non-white) color, they are often read as outsiders—people who are immigrants and "speak with accents" that are not easily understood and are unlikely to have the necessary "Canadian experience" and educational and occupational qualification for jobs. In light of this construction, it is to be expected that the comfortable economic and social life to which Caribbean Canadians aspire appears to be up against insurmountable odds.

Nevertheless, they, like other immigrants, cling to hope and the belief that education—the more the better—is key to their attainment of the economic and social ideal that is their immigrant dream. So despite their underperformance in the job market, the continual undervaluation of their university education, and the costs to their health and well-being, many African-Caribbean Canadians continue to obtain university degrees, professional credentials, and trade skills, as well as try to stay employed. In effect, as racialized people, and as the *Racism*, *Violence*, *Health* research indicates, hope can be viewed as a form of social capital that provides individuals with the impetus to develop and maintain confidence in themselves—in their identity, abilities, knowledge, and skills—and in the belief that the hurdles or obstacles to their achievements are surmountable, if not by them, by their children.

All things considered, as I argue elsewhere, how and when a group of people is allowed to enter a country, and the manner in which they

are accommodated and expected to participate, set the parameters that delineate their social and economic outcomes for a very long time (James 1997). For Caribbean Canadians, the persistence of racism—and anti-black racism in particular (Benjamin 2003)—means that their economic and social mobility will not only be at a much slower pace than earlier European immigrants, but also more limited compared to other immigrants of color, especially when we take into account gender, underemployment, and health issues. All of these do not bode well for the future of the children in whom Caribbean Canadian parents place their hopes for the future.

NOTES

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1. According to the Canadian Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, integration is "a process, clearly distinct from assimilation, by which groups and/or individuals become able to participate fully in the political, economic, social and cultural life" of the country (1987, 87).

2. Montreal has the second largest number of Caribbean Canadians; about 25 percent, a significant proportion of them, live there.

3. The census also indicated that 5 percent of Caribbean Canadians were of Indian origin, 15 percent of Chinese and other racial minority origin, and 7 percent of European origin. However, Plaza (2004) argues that the number of South Asians (or people of Indian origin) is likely to be larger.

4. Using the 1996 Census, Ornstein (2000) identifies that a significant majority of Caribbean immigrants, well over 70,000, were from Jamaica, and more than 10,000 each were from Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. In fact, Caribbeans are about 6 percent of Toronto's more than 4 million residents.

5. The research team included Wanda Thomas Bernard (Halifax), David Este (Calgary), and Akua Benjamin (Toronto). The study, "Racism, Violence, and Health," was of African Canadians generally, but for this article, I reference the responses of African-Caribbean Canadians only. We used a mixed-method data gathering approach in which nine hundred participants (three hundred from each site) were surveyed and ninety (including thirty key community informants) were interviewed.

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ELAINE SAVORY
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An Interview with Francis Abiola Irele

This is the first in a series of interviews with major literary critics and theorists from the African diaspora. Professor Francis Abiola Irele presently teaches in the Department of African and African American Studies at Harvard, and is also editor of the crucial journal for public intellectuals in the African diaspora, *Transition*, where he succeeds founding editor Rajat Neogy and later editors Wole Soyinka and Henry Louis Gates. He holds a doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris and is equally at home in Yoruba, French, and English. He has edited or co-edited anthologies and editions of French African prose; the poetry of Léopold Sédar Senghor; essays on African drama, African education and identity; Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, and the Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature.

His essays have been seminal in the fields of African and African-diaspora studies and have been collected in *The African Experience in Literature and Ideology, The African Imagination: Literature in Africa and the Black Diaspora*. His many areas of scholarly interest include Négritude, the teaching of African literature in vernacular languages, the criticism of modern African literature, African philosophy, publishing in Africa, the African scholar, and a long list of writers, including Chinua Achebe, Frantz Fanon, Wole Soyinka, Camara Laye, Ken Saro-Wiwa, John Pepper Clark-Bekederemo, Kamau Brathwaite, Femi Osofisan, Niyi Osundare, and W. E. B. DuBois. As early as 1978, when his first essay collection was published, he was called "the commanding intelligence of African literature," a comment he modestly

waves away, but which has a solid currency with those who know his work. His recent work includes a book in French on négritude and the African condition, an edition of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in the Norton Critical Series, an edited companion to the African novel forthcoming from Cambridge University Press, and a major essay on African reconstruction.

Last year, scholars, writers, and musicians from Africa, the Americas, and Europe gathered at two major celebrations in his honor, held to mark a collective appreciation of his work at the beginning of his eighth decade. One was hosted by Churchill College, Cambridge, and the other by the DuBois Institute at Harvard. From the latter, a two-day symposium, concert, and poetry reading, will come a festschrift, which by its very scope and depth indicates the enormous influence Irele has had.

He is known for the breadth of his literary knowledge, his command of languages, and the enduring importance of his ideas, but also for a remarkable modesty which has probably inspired many to follow his path of constant learning. His inaugural lecture as professor of French at the University of Ibadan in 1982 was titled "In Praise of Alienation" and was a magisterial and provocative assertion of the importance of a creative tension between the particular (local culture) and the universal (what at the time was often characterized as the intrusive and irrelevant nature of colonially introduced European intellectual traditions). This sense of the importance of a complex reading of post-colonial texts is clear in his location of Césaire's *Cahier* which he calls "the master text of decolonization, " which must be read not only politically, but also in "a cultural and moral sense," a text which speaks at the same time "to all humanity." In his early essay, "The Criticism of African Literature" (1981), Irele argues that critics must know the cultural context of a literary work, whilst warning that this does not mean that anthropological detail in creative works should be hunted down by anthropologists and sociologists. Though such a position is unremarkable today among scholars of African diaspora literature, it was almost entirely opposed at the moment when Irele first articulated it in 1970 and was clearly the result of his long study of sociology in Paris.

From this early essay onward, he has been known as a powerfully insightful and forward-looking scholar. He is also a generous colleague and mentor and a demanding and energetic editor. Irele's excellent prose style demonstrates his love of language, and he has long been

close to major Nigerian writers Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe, as well as many other writers. His resistance to certain aspects of what used to be called "high theory" is responsive to what he perceives as a use of language to obfuscate and mystify rather than enrich and enlighten. His magisterial edition of Césaire's *Cahier* is clearly deeply informed by his respect and love for Césaire, and his richly scholarly and thoughtful introduction is just simply a necessary entry for anyone who wants to know about the importance of Césaire to subsequent Caribbean thought and creativity: "*Cahier* initiates the exploration of the reaches of the Caribbean mind now being pursued in the work of writers as diverse as Edouard Glissant, René Depestre and Simone Schwartz-Bart . . . in French and Edward Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott working in English" (1994a).

Irele is the kind of literary and cultural critic who is serious about contributing to the future of literature, not just by praising writers and their work, but by insightful and productive analyses and sometimes warnings. In an early essay, "The Criticism of African Literature" (1981), he argued that because African literature was being read via the Western critical tradition, the challenge for the critic was to avoid both "frustrating our writers and stultifying the development of a vigorous movement" and "excessive indulgence in encouraging second-rate work and condemning our literature for ever to a minor position" (1981, 31). Following Irving Howe, Irele saw literary criticism as having a key role in the development of a culture. For the critic of a new literature, such as Africans writing in European languages, the stakes are particularly high. The critic should pay attention to "how the author's intention and attitude issue out of the wider social context of his art in the first place, and more important still, to get to an understanding of the way each writer or group of writers captures a moment of the historical consciousness of the society" (1981, 34). In addition, criticism "cannot be pure scholarship . . . the best criticism implies an affective and intense participation in the creative act" (1981, 32).Though Irele studied sociology in Paris, as he prepared for his doctoral work on négritude and literature, he was highly dismissive of anthropologists who use the literature of developing societies without attending to how "they form part of the imaginative life of the work and how they are integrated into its artistic purpose" (1981, 34). Irele was also concerned with linguistic issues. He pointed out that African languages such as Ijaw and Yoruba

were still, in the late sixties, resistant to adaptation to the technologi-
cal world, still "archaic in the purest sense of the word—that is every
word, every syllable even, retaining its value as a sign, as a metaphor"
(1981, 37). By this he meant, as he went on to explain, that the most
accomplished writing in English by writers who possessed those ar-
chaic languages could revitalize world English itself, giving back the
"sensuous delight in language" of Shakespeare's time, and so restoring
something to English that has been lost in England itself. African writ-
ers will refresh and cleanse the English language.

His essay insisted on the importance of literature and literary criti-
cism as part of the intellectual development of a society, people, or
an entire continent. He reminded his readers that T. S. Eliot insisted
on the importance of an acute critical faculty "within the creative pro-
cess itself" (1981, 32). Similarly Irele required the critic to be capable
of creative, innovative reading. In the late 1960s, his concerns were
to avoid both what would later be identified and attacked by cultural
critics such as Anthony Appiah as "nativism," a protectionist and often
highly romantic rejection of all things foreign in Africa, and the blink-
ered application of Eurocentric literary critical assumptions to African
texts, which was happening as Irele was writing. He understood that
the establishment of an audience for scribal texts in a predominantly
oral post-colonial popular culture is another challenge for the critic as
for the writer. But also scribal texts need to be understood in terms of
their complex intercultural ancestry. Finally, Irele's call in this essay
for the contribution of literary critics to the making of African culture
came at a very difficult time: the Biafran War, or Nigerian Civil War,
broke out in 1967.

A few years later, in 1974, *The Benin Review* was launched, coed-
ited by Irele, an early example of his long commitment to the critic's
involvement in the publishing of both creative writing and the contribu-
tions of public intellectuals interested in literature. It was short-lived,
but in the opening issue it immediately reflected Irele's truly diasporic
reach by including an elegy by Senghor for Martin Luther King (with a
note "for jazz orchestra"). In an essay here on Wole Soyinka's creative
engagement with the Nigerian crisis, Irele practices the critical prin-
ciples he had set out in the late sixties. He explains how Soyinka's work
speaks to a particular historical moment: "If Soyinka is the creator of
a disquieting awareness, it is as a means to the illumination of our col-

lective consciousness in this our 'age of anxiety' as Africans, and as an invitation to a lucid understanding of our situation" (1974, 122).

Whilst he supports Soyinka's evolution from "pure artist" to "committed writer and political activist," he is concerned that Soyinka is too invested in "a romantic anarchism . . . an extreme attachment to the abstract ideals of the liberal individualism of the 19th century European intellectual tradition," something hard to translate effectively into the contemporary African context (1974, 121–22). In short, Irele's critical task here was to make both a formal and contextual reading of the work of an outstandingly gifted writer in a period of violent political upheaval, reflecting his sense of the importance of the critic's role in the development of a new literature. He was an early appreciator of the work of Kamau Brathwaite, and wrote an important essay on "Masks" (1994b), in which he wondered why this fine poem cycle had thus far received relatively little critical attention, since he sees it as the "pivot" around which Brathwaite's first trilogy, *The Arrivants* (1973) revolves.

In the interview that follows, Irele is characteristically honest and forthcoming, providing a rich portrait of a life of constant intellectual curiosity, the life of a major humanist, whose next project is to contribute to the renaissance of the intellectual life of his home country, Nigeria, so sadly fallen into hard times in recent years of political, economic, and cultural upheaval, forcing so many, like Irele himself, to leave. He has said he could have added so much more: perhaps this might tempt him to begin a memoir that can go into far more detail as to the intellectual and creative communities that have sustained him and to which he has given so much.

THE INTERVIEW

Elaine Savory: For so many in the United States and the Caribbean, Nigeria is known only by its troubles in recent times, or by its writers, such as Soyinka or Achebe, no longer living there. But it is such a rich country, culturally and linguistically, that to say you are Nigerian is only the surface of the story. Nigerians are famously multilingual and often multiethnic. Where in Nigeria were you born? What was your first language? Where did your family come from?

Abiola Irele: The question of my background is rather complicated. I was in fact born in Ora, north of Benin City. That is an Edo-speaking area. There are three main Edo dialects, variants of the same language: the one spoken in Benin City and environs, and then Ora and Ishan. Edo describes both a linguistic group and also an ethnicity.

I must have heard Ora first, because both my parents spoke it, but I was taken shortly after my birth by my mother to Enugu where my father had been posted as a civil servant. He employed people there as house help, and they were all Igbo-speaking. They took care of me, so the very first language I spoke was Igbo, up to the age of four. Though I have since forgotten the language, sometimes when I say an Igbo word, I'm told by my Igbo friends that I pronounce it well. So maybe some memory survives.

We moved to Lagos in 1940, where I then began to speak Yoruba. In 1943, I was taken back to Ora with my mother, after a quarrel with my father. I was then seven years old, and picked up Ora and began to speak it fluently within the year. I don't speak it any more on a regular basis, but I still understand it. I moved back to Lagos to live with my father in 1944 and so grew up with Yoruba as my first language and ethnic identification.

English was of course all around us. I began to listen to the BBC very early, and by the age of nine was reading the newspapers regularly, in order to follow the progress of the Second World War. I remember the headline announcing the defeat of Germany in 1945: "Germany Surrenders Unconditionally."

E. S.: What did you read as a child? Of course English colonialism controlled the educational syllabus. What did you enjoy of English literature? Yoruba culture surrounded you in your early days outside school. What was your sense of Yoruba culture and how you fitted into it? How did you first get the idea of the importance of words for Yoruba people? When did you discover your particular affiliation with literature?

A. I.: My first introduction to literature, in the sense of imaginative expression, was through the folk tales. This was in the mid '40s, when Lagos was still a traditional city, and we were able to have folk-tale sessions within the household. Most of the city was in fact rather rural. There was a town crier who went round regularly with a gong to make announcements emanating from the king, Oba Falolu, who still exer-

cised an authority that was more real for the indigenes of Lagos (Eko) than that of the British commissioner. Then, above all, one heard oral poets as they went round in the streets chanting long pieces known as "rara," in a high-pitched voice, placing their hands over their ears. (The word has survived in the folk lore of the West Indies.) There were also all the various festivals, with the procession of masquerades and especially one particular to Lagos known as "Igunnu."

My formal education in elementary school for the first six years was in Yoruba. It was at this stage that I read Fagunwa's novels and other texts in Yoruba, especially Itan Eko, a history of Lagos. These texts were always read aloud in class, in fact performed, with songs as interludes, as in the folk-tale sessions.

I began to read children's stories in English—Enid Blyton and stuff like that—in the upper elementary and moved on to things like Ballantynes's *Coral Island*, then graduated to more serious literature when I entered secondary school early in 1949—the school year began in those days in January. I tackled Dickens (*A Tale of Two Cities*), George Eliot (*Savonarola*), Jane Austen (*Pride and Prejudice*) quite early, in full text editions. I don't remember now much of what I read, but hope to reread them when I finally retire. I was later introduced to Conrad by Fr. Carroll, who was our English master in secondary school—a Catholic boarding school. Before I left school, I'd read most of the major works—*The Secret Agent*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Typhoon* and especially, *Nostromo*.

Fr. Carroll also gave me copies of *Scrutiny* to read. He'd been at Cambridge and studied, I believe, with F. R. Leavis. He had a complete set of *Scrutiny* at the time, and was a devoted Leavis man.

E. S.: Is that why you wanted to go to Cambridge? Did he go to Clare?

A. I.: He would have liked me to go to Cambridge, to Clare College, after high school, but my father couldn't afford it, so I went instead to the University College, Ibadan, where in 1960, I completed a BA with honors in English, awarded by London. This was under what was called a special relationship which enabled colonial students to study at the local university colleges founded after the war and to take London degrees. University College Ibadan became the University of Ibadan later on, in 1964.

E. S.: Clearly Ibadan, like the rest of the Nigerian educational system, had a British-based syllabus at the time, due to colonialism. Did you go up to read English as it was then called? What literature did you have to read for your B.A., and what do you remember as the most important and enjoyable for you?

A. I.: Strangely enough, I didn't choose English when I went up to Ibadan in 1957. I planned to read classics, but as I had no Greek (I'd done eight years of Latin, right up to A Level) I'd have had to spend an extra year studying the language in order to enroll for the degree, so I opted for English, especially as the dean of arts that year was Molly Mahood, who was also professor of English.

The syllabus in English at the time began with the Renaissance—no Anglo-Saxon, nothing from the Middle Ages, and so, no Chaucer. (I'd done *The Prologue* and *The Pardoner's Tale* at A Level). Even then, the syllabus was fairly extensive. As I've said elsewhere, it stretched from Spenser to Spender. We also did the history of the English language, and in our final year, structure of English, a kind of introduction to linguistics, to the "scale and category" method associated with the British School at the time.

Shakespeare comes first for me. Actually, I first encountered him through Charles and Mary Lamb's retelling of the plays. Later, I read *Macbeth* for the Cambridge School Certificate, and *Hamlet* for the A Level, and the rest of the work for the Shakespeare paper in English at Ibadan, with a focus on *Othello*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Coriolanus*. I've retained a profound admiration for his depth of human understanding and for his mastery of language. I've already mentioned other writers I read in my early years, among whom I should include the Brontë sisters: *Wuthering Heights* had a shattering impact on me. There remain the Romantic poets, whom I studied for the A Level. We read quite a bit of English poetry in school—I still remember lines from Gray's "Elegy" and Goldsmith's "The Village Headmaster" to this day. But it wasn't until my A level that I really began to acquire an extended view of English poetry: Wordsworth and Keats, in particular. My favorite Romantic remains Shelley. I must add that Bernard Shaw was a huge figure for us in those days. Surprising that he's not read or produced any more. It was during this period too that I discovered Donne and Hopkins. Yeats and Eliot came later, at university.

But it was not only the classics that I read—there were the novels of writers like Somerset Maugham and H. E. Bates, and I remember reading the plays of Christopher Fry—*The Lady's Not for Burning*, *Venus Observed*, etc.—and many other works which a pen friend of mine used to send me from England. I never met her, by the way.

E. S.: What was Ibadan like when you did your first degree? Was there an intellectual and cultural vibrancy for undergraduates?

A. I.: The Arts Theatre was part of the English department, and we produced lots of plays. We put on the premiere of Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, in which I played Lakunle. His early plays were also performed in the dining halls, as they came off hot from his typewriter, as it were. But my most memorable experience of drama at Ibadan was the production of two plays by Brecht, by Geoffrey Axworthy, at a time when Brecht was not yet well known in Europe itself. Our student union meeting provided a kind of drama on its own. In addition, there were hall dinners, dances: I was introduced to Achebe at one of these dances in 1959. He had read my review of *Things Fall Apart*, which had just been published in the student journal. I hope this gives you an idea of the atmosphere at Ibadan.

E. S.: Clearly Molly Mahood, an extraordinary British academic who was truly supportive of the development of African literatures, was a key mentor. She was an anglophone scholar but you chose to study in France for your doctorate. How did you make that choice?

A. I.: There was no degree program, no courses in French at Ibadan at the time. We didn't do the language in school either. But I'd taught myself some French before I entered university, and even obtained a school certificate in French as a supplementary subject, which I had decided to take as a private student. It was partly for fun, partly also because some people in my extended family were from Dahomey (now Benin), and I wanted to be able to speak the language with them. As it turned out, this was very propitious, if one may say so. My very elementary knowledge made it possible for me to obtain a French government scholarship to study in France after I'd got my BA degree in 1960. It was intended for one year, to enable me to acquire French properly, after which I was to proceed to England with a university of

Ibadan scholarship for my doctorate, with Clare College, Cambridge, as a possibility. There were funds available for graduate scholarships if you got at least an upper-second in your degree, and three of us in my year qualified—Michael Echeruo, Ayo Bamgbose, and myself. Echeruo went to Cornell to do literature and is now a noted Shakespeare scholar, Bamgbose went to Edinburgh to do medieval English and became an outstanding sociolinguist and theorist. I was supposed to go on to do a thesis on an English writer after my year in Paris. I had Conrad in mind.

That was the plan. The French authorities placed me at a hotel in the Latin Quarter—on the Rue des Ecoles. Présence Africaine was less than a block away, and I went first thing in the morning to visit the bookstore. I soon met Alioune Diop there. My French was not good enough to talk with him freely, but he had good English. Later, I met some of the francophone black writers and intellectuals in his circle. I remember Glissant in particular, because of his impressive bearing. In December that year, Présence Africaine organized an evening of poetry reading at UNESCO which featured Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*. It was magnificently rendered by Toto Bissainthe, a Haitian actress and singer. All this made a powerful impression on me, so I wrote to Molly Mahood and asked to have my Ibadan scholarship transferred to Paris. That's how I ended up staying six years there.

E. S.: What were the most influential experiences you had in Paris? It must have been very exciting to know Diop and his circle. Given the lack of French studies at Ibadan, how did you achieve fluency so as to participate fully in that circle? What other important experiences contributed to that period of your intellectual life?

A. I.: Indeed, Paris was a very exciting place at that time—I suppose it's always been! The influences were many and varied—intellectual first and foremost, but also, cultural and even culinary. Let me begin with Diop and Présence Africaine. The place was a meeting place for black writers and students, so there was a constant procession and I met practically all the people who counted in the francophone intellectual world. From 1963 to 1965, I was assistant editor on a part-time basis helping with the English edition. I began to write reviews for the journal—I'm not sure what they sound like now! In 1962, Diop asked

me to undertake a mission to Kampala, and I arrived there just days after the famous conference of English-speaking writers. We didn't know about it in Paris, otherwise I'd have timed my arrival so as to take part in the conference. But I met Ngugi, who was in his final year at Makerere. I also met Rajat Neogy, who'd just started *Transition*. I later wrote a couple of articles for the journal, and especially a review of an extraordinary novel titled *The Crossing*, by a young writer called Alan Albert. He was an incredibly gifted fellow who shot like a comet across our sky and disappeared, never to be heard from again.

But beyond the circle around Diop, there was the artistic and intellectual life. The new wave of French cinema (la nouvelle vague) was in the ascendant when I arrived—I was bowled over by *Hiroshima mon amour*. Then there were the concerts: as a student, you could join the Jeunesse Musicale de France and get very good seats at low prices, so I went to concerts almost every Sunday and saw some of the great performers. I remember a divine performance by Arthur Rubinstein of Chopin's first piano concerto. Also recitals by Marian Anderson and Fischer-Diskau. And splendid productions of *Carmen* at the Opera. The Odéon Theatre, directed by Jean-Louis Barrault, was in the Latin Quarter, within walking distance of the student hostel where I moved in December 1960. I saw a fine production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* there, in French. And as part of it all, I acquired the café habit.

I had to have a good knowledge of French before I could begin to form an idea of the literary and intellectual life. From 1960–63, I studied language and literature at the Sorbonne's institute for foreign students and obtained the first grade of the Teacher's Certificate for teaching French as a foreign language. The literature syllabus was focused on seventeenth-century drama, the Romantics, and post-romantics (Hugo and Baudelaire, right up to Valéry), plus the nineteenth-century novel. In addition to prescribed texts, I read contemporary French literature, beginning with the novels of Camus, then Malraux, Sartre, Mauriac and the plays of Beckett, Anouilh, Ionesco.

E. S.: How quickly did you discover that you needed to work on Césaire? Was this a part of discovering the richness of what we would now call the African transnational cultural and intellectual world, the diaspora manifest as a dynamic interchange between artists and thinkers from all across the diaspora and the continent?

A. I.: After that concert and poetry reading in 1960, I'd decided I'd work on Césaire. Right from my arrival in Paris, I began to read black literature, beginning with the Americans—Wright, Baldwin, DuBois. Then gradually turned to the francophones: Senghor, Damas, Laye, Beti and Oyono, Tchikaya. That was how I progressed to Césaire and Glissant; they were rather more difficult. But by 1964, all this reading afforded a general view of Négritude, enough to provide material for a public lecture I gave at Dar-es-Salaam—I'd been invited by Molly Ma-hood to teach at the new university for a term, where she was setting up the literature department at the new university there. David Kimble was director of extra-mural studies, which had arranged my lecture. He was also editor of the *Cambridge Journal of Modern African Studies*. He asked me to write up my lecture for the journal. So as soon as I returned to Paris, got down to work on the article. It was published in two parts, in 1965 and '66. It occurred to me to present the article as an MA thesis to London University and return home—I'd worked so much on the article and longed to return home. You see, it was not then usual or thought necessary in British or formerly British territories to have a doctorate to teach in a university. But in 1963, Henri Evans was appointed professor of French at Ibadan, to start the Department of Modern Languages and he passed through Paris on his way out. He insisted on a doctorate degree as a qualification for a position. I was guaranteed a scholarship for the three additional years I needed to complete a doctoral thesis.

As a matter of fact, I had already begun to think about doing a thesis and had already registered at the Sorbonne the previous year. At that time the Sorbonne (like Oxford and Cambridge) had a rule that you could not write a thesis on a living writer. So Alioune Diop suggested that I approach Roger Bastide to write my thesis as a sociological study, as a way of getting round the rule. Diop wrote a letter to introduce me to Bastide who accepted to supervise my thesis. I studied with him for four years. He had me read some very difficult texts, most of them very theoretical and dreary—works by George Gurvitch, for example. So for a year I didn't even do much work on Césaire, as I was busy try-ing to get a foothold in sociology. The first year, I attended a weekly seminar held every Saturday at the Invalides on social psychiatry and the following year on what was then known as the sociology of knowl-edge (sociologie de la connaissance). But I was glad I did, because

these seminars and the reading that I had to do expanded my horizons considerably. Apart from this class work, I read, in a haphazard kind of way, stuff related to the dominant intellectual trends in France—Marxism, with its Hegelian foundation, and Existentialism. Structuralism came later. The Friday edition of *Le Monde* featured review essays by the house critic, Pierre-Henri Simon and others, a good way to find one's way through the literary and intellectual landscape. There were also journals like *Esprit* and *Les Temps Modernes*.

I defended my thesis in 1966. I had tremendous help from Césaire—without him, I'd not have been able to do a credible study of his poetry. I visited him regularly at his apartment in Paris, where he took me patiently through his poetry. This was how I was able to understand his metaphors, to get a sense of his poetry in general.

E. S.: Did you return home after finishing the doctorate? The middle sixties were troubled times in Nigeria. From soon after independence in 1960, divisions began to manifest in the federal state, and the Civil War (the Biafran War) broke out in 1967.

A. I.: Well yes, in a way. But there was a complication. In 1965, I had been approached by UNESCO with regard to whether I would like to take a UNESCO fellowship to complete my doctorate, so I could return to teach French in the Advanced Teacher Training College which had been created in Lagos under UNESCO auspices. But I found on arrival that the conditions of the award were not fulfilled, and I was unhappy with the terms of my appointment, which was tied to the Civil Service. So I wrote Kwabena Nketia to ask for a job. Nketia was director of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. He replied promptly with a telegram offering me a one-year contract. This was changed into a full appointment as research fellow, and I was confirmed ("tenured," as they say in America) the following year. I began then to think of settling in Ghana and making my career there.

At Legon, I conducted a weekly seminar in African literature for MA students. We met once a week for three hours or so. There was very little critical material on African literature at that time, since it was only just developing. I was searching for a critical approach appropriate to African literature. I also did some teaching in the French department. It was then that I found that Césaire's *Cahier* was incomprehensible to my students and the idea of an annotated edition first occurred to me.

In 1968, there was a conference on African Literature in English at the University of Ife, Nigeria. Michael Crowder was director of African Studies at Ife. He was recruiting for the department and offered me a job. I'd been considering an offer of a research fellowship at Ibadan by the linguist Robert Armstrong. Ife was more attractive, because of the newness of the place, and the vibrant cultural atmosphere there, centered on the group of artists at the Ori Olokun Centre. By now, the Civil War was raging in Nigeria. My mother was trapped in Benin, which had fallen to the Biafran army. On top of that, the Ghanaian government promulgated an alien expulsion order which forced many foreigners to leave. Although I was not directly affected by this order, all this was disturbing, so I decided to move to Ife where I took up a position as senior research fellow in 1970.

E. S.: I believe the paper you gave at Ife would become one of your most influential early pieces of work, but that at the time, many resisted its ideas. Could you speak a little about that?

A. I.: It was "The Criticism of Modern African Literature." The paper had a strong sociological bias. But I was concerned not only with the cultural references of the literature, but with the expressive adaptation of the European languages to reflect the African context. Hardly anyone saw my point of view—that a sociological perspective was essential for defining a new criticism of African and Caribbean literatures.

E. S.: How quickly did the syllabus at Ife evolve away from the old colonial emphasis on British literature. Did you teach African literature there?

A. I.: Yes, both anglophone and francophone, as we now say. Eventually even those who had no interest in African literature began to see the value of the new literature and some even went on to produce anthologies. I taught Senghor, Laye, Beti in the French department. But what I'm most proud of about my tenure at Ife was starting a program in Yoruba literature, within the Institute of African Studies. The university administration was hesitant, but finally my initiative was approved by the faculty Board of Studies and I was allowed to recruit a few students. We read Fagunwa and worked through a fine anthology of contemporary Yoruba poetry edited by Akinjogbin. I taught these texts

in English then, but the program has expanded considerably, and now, Ife has a full-blown department of Yoruba Studies. Today, the degree program is conducted entirely in Yoruba. It has been developed at Ife into a meta-language for literary and linguistic studies.

E. S.: When did you return to Ibadan? You've described the intellectual connections between Ibadan and Ife as powerful and enriching and they are relatively easy to travel between.

A. I.: In October 1972. I stayed there, despite some tempting offers in the U.S., until I finally came to the U.S. in 1987.

You know, at Ibadan, during the fifteen years I taught there, I was in my natural element, so to speak. A lot was happening that I felt part of. Much of this was due to the activity of younger colleagues—Biodun Jeyifo and Kole Omotoso at Ife and Femi Osofisan and Onoge and some other lecturers at Ibadan who created an Ibadan-Ife axis of radical intellectuals. They published a journal—*Positive Review*—in which they expounded their ideas. These were very much to the left of my own positions, so I didn't always agree with them, but they were all close friends—Osofisan was in fact my first graduate student. Then we had the annual African literature conference, which attracted a lot of people from universities abroad, America in particular. The Arts Theatre was alive with plays and operas—I even sang the tenor role in *Don Giovanni*, a very difficult role, technically. The faculty club (we called it "the staff club") was a very lively place where you met colleagues from other disciplines and where we carried on long discussions and arguments. I began to learn about DNA there from a colleague in biology. And it was another colleague in political science who got me to read Locke. I had then a sense of involvement in things, a sense of belonging, that I haven't found anywhere else.

I ought to add that I also spent a lot of time among my francophone friends, mostly Dahomeans—they're now called "Beninois." They formed something of a colony at Ibadan. I used to drive all the way to Cotonou, where for some time I taught a course at the university there, and examined master's theses. During this period, I was obliged to speak French and English equally.

E. S.: You have now lived in the U.S. for more than twenty years. What kind of intellectual life did you find when you first came to the U.S.?

A. I.: When I was a student in France, I never considered living permanently outside Nigeria. The idea was to complete your studies, take your degree, and return home. That was how I felt for a long time. When I came to Ohio State in 1987, at the invitation of Richard Bjornson (who had read *The African Experience*), it was supposed to be for one year. I left all my books in my office, and they are still there. Some years ago, my colleagues moved some of my books to my brother's house on campus, but the bulk of my personal library is still there in the departmental office, and it's only now that I'm trying to move them. I offered my French books, the primary texts, to the Catholic Institute at Ibadan—it's a kind of college where they have residential students and tutors—rather like Oxford or Cambridge. If I had stayed in Nigeria, maybe I would have built a house with a wing designed specially as a library for all my books.

We had a wonderful intellectual community at Ohio State. Bjornson took over from Lindfors at Texas as editor of *Research in African Literatures* just about the time I arrived. He was assisted by Kubayanda, a Ghanaian colleague. There was a Nigerian in the college administration—Isaac Mowoe, scion of a well-known family in the Delta, who was director of the Center for African Studies. Conteh Morgan from Sierra Leone joined the faculty in 1993. There were other friends and colleagues, white and black, African and American, who provided a semblance of family. But I never felt as totally at ease there as in Ibadan, was never truly at home.

E. S.: Your interest in Caribbean literature obviously began with Césaire. How did it progress afterwards? You wrote an essay on Brathwaite's "Masks" for the collection of *World Literature Today* which marked his Neustadt Prize in 1994.

A. I.: That article has been reprinted in my collection *The African Imagination*. The point is, apart from the francophones, I was very much interested in anglophone Caribbean literature. I found Walcott extremely fluent in his idiom, but somehow elusive, his poetry seemed to me to lack passion, not like Césaire, not like Brathwaite. I first met Brathwaite at a conference in Buffalo, New York state, in 1968 or '69 and then invited him to a conference at Ife in 1971. He stayed at my house because there were no good hotels in Ife at the time, so we had time for long conversations. I saw him in Jamaica subsequently—on

visits there for one thing or another, certainly at Carifesta in 1973 or '74. I've been reading Caribbean authors—Reid, Selvon, Lamming, James, Lovelace—and will be concentrating on this area for work I'm doing at the moment.

The Caribbean fascinates me—the landscape, the sea, the people, the food, the culture. I first visited as external examiner for the University of the West Indies in the late 1970s. At that time I also made my first visit to Martinique, where I have been three times since, to see Césaire's landscape. I wish I could have attended his funeral. I've been back in the Caribbean a number of times since, twice in the past year—to Barbados and St. Martin.

E. S.: What do you think is the Caribbean's particular contribution to African diaspora culture and intellectual life?

A. I.: I consider the Caribbean quite simply the center of gravity of black thought, both French and English. I'm less familiar with the Spanish—Cuba and the Dominican Republic. The intellectual culture goes back to the late nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth. The area is crucial, central, to diaspora history and experience. The United States is often seen as the center of black thought, but the contributions of Caribbean thinkers and writers who were immigrants here, like Claude McKay and Marcus Garvey, were decisive in creating the sense of what Gilroy has called the Black Atlantic, not Richard Wright, on whom Gilroy's book is focused. The Caribbeans have been more central to black intellectual life than the U.S., in terms of their impact beyond their immediate context—here, we must make an exception for DuBois. J. J. Thomas's *Froudacity* is an immensely important book; it needs to be rediscovered. With Antonin Firmin, C. R. L. James, Frantz Fanon, and Lewis Gordon, we have a roster of great thinkers, in the tradition of what Paget Henry has called "Caliban's Reason." This is something to think seriously about.

E. S.: Because you are so multilingual, like many Nigerians, you might have been a major translator. Did you ever think of that as an option?

A. I.: Because my knowledge of French came so late, I never thought I could translate on a large scale. Now I wish I had done more translation. But I have facilitated the translation of a number of anglophone works into French—for example, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, translated by a

friend of mine, Michel Ligny, and published by Présence Africaine. It's been a huge success. In 1970, I met Paulin Hountondji, the Dahomean philosopher, and we struck up a friendship. Later I proposed that his book on African philosophy be translated, which Henri Evans did. It was published in 1981 with a preface by me. When I started a publishing house at Ibadan in the late seventies, my ambition was to publish translations of francophone literature, and I began with four works: Jean-Baptiste Tati Loutard's *Poems of the Sea*, Mongo Beti's *Remember Ruben*, Hampaté Ba's *Wangrin*, and especially Mariama Ba's *So Long a Letter*. The translation was done by a close relative and I supervised it personally. I still think I owe it to the African intellectual community to undertake translations of important works and I hope to fulfill that obligation before passing on.

E. S: From the time of your influential lecture on alienation, you have insisted that people of African descent need to read European thinkers, where possible in the original language. What do you think is the importance of so-called "French Theory" for the African diaspora?

A. I.: The legacy of the European Enlightenment is universal. The colonial intellectual is inevitably related to Europe: we use European languages, have received a Western education, and often, our lifestyles have been modeled on the Western. So Europe, the West, forms an important dimension of our personality. As I tried to argue in that lecture, what might be called our modernity project derives from the West. This is why we must pay attention to the Western intellectual tradition. The main interest of French theory is precisely its skeptical stance towards this tradition, pointing up the way the Enlightenment has been unable to fulfill its original ideals. Foucault is a thinker of exceptional power, who has given a new meaning, a new dimension to intellectual history. Moreover, he writes French so well that one needs to read him in the original. The same thing, by the way, goes for Sartre. They are both masters of language.

What I have read of French theory is of course very powerful. But I have my reservations, largely due to my anglophone background. I was immersed early on in Leavis, and later on, the work of Raymond Williams—principally *Culture and Society* and *The Country and the City*—offered models of literary analysis based on concrete sociological understanding, the kind of thing I was looking for early in my ca-

reer. We'd hoped to have him at Ibadan in 1984 for a lecture visit sponsored by the British Council, but he was unwell and died soon after. The point I want to make is that you don't get that kind of concern for the text in French theory.

The problem with contemporary theory—and this includes so-called post-colonial theory—is its abstraction. The one exception here is Said. There is a proliferation of terms that students now employ, mainly graduate students, without giving much thought to their meaning. They let the terms do their thinking for them, yet many of these terms are simply unclear, or at least don't seem to me to be relevant to anything in my experience. I don't see anything "interstitial" about African culture today; it's full blooded and whole. And I much prefer the term "syncretic" to "hybrid" as a description of this culture that is constantly in the making and being renewed. I'm trying here to point up another major problem—the way these terms prescribe a fixed way of thinking so that a certain orthodoxy has come to be established around the leading figures of theory. You can't question them, even when their views appear extreme and sometimes even absurd.

There is also the fact that so-called theory has created a style, a critical idiom, a language, that is often impenetrable, and needlessly so. It all seems a game, despite the seriousness of the issues. Derrida is the principal culprit here. He's been followed by Spivak, who translated his first book and adopted his style, and is so difficult to follow.

It is interesting to see a reaction emerging against this kind of theory and its idiom. No less a scholar than Todorov has complained about this new scholasticism and its negative effect on reading, on literature as a form of cultural practice. I was reading recently a review in the T.L.S. of a book on "the death of the critic," apparently in the same vein.

E. S.: You have always been an editor, and not only that, but a risk-taking entrepreneur in publishing. Would you explain how New Horn Press came into being, give us an idea of the priorities which informed your editorship of *RAL*, and express your hopes and ideas for *Transition*, of which you have recently become editor.

A. I.: During my student days, I was editor for two years of *The Horn*, a publication by and for undergraduates at Ibadan. In those days, in the late fifties, we had to prepare stencils on a manual typewriter,

which we rolled to reproduce the sheets, and then to assemble and
staple each copy by hand. I should point out that Molly provided funds
for the stencils. All that messiness is now a thing of the past with
modern technology. We published mainly poetry and some creative
writing. When I returned to Ibadan in 1972, I thought I'd revive the
journal under the name *New Horn*. Femi Osofisan had just completed
a novel at that time, it was called *Kolera Kolej*, and *New Horn* printed
an extract. After that I founded New Horn Press, registered it formally
as a limited liability company. We published Femi's novel as our first
title. We followed up with Niyi Osundare's *Songs of the Marketplace*,
and Harry Garuba's *Shadow and Dream*. It was after these that we
published translations of the francophone works I spoke of earlier.
I proposed to Wole Soyinka a collection of his essays and with his
agreement, Biodun Jeyifo put together the volume *Art, Dialogue, and
Outrage*, which came out in 1987 with an introductory essay by him.
The book had been typeset in Nigeria, but was printed and bound in
the U.S. By then, I had moved to the U.S., and once I decided to re-
main, it became very difficult, in fact impossible, to run the press at a
distance.

I still have a deep feeling of regret that I couldn't sustain the venture,
because it was part of a wider ambition which started with work I did
for the Midwest government in Nigeria in the 1970s, as chairman of
the Ethiope Publishing Corporation. I edited *The Benin Review*, which
was published by the company, but the military coup in 1976, with the
change of editorial board that followed, ended the journal. But I wanted
to see a publication which was not mainly for and by expatriates, such
as *Nigeria Magazine*, something to serve as a channel for intellectual
expression. I got to know Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1982 or thereabouts, and
he agreed to underwrite a journal to be called *The Nigerian Review*.
This was not meant to be an academic journal but something accessible
to undergraduates and people outside the university. We had a problem
in Nigeria in the 1970s and 1980s getting people to write articles about
ideas because the level of education was sinking and intellectuals were
leaving, universities were collapsing, and ideas were not being kept up
with. But as you know, Saro-Wiwa got involved in Nigerian politics and
was executed in 1995 by the dictator Sonne Abacha. I wonder what
would have happened to me if I had stayed in Nigeria and collaborated
with Saro-Wiwa to publish a journal.

E. S.: And what was your experience with *Research in African Literatures*?

A. I.: When I became editor after the tragic death of Bjornson from a heart attack, I began to make changes, such as establishing themes for special issues. I expanded the scope of the journal beyond literature, to include music and art. My reasoning was that these could be considered forms of aesthetic discourse. I changed the type face. I also requested longer reviews, review essays. I was fortunate to have in Ruthmarie Mitsch an excellent managing editor. We established very good relations with Indiana University Press, which published the journal for Ohio State University. The university administration was not very supportive at first, but was eventually persuaded that *RAL* was a good thing for the university's image: a kind of jewel in its crown!

As for *Transition*, I have less scope as I'm a co-editor, which means a certain amount of negotiation concerning policy and choice of contributions. Even then, I plan to give it a more pronounced African orientation than it has had since its revival in the U.S. One positive thing—it's now published by Indiana University Press, so will appear more regularly, three times a year. I'll just have to see how things go with *Transition*.

E. S.: Many of Nigeria's major intellectuals now live outside Nigeria, like yourself. Can you comment at all on intellectual developments inside Nigeria in recent years (the evolution of Ibadan and other universities for example) and on ways you stay current with what is going on there? Recent work you have been doing on reconstructing Africa suggests you feel very deeply about the need for African intellectuals working overseas to still be engaged at home.

A. I.: One way to stay current is via the Internet. I receive information about lectures, conferences, and cultural events through dedicated sites. And surprisingly, given all the problems of infrastructure, there is quite a lot happening. A revival of intellectual activity seems to be taking place, new writers are emerging, along with a rebirth of the publishing industry. Culture, with a big C, is represented by The Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON)—they seem well funded and organize concerts, most of it Western. They have a fine performance hall and center, and a first rate restaurant attached. Another way to stay current

is to visit regularly, which I try to do at least once a year. For me, it's rather burdensome and expensive, as it's a long flight from the U.S.; it would have been more convenient if I'd been living in the UK: it's just 6 hours by air from London to Lagos.

But really, the solution for us is to move back home, as I intend to do, to try and play a role there, to help to create new institutions, to keep the intellectual life going. This really means, in Nigeria, reviving the universities. Since the Structural Adjustment Program was imposed by the IMF, there has been a precipitous decline of the universities—a deterioration of physical facilities and infrastructure. All this has to be revived, on a very large scale. We might then be able to bring our universities back to the level they'd attained in the late seventies, early eighties. I know there has been a growth of private universities, some of them—not all—quite good, respectable. I have nothing against them, but in our context, the job that needs to be done cannot be done by them. Ultimately, the responsibility rests on the state—the federal government in the first place, and the state governments. We have the resources to undertake the kind of massive reconstruction of our universities that is required. We must now begin to see higher education once again as a major area of investment. Indeed, the university must now be recognized in Africa as a national institution—not only indispensable as an agent of development and modernization—capacity building, technological training and all that—but also, as a powerhouse of ideas, with all the implications for public life and the general culture. Think of the role of the university in Europe since the Middle Ages, and you'll see what I mean. I've become convinced that our real place is back home. We cannot function properly in the West because our situation here is ambiguous. African studies as a field is marginal to the interests of Western universities. It is a narrow and specialized area, with an almost exotic interest. Perhaps individual scholars with a zeal for our continent need Africa, but whatever we say or do, the Western universities do not need us.

But perhaps we need to begin to think that we don't need them either. The only place to develop African studies properly is in Africa itself. If you want to do research into the Yoruba language, or an aspect of Yoruba thought and culture—for instance, Ifa divination poetry—common sense dictates you should go to Ife or Ibadan, not to SOAS,

Langues Orientales, or UCLA. And in the matter of literature, we've always had a sense of cultural and literary independence. Unlike our counterparts in the English departments at say Pretoria or Witts, we in Nigeria don't think of ourselves as being in a backwater of England. In South Africa, because of the Afrikaner/English tension, the English-speaking intellectuals tend to fall back on England as a reference. Things are changing though. The universities are beginning to open up to African literature. UNISA has several departments of South African languages; I worked in 2001 and 2002 with the department to do recordings of Sotho praise poetry. And there's now a Center for African Literary Studies at Pietermaritzburg. All these are signs of very encouraging developments.

E. S.: Despite all the celebrations of last year to mark the beginning of your seventies, you show no signs of slowing down. What are you working on now?

A. I.: A book on black utopia, which will deal with diaspora constructions of Africa and their impact on Africa. The book will include essays on DuBois, Wright, and Fanon, as well on the Caribbean contribution to African consciousness. I plan in the conclusion to examine how all this connects with the idea of the African renaissance as it has developed and is being promoted in South Africa. This is the main project. I'm also co-editing with Biodun Jeyifo the *Oxford Encyclopedia of African Thought*—this will be published next year (2009) in two volumes. I'm also thinking of putting together some of my published essays for a third collection in English, a fourth if you count the essays in French.

E. S.: Thank you.

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Cold War in a Hot Zone: The United States Confronts Labor and Independence Struggles in the British West Indies by Gerald Horne

In his bitingly interesting book, Professor Horne re-creates the political discourse that shaped the modern West Indies and set the stage for the later making of the nation-states that now form the Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, grouping. The book stands out as one of the most revealing pieces of work ever to be articulated on the subject of labor and working-class struggles in the former British colonies in the Caribbean during the 1940s and 1950s. Horne's research was meticulous and comprehensive. One wonders if there is a single piece of written material on the subject that he did not scrutinize, so voluminous and complete are his references and citings.

Cold War in a Hot Zone craftily re-emphasizes a major mid-century, historical development that shaped the direction of the West Indian political agenda for the rest of the twentieth century. The dialectical interplay between labor and politics is an ever-present theme in the book as it was in the dynamics of real West Indian life. The resultant structures can be seen at every historical stage as Horne shines his light on the region's socioeconomic development. This interplay straddles a wide spectrum of sociopolitical cleavages, from radical to ultra-conservative; left to ultra-right; sovereignists to colonialists; federalists

to nationalists; cosmopolitanists to ultra-nationalists; communists to anti-communists; patriots to traitors; stalwarts to turncoats; bulldogs to lapdogs; British versus United States hegemony; racism, class antagonism, and religious conflicts. In effect, the interplay represented the West Indian version of the "cold war" that had engulfed the world at that time. But this was more than an ideological struggle. It was a historical occurrence.

Horne tells us that "in part this is a book about the Caribbean Labor Congress, which, propelled in 1945 by a wave of labor unrest, sought to organize the working class—especially in the former British West Indies—as it pushed for independence for these postage-stamp-sized islands, in the form of a federation." It is also "a book about the impact of the early Cold War in shaping today's former British West Indies" (3).

The tone of the book is largely polemical. The discourse takes the readers from stage to stage within the broader context of imperial machinations and hegemony. "The rhetoric of the war, with its impassioned calls for democracy, freedom, and self-determination, would have been exposed as empty if they had been applied solely to those of 'pure European descent'; inevitably those of the Caribbean began to think that such uplifting sentiments also applied to them." Horne continues: "The region was racked with labor unrest during the war as the colonial masters were quite busy trying to save their own hides" (56). Further, "this was an era when the working class recognized that a turning point in the planet's evolution had been reached" (57).

Constantly, throughout the discourse, we are reminded of the importance of ideas, and how their articulation can become the genesis for the ultimate movement and transformation of society. However, a most telling conclusion in the book is about the ideological chasm between leaders, on the one hand, and between leaders and their followers, on the other. "The abject lack of unity that prevailed" (59) among labor leaders made for a "fragmented polity." In the long run, there were the resultant failures of the various labor movements to transform into viable working-class organization. Consequently, the many political parties that emerged out of the struggles of these movements did not develop into working-class parties at all, with the major exception being the People's Progressive Party (PPP) of British Guiana, under the leadership of Dr. Cheddi Jagan.

The general assertion here is that individualism, so embedded in the colonial psyche, was inherently anathemic to building and sustaining progressive political organizations. Egoistic and self-serving leaders significantly hampered cohesion within the labor movement and failed to address the sociopolitical dynamics of the leadership question. Organizing was made difficult, as well, not only due to the internal dysfunctionalities, but clearly because of the relentless and disruptive pursuits by the authorities, namely the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the British colonial agents deploying their trademark divide-and-rule tactics. Of course, as Horne implies, there was no shortage of local "agents" and lackeys at every level of the struggle.

An issue parallel to the leadership dynamics that Horne did not fully pursue was the persistent and mutually held notion in West Indian politics that leadership contained messianic elements, bordering on redemption by fatalism. This notion, still receiving contemporary popularity in West Indian politics, holds that the people simply have to invest their faith in their leaders, who will then take them to the "promised land" and that full partnership and democratic participation in formation, operation, and decision-making at all levels of the organization were not necessarily integral to building and sustaining viable political entities. (This idea received extensive treatment by Caribbean thinker Lloyd Best in the early 1960s.)

So, while the Caribbean Labor Congress (CLC) "sought to organize the working class," the disparate leadership was pulling in varied directions, exacerbated by ideological contradictions heightened by an overbearing, engulfing Cold War ideology and "red-baiting." The setting was fertile ground for ambivalence and opportunism. Vacillation, flip-flops, insularity, island chauvinism, and pseudo-intellectualism signified the realpolitik strategy of some of the leaders, both inside and outside of the CLC, as they abandoned radicalism and progressivism, deciding instead to lend their support to capital and forge their own self-serving path with allegiance only to their personal portfolios.

Defections mounted as some political and labor leaders, like Grantley Adams of Barbados, Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley of Jamaica, Vere Bird of Antigua, Robert Bradshaw of St. Kitts, and Albert Gomes and Uriah Butler of Trinidad and Tobago, stepped forward to identify themselves, coerced or uncoerced, wittingly or unwittingly, as gatekeepers for Washington and London, taking their

places as Cold War acolytes, barking invectives or braying at progressive leaders on cue.

Horne brings the readers to the historic scenes and invites us to listen and observe as the various players interact and exchange ideas in a vivid dialogue that re-creates the historic clashes between sometimes-allies-sometimes-foes as they create the region's history. One of the most telling and vigorous clashes took center stage following the speech delivered by Grantley Adams of Barbados at a United Nations conference on decolonization. "At his controversial 1948 speech in Paris, the man who was to be rewarded later by being knighted as Sir Grantley Adams, opposed a Soviet-India resolution on anticolonialism in stridently anticommunist terms—though during the war, like so many others, he was unstinting in his unalloyed admiration for Moscow" (111).

Adams's stand was detrimental to both the survival of the CLC and to the anticolonial struggle. It invoked impassioned reaction and condemnation from progressives around the world, especially in West Africa, London, Harlem, and every West Indian city. "George Padmore of Trinidad was dumbfounded by Adams's strident defense of British colonialism. It was, he said with bafflement, 'the first time in the history of British foreign policy that a politician outside the United Kingdom . . . has been invited by His Majesty's Government to serve upon a diplomatic mission representing the Cabinet of the day" (111–12). To his own dismay, "Richard Hart, the embodiment of the CLC left, sharply criticized the remarks of Adams, which he saw correctly as indicating a wounding spirit in the ranks" (112). But, Adams, his Barbados Workers Union, and supporters remained unrepentant and combative.

Horne's work has helped us to refocus with sober clarity on the destructive role played by some of those who have managed to forge themselves as "heroes" of West Indian liberation, but who should be relegated a few notches down this wall of fame. Adams and his cohorts took the Cold War red-bait and swallowed the anti-communist hook. As a result, they became fishy foes in the global battle that led to the sinking of the West Indian ship that would have transported the islands more safely through the turbulent waters to higher grounds. Federation may not have been an exercise in futility in the late 1950s, and sovereignty could have had more meaning than flag-independence.

Everyone who played influential roles (negative or positive) in the struggle receives just treatment in Dr. Horne's analysis. Global pan-Africanist movements and other Caribbean liberation and labor/working-class movements, as well as progressive and internationalist forces, are all treated with due respect in terms of their contributions to the anticolonial struggles waged by West Indians. Throughout the book, there are two recurring themes on which Horne places significant emphasis (and deservingly so): First, the role of the CLC and its leader, Richard Hart, and second, the 1953 British military overthrow of the elected PPP government of British Guiana, led by Cheddi Jagan. He writes: "In a vicious one-two blow, the CLC went into a steep decline in 1952 and Jagan was toppled in 1953, and the region has hardly recovered since, though the Caribbean Congress of Labour, a far less ambitious entity, was founded in 1952 after its predecessor fell" (191). He pointed out that "with the routing of the CLC, the labor movement regionally had been disastrously wounded, and what had arisen in its wake was comparatively weaker" (193). These were well-targeted, ideological assaults by Cold War militarism against the main pillars of the West Indian body politic, distinctly aimed at destroying any hope of their achieving sovereignty and independence.

Dr. Horne did not engage in the kind of revisionism that is so pervasive in contemporary writings of history. His analysis situates the issues within their contextual positionings and depictions, allowing for readers to learn and come away with a very comprehensive understanding of these important historical events of West Indian life. The title of the book does not betray the essential, historical nature of what took place as the region was being shaped in the image of the hegemonic forces of the day. The theater of operation was as global and intriguing as the Cold War itself. The West Indian struggle to find its own place in the sun was confronted at every stage by the new, ruthless, imperial behemoth, the United States of America, in partnership with the dying colonial empire that was Britain. The end game was to keep the islands in their place, that is, as dependent and underdeveloped appendages to metropolitan market centers.

However, *Cold War in a Hot Zone* is also a story about how the West Indies was won. Not about how the U.S. cavalry came riding in with bugles blowing to save the West Indies from the stranglehold of British colonialism. The eventual victory for flag-independence/sovereignty

came as a result of the relentless struggles of diverse political forces that were global, homegrown, and diasporic. They were patriots and nationalists, progressives and conservatives, and so on. They were, however, mainly West Indians and their allies.

The launch of the Cold War, after the Second World War ended in 1945, created a world order that straddled a left-right ideological spectrum. In its wake, the CLC was felled, the PPP was overthrown, and revolutionary Grenada was invaded by U.S. marines in 1983. In terms of global politics, much has changed over the fifty-year period since the Cold War began. For one thing, with the collapse of the socialist block, the Cold War ideological divide lost some of its sharp edge. Secondly, capitalism and the West have established a *new*, new world order, and globalization has replaced imperialism as the descriptor for the highest form of capital domination. Thirdly, militarism has taken to new heights of absurdity, with simpletons making up new doctrines along the way. A near-fascist state keeps telling the world that it alone can claim the title of "super power." In the wake of this *new*, new world order, the West Indies has morphed into a broader Caribbean common market known as CARICOM. However, the political leadership questions remain unanswered. It is not surprising, therefore, that Dr. Horne does not appear to have a very hopeful outlook for the kind of sovereign and federated island-states that had been articulated by Richard Hart and the CLC.

Cold War in a Hot Zone promises some surprises and thrills for those interested in a uniquely refreshing look at West Indian/Caribbean history.

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Crossing Over: Comparing Recent Migration in the United States and Europe edited by Holger Henke

Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books—Rowman & Littlefield, 2005. 323 pp. ISBN: 0-7391-0961-8 (cloth)

The book *Crossing Over: Comparing Recent Migration in the United States and Europe* brings together a diverse group of academics who examine the immigration and settlement experiences of various ethnic groups in Europe and the United States. The essays in *Crossing Over* mainly focus on security, citizenship, identity, and host-guest interaction. The book is particularly interesting because of the events of September 11, 2001, and the heightened fears of terrorism/immigration that have taken over North America and parts of Europe. The book is also appealing because there are comparisons between countries that have never been written about before (Italy, Spain, Germany, and Britain all with the United States). This book contains an excellent collection of research essays that shed light on both the similarities and differences that exist for immigrant groups in various locations. The authors in the book point to the growing and accelerating transnational interconnectedness between different nations and regions of the world, which collapses the former boundaries of local, regional, national, and global.

Transnationalism, in its broadest sense, is how national borders are challenged, traversed, and therefore weakened by people, organizations, or ideological movements. Transnational migrants are "immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships (familial,

economic, social, organizational, religious, and political) that span borders" (Basch, Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc 1994, 7). Transnational migrants like the Chinese, Jamaicans, Mexicans, Afghans, or Turks forge a complex matrix of social relationships that connect two localities in different nation-states. Thus, many migrants go to a metropolitan area and, rather than severing their social relationships in the sending area, maintain intense ties.

Migration and transnational communities appear to be proliferating rapidly at present in metropolitan sites. This trend can perhaps best be understood as part of the process of global integration and time-space compression. This is partly a technological issue of improved fast transport and accessible real-time electronic communication. Above all however, it is a social and cultural issue of globalization, closely linked to changes in social structures and relationships and to shifts in cultural values concerned with place, mobility, and belonging. Globalization means that immigrant populations in metropolitan locations are less likely to assimilate into the mainstream society, but are more likely to live on a hyphen or maintain a cultural bridge between the host nation and their home constituencies.

Despite a growing cultural and economic homogenization across the globe, the visible presence of immigrant communities stands out in many of the world metropolises. In almost all major metropolitan cities (Toronto, New York, Paris, London, Madrid, etc.), the cultural and physical presence of various ethnic or religious groups is evident. Yet until now, the academic treatment of international migration has mostly been confined to limited case studies, single ethnic groups, or single locations.

The book *Crossing Over* is particularly interesting because it fills the void in the research literature by providing a cross-cultural examination of migrant issues from the perspective of many different locations. The comparative perspective with which the thirteen chapters of the book are written is particularly suitable for the study of the migration and settlement process. Europe, like the United States, has started to experience a greater inflow of non-European peoples. In the post–World War II period many European countries actively pursued labor migration—and to some extent migration from former colonies. The impression emerging from the chapters in this book is that the forces of

globalization, transnationalism, security concerns, and ethnic identity formation often account for substantial similarities across and among immigrant communities in Europe and the United States.

In reviewing this book, I will focus on six of the thirteen chapters that had the most salient examples related to current migration trends. In the opening chapter, Franck Düvell argues that current global migration regimes and national immigration policies are insufficiently equipped to address the increasing flows of migration spawned by new global systems and transnational economic activities. He concludes that the management of migration will be impossible given the market and subjective forces that propel people to seek out better opportunities.

Alessandra Buonfino, in a subsequent chapter, compares British and Italian migration patterns. She argues that rather than the scenario promoted by Franck Düvell, it appears that national security considerations will likely lead in the conceptualization of future immigration policies. The culture of fear and the desire for security will cause many Western governments to erect stronger borders and surveillance systems despite the needs of the market system.

In the chapter written by Zeynep Kiliç, she examines the second generation of immigrants and their issues of belonging, identification, and membership. She notes that the contours and contents of identity formation among second-generation Turkish migrants in Germany and the United States are extremely dependent on the respective legal, political, and discursive context within which the communities and individuals are operating. Second-generation Turks in either country are not necessarily characterized by a post-national or transnational identity. These individuals may often be cemented by ethnic ties that go deeper than the formal membership of their members in the country in which they live. Thus, while transnational communities are deterritorialized, they nevertheless reproduce a traditional ethnic identity in a global world.

The chapter written by Relano and Meneses deepens the analysis with their comparison between two major Latin immigrant communities in the United States and Spain. Focusing on linguistic and educational aspects they find that in the context of Catalonian regionalism, the heterogeneous Latin American immigrant community had to assert itself in order to achieve a modicum of linguistic integration. In the

Untied States, Latinos faced the threat of being racialized and thus became even more remote from an approximation of what Milton Gordon describes as corporate pluralism.

The chapter written by Mudu and Wei Li compares the structure and internal socioeconomic dynamics of Chinatowns in Italy and the United States. Despite their time differences, Chinatowns in Italy faced similar negative reactions that earlier waves of Chinese migrants experienced in the United States circa the nineteenth century. Contemporary Chinatowns in places like Italy seem to be a response to these newly arriving cohorts of immigrants feeling alienation and racism. Chinatowns also appear to perpetuate transnational lifestyles among the residents who live within the confines of the demarcated community.

In the final chapter, written by Holger Kolb, he shows how well Germany's green card system has performed. The green card system allows for skilled workers to enter Germany and to be monitored throughout their regulated stay. This has allowed for more labor mobility. Multinational companies can best benefit from this policy because they can draw their labor power from the global pool of skilled workers who can be called upon in real time production cycles. Thereby it ensures that the German metropolitan company maintains a greater global competitive edge.

Crossing Over: Comparing Recent Migration in the United States and Europe is a highly readable book. It makes an important contribution to migration studies, particularly with respect to the issues of security and fear of the "other" as the "terrorist" in the United States and Europe. The chapters in the book nicely document the experiences of many different immigrant groups living in the transnational diaspora. The book would be appropriate for undergraduate or graduate courses on migration studies, race and ethnic relations, or globalization studies. Undergraduate students in particular will find the writing style accessible.

With increasing migrations around the world, the proliferation of the global mass media sources, and growing fear of "dark" immigrants among host populations, minority populations worldwide will continue to be vulnerable to media and popular culture misrepresentations of them as a security threat. This makes Holger Henke's new book *Crossing Over: Comparing Recent Migration in the United States and Europe* a highly recommended valuable addition to the study of

migrant settlement, assimilation, and acculturation in the international diaspora.

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Revolutionary Freedoms: A History of Survival, Strength, and Imagination in Haiti edited by Cécile Accilien, Jessica Adams, and Elmide Méléance

Florida: Caribbean Studies Press, 2006. 266 pp.
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> Therefore, as an artist, my creative soul is totally exposed to the magnetic force of natural, universal inspiration and expression. But Haiti has my soul, and she will always be the focal point on the canvas of my existence. And furthermore, my strong determination will never allow me to deviate from my sacred mission as a portrayer of Haiti. —Ulrick Jean-Pierre

Anyone interested in Haiti's rich history in its national, diasporic, and transnational contexts, as well as its significant position in the global arena, would be pleased to read *Revolutionary Freedoms: A History of Survival, Strength, and Imagination in Haiti*. Edited by Cécile Accilien, Jessica Adams, and Elmide Méléance, *Revolutionary Freedoms* is a volume that presents an overview of Haiti's history through an interesting juxtaposition between the historical paintings of Haitian-American artist Ulrick Jean-Pierre and various essays by recognized scholars and thinkers in the field of Haitian studies. It is an educational and resourceful book that uses art to represent Haitian history and retell old stories in new ways to younger generations of Haitians.

Revolutionary Freedoms is divided into six sections. The first section, "Beginnings of the New World," focuses on the pre-Columbian period to Columbus's first landing. The second section, "What is Freedom?," includes reflections of revolutionary figures such as Makandal and Dessalines, as well as significant historical events from the eighteenth century to the first United States occupation of 1915–1934. The third section, "Forgotten Women of Haitian Liberty," highlights Haitian heroines such as Anacaona and Marie-Jeanne Lamartinierre. As Haitian women are often misrepresented or made absent in Haiti's history, this section stresses the positive portrayals of Haitian heroines in Jean-Pierre's paintings. The editors assert in the introduction to this section, "We need a new history that challenges the current representations of Haitian women as merely incidental in the evolution of Haiti as a nation" (72). This section articulates the ways in which Jean-Pierre centralizes Haitian heroines in his works. The fourth section, "Legacies of Vodou," explores the role of religion in the revolution, as well as the relationship between Vodou in Haiti and in Louisiana. The final section, "Behind the Mountains are More Mountains," reflects on more contemporary subject matters, such as mass migration to the United States and the plight of Haitian refugees. This section also includes an essay on the history of Haitian painting by Michel-Phillippe Lerebours and an interview between Ulrick Jean-Pierre and Edwidge Danticat. The final section encompasses the selected paintings of Ulrick Jean-Pierre.

Indeed, the uniqueness of this book is in this representation of Haitian history through a dialectic play between the visual arts and the written text. The essays in this book lucidly reflect on significant events and figures in Haitian history. The specific artistic vision of Ulrick Jean-Pierre is used as an avenue to lure the reader into the vividly colorful richness of Haitian history. Some contributors do a great job at connecting Jean-Pierre's work more directly in their essays. March A. Christophe's essay "The Ceremony of Bois Caiman" is a noteworthy piece that specifically analyzes one of Jean-Pierre's paintings, "Cérémonie du Bois Caïman," in a way that merges a reflection of the painting as art with a keen articulation of how the event is historicized, imagined, and interpreted in the Haitian collective consciousness. Andrea Schweige Hiepko's "The Haitian 'Sibboleth'" is a good analytical reading of the painting "Awareness of Exploitation." The article provides the historical background to understand the images and colors in the painting in a way that forces

the reader to constantly refer to the image. Other essays did not touch on Jean-Pierre's paintings as I would have liked. Unfortunately, the section that required the most analysis of the paintings failed to do so. Section 2, "What is Freedom," included essays on Haitian leaders and revolutionary heroes with little to no critical reading of Jean-Pierre's artistic representation of these heroes. The essays in this section need to do more than just provide the reader with a historical context of specific Haitian leaders and revolutionary events. They need to complicate Jean-Pierre's portrayals of Pétion, Dessalines, Henri Christophe, and Charlemagne Péralte within the framework of the artist's vision and philosophy. When reading essays that did not directly refer to the paintings, I was left wondering about the intent of the book. Is Jean-Pierre's work central, or incidental? Is the focus more on history or art? If the focus is on art as much as it is on history, then other questions must be asked. For example, what is Haitian art? What is the history of Haitian painting? What is the place of the arts and the role of artists in the political, economic, and social climate of Haiti? What is the relationship between political leaders and the artist? Who is Jean-Pierre and how has his work affected both the representation of Haitian history and the representation of Haitian artists?

Some of these questions are actually answered toward the end of the book. The essay by Michel-Phillippe Lerebours provides a necessary overview of the history of Haitian art. Readers finally understand more clearly the role of the artist in the development of Haiti as a nation. I appreciated the discussion of Haitian painting under the leadership of Haiti's founders and leaders as well as their interest in fostering artistic production. I am particularly interested in learning more about Faustin Soulouque and his empire in this manner. The interview between Edwidge Danticat and Ulrick Jean-Pierre on his work and his position, role, and responsibility as a Haitian artist is a telling one that provides the reader with a closer look at the artist. In this interview, Jean-Pierre shares his artistic philosophy, articulating his desire to capture and "immortalize" significant historical events and figures to "revive the consciousness of greatness" forgotten for the benefit of future generations. These two significant pieces would have worked best at the beginning rather than at the end of the book. This way, readers would be able to work through questions on the relationship between Haitian history and Haitian art with this background information already

established and concentrate on other questions that stem from this work. For example, what does it mean to see a historical painting, and feel history in this manner "for a renewed vision of Haiti's possible futures"? In what way should we be thinking about contemporary Haitian art to raise consciousness of the past for a more promising future?

Reading the essays with the paintings of Ulrick Jean-Pierre always in mind, I also think it would have been better to bring his artwork in closer proximity to the essays. In other words, instead of having images of his paintings at the end of the book, isolated in a separate section, the images should be placed in the essays. Having to constantly go to the last section of the book to look at the images mentioned in the articles oftentimes created a disconnect.

If you have little to no knowledge of Haiti's history, this book is a great resource. If you want to be reminded of the magnitude of Haitian history and share it with younger family members, this is a book to recommend. It is certainly an educational volume that can be taught to high-school teenagers and a great reference for college students, educators, artists, and scholars of Haitian studies. It is by no means a concise text of Haitian history. As Cécile Accilien states in the introduction to *Revolutionary Freedoms*, this book "does not pretend to offer a complete account of all the events in Haitian history; rather, through Jean-Pierre's art accompanied by commentaries and reflections from a wide variety of scholars and thinkers, it hopes to pique readers' interest and to inspire them to find out more about the history of the first black republic" (xxiv). It is in this challenge of arousing and awaking interest in Haiti's history through the medium of art for the benefit of Haitian children and future Haitian leaders that I find this book most valuable and successful.

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Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery, and Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados by Russell R. Menard

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During the mid-seventeenth century, the economy of the 166-square mile Caribbean island of Barbados flourished. Sugar plantations covered the small island where slave labor generated enormous profits, making it one of the most successful plantation colonies in the British Empire. Since the early twentieth century, historians have produced significant studies on the plantation system of early Barbados. Menard's short monograph is the latest, and perhaps the most thorough, examination of the role of sugar plantations in transforming the island's economy during the mid-1600s.

While researching his topic, Menard initially set out to expand on the scholarship relating to the popularized Barbadian "sugar revolution" theory. During a research trip to this island, the author discovered several historical inaccuracies in the thesis that sugar revolutionized Barbados's plantation economy in the mid-seventeenth century. He suggests most scholars misinterpreted the impact of the crop on the plantation system. Menard's groundbreaking findings prove that the planters' reliance on slave labor existed before the rise of the island's sugar industry, refuting long-standing historical claims that large plantations emerged and thrived because of profitable sugar crops. The author does not disagree with scholars who argue that a "sugar revolution" existed, but proposes that the rise of sugar plantations oc-

curred too gradually to be described as a "revolution." He prefers to characterize the success of the sugar plantation economy after 1640 as a "sugar boom."

In reality, the sugar industry was more unique and sophisticated than scholars described it. According to Menard, the Barbadian plantation system is best defined by the development of several important factors, such as large-scale integrated plantations, the slave-economy system, the gang-labor system, and the commission system. For example, as entrepreneurs, sugarcane planters profited greatly by selling the commodity to European markets under the British commission system.

Menard's meticulous research reveals that instead of the sugar industry revolutionizing Barbados, the island revolutionized sugar production by converting the small, "dispersed" plantations into enormous, integrated plantation operations where the owners oversaw their respective cultivation and processing of sugar. Relying on statistical data located in deed books, the author brilliantly argues that "sugar did not bring slavery and plantation agriculture to Barbados; rather it sped up and intensified a process well underway" (124). Sugar did not develop from an economic depression and transform the island's plantation economy, a fact supported by Menard's compelling evidence that other crops stimulated economic growth in Barbados prior to sugar's dominance. The abundance of quantitative data confirms that Barbados experienced economic prosperity before sugar arrived on the island because of its successful tobacco, cotton, and indigo plantations. The presence of these successful plantations in the 1630s and 1640s proves that Barbados emerged as a premier "plantation colony and slave society before the rise of sugar" (19).

The author's narrative is most effective in reconstructing the development of slavery by using primary documents produced by Barbadian settlers such as Richard Ligon, whose journal observations vividly detail the emergence and growth of sugar crops in Barbados after 1640. These records, along with other primary documents, chronicle the commercial sugarcane industry.

In this well-written book, Menard examines a number of primary documents from the Barbados National Archives, the British Library and Public Records Office in Great Britain, and the John Carter Brown Library in the United States. Menard's research methodology strengthens his arguments. His use of plantation records from these archives

also illustrate that a sizable number of slaves occupied Barbados long before the sugar industry appeared.

Menard also examines the great historical debate over who financed the Barbadian sugar industry during the seventeenth century. Prior to his monograph, scholars theorized that the Dutch either financed or bankrolled the Barbadian sugar industry. The author says this argument is grossly overstated and dispels the "myth of the Dutch" (51). Barbadian planters controlled all aspects of the plantation economy, from planting and processing to the sale of the finished sugar products to other markets. Deeds also demonstrate that after 1640, the British owned most of the island and not the Dutch, as some historians had previously argued. Menard's findings clearly establish that the British developed the industry and managed all aspects of sugar commerce.

Menard not only unravels the complexity of who controlled the sugar plantations in Barbados, but he also includes specific examples of how the British revolutionized the sugar industry. Planters experimented with a few production methods such as the "dispersed" system, where small farms cultivated sugar for wealthy mill owners, but eventually found it more efficient to rely on the more dominant, large-scale integrated plantation system in which sugar was grown and processed at the same location. This study describes the financial success of the mono-crop sugar culture in plantations. The triumph of the Barbadian sugar industry also provided planters the opportunity to expand their business ventures. The "sugar boom" enabled thousands of planters to raise enough capital to relocate to the mainland colonies of South Carolina and Virginia, spawning a "plantation revolution" that promoted the expansion of slavery throughout the Chesapeake and lower South.

Like most quantitative studies on slavery, Menard's book fails to deliver explicit details about the inhumanity of Caribbean slavery. He offers only a glimpse into the lives of the largest "Africanized colony in European America" (115), focusing primarily on the sophistication and profitability of the sugar plantation system. Providing graphic details about the horrific conditions slaves endured on such plantations would enhance this study further, bringing objective reality to the suffering that underpinned the success of the sugar industry. The vivid description of the labor intensiveness of sugar processing should be balanced by an account of the cruelty and greed of Barbadian planters who denied their slaves adequate food, clothing, and shelter.

Moreover, the author should also have expanded on the severe gang-labor system which was used to increase productivity at the expense of the slaves, whose overseers severely disciplined and whipped them to make them work faster. Menard briefly describes the painstaking, eighteen-month process of harvesting sugarcane to illustrate the crop's tedious nature. During the processing of sugar, planters demanded their physically exhausted slaves, who often slept on their feet, to "work around the clock" (15). Dependence on a quantitative analysis of plantation slavery marginalizes the pain and suffering of enslaved Africans at these treacherous onsite mills, where, according to Menard, they often suffered scalding and maiming.

Overall, this study is an insightful analysis of the economic and managerial aspects of slavery in Barbados, which, as Menard shows, enjoyed an efficient and prosperous plantation economy prior to the infamous "sugar revolution." The book enhances the scholarship on plantation slavery in the Caribbean, and will join the ranks of other classic studies on the plantation system. This major revision of, and challenge to, previous scholarship on Barbados sugar plantations is a must-read for history majors, historians, and those interested in a plantation system that served as the catalyst for an immoral industry in the Atlantic world.

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