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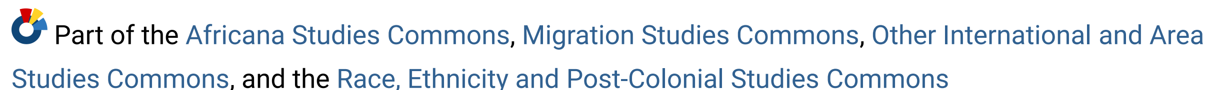
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Tek Dem Han An Tun Fashion:
Gender, Class, Ethnicity, and Placemaking in the Jamaican Transmigrant Network

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
Brenique O. Bogle

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2022

Dedication

To my holy trinity: mommy, grandpa, and teacher.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to my six interlocutors, Daisy, Chester, Byron, Paulet, Princess, and Daphnee. I hope that I have honored your stories.

Thank you, Chrisitan Crouch, for all your support these four years.

Thank you, Peter Rosenblum, for your guidance throughout this process.

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Notes on Terminology

The following definitions are specific to the way I use them in the following chapters and are not intended to be definite descriptions.

West Indies: Post-colonial countries that were once part of the British West Indies.

West Indian: A person whose recent heritage traces to the West Indies.

Caribbean: A person whose recent heritage traces back to a country or state located in the geographic region of the Caribbean.[1]

Jamaicanization: The process in which a place or thing is made Jamaican in character. The Jamaican influence on popular culture, including art, cuisine, and language.

Yankee: A person who is born and raised in the United States regardless of their ethnic background.

JaMerican: A person of recent Jamaican ancestry who is born and lives in the United States.

Ethnic Jamaican: A person who is of Jamaican descent regardless of their country of origin.

Green Card: A permanent resident card. An identity document that shows that an immigrant has lawful permanent residency in the United States.

2nd Great Migration: The movement of Black people from post-colonial Latin American, Caribbean, and African nations to urban areas in the United States after 1965.

Susu: An informal savings club where a group of people contribute an equal amount of money into a fund that is rotationally shared; **Partner** *(syn)***.**

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[1] I frequently use the term Caribbean and West Indian interchangeably to refer to a person's cultural background.

Introduction

In the initial months of the Covid-19 lockdown, I embarked on a personal project examining my genealogy. I spent a lot of time talking with my grandmother and my mother about their experiences in the United States and their experiences in Jamaica. These conversations encouraged me to think a lot about my identity as a first-generation American and my relation to Jamaica, Queens in the United States, and Jamaica the island in the West Indies. I began to scour the web for information that I could find about my ancestors looking through birth certificates, death certificates, and church records trying to put together the fragments of my history. I found many materials on the internet but realized the most valuable information I was receiving was from family members. It was hard to find documented materials for two reasons (1) The West Indies as both a geographic region and ethnic identity has been relatively neglected by scholars. (2) the power of self-documentation has not always been accessible. Western knowledge production practices often decenter the Caribbean in history. Countries outside the imperial core and their inhabitants are left in the peripheries of academia. While I was on a quest to discover my family history and by extension my identity, I began to see a larger story of Jamaican migration in New York City unfolding. I became fascinated with the relationships across the city that created my family's migration story. It seemed that in some ways everyone I knew—family or not—was somehow a part of the story. This is the way migration works—it is not individual traction but rather a collective action that is both the product and producer of relationships. It is through those relationships that ethnic enclaves are formed.

As a Global and International Studies student, I have learned about people and places all over the world but there are very few classes offered at Bard studying the Caribbean. Through my senior project, I want to honor my heritage by documenting the contributions of third-wave Jamaican migrants through oral history. They have made semi-independent communities in cities like New York. I want to do so through the voices of the migrants themselves, people like my parents, friends, and teachers. So much of the story of migration cannot be told by simply examining legislation and statistics. Although empirical evidence is important, the heart of the story rests in the people. The following chapters will include excerpts of interviews with Queens residents. It was important for me to include the lived experiences of migrants because I believe that self-documentation and the ability to produce historical and cultural artifacts and archives are important, especially for victims of colonialism. Below, I have created a table that lists each participant, name, gender, occupation, and the year that arrived in the United States.

Name	Gender	Occupation	Year of U.S. Arrival
Byron Edwards	Male	Teacher, Entrepreneur	1986
Chester Gordon	Male	Entrepreneur	1999
Daisy Jensen	Female	Nurse (retired)	1969
Daphnee Grant	Female	CNA (retired)	1978
Paulet Edwards	Female	Teacher	1989
Princess	Female	Teacher, Nurse (retired)	cir. 1987

Michel-Rolph Trouillot's writing in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of Histor*y has shaped the way that I engage with knowledge production practices and influenced

my writing process for this project. Trouillot interrogates the colonial framework of historiography. The lived inequalities in the past manifest themselves in unequal historical power in the present. For me, this means that Black Jamaicans often relive the atrocities of the past through the ways that their history is excluded from traditional academic history. This exclusion contributes to the lack of archival power. There is power in story-producing, in being able to tell your own story; but because many Jamaican migrants are part of vulnerable populations whether it be due to their immigration status, class, or gender, historically access to self-documentation has been denied to these groups. These first-hand accounts of migration do not only provide valuable qualitative data but also empower individuals of a community of which I am part and preserve our history as it is being made. Through the production of this oral history, I hope to create a primary source or archival source.

While the agency of migrants is important to the story, their free choices are profoundly affected by macrostructural forces such as immigration law. The changes in immigration laws have led to cycles of constriction and expansion in immigration patterns. The passage of the Hart Celler Immigration Reform Act of 1965 dramatically changed the ethnic makeup of New York City. This has pushed the city into a Second Great Migration. Since 1965 a total number of 59 million immigrants have moved to New York City, the majority of them identifying as Black. According to the Pew Research Center, the increase in the Black immigrant population accounted for 19% of the growth in the overall Black population, which increased by 20 million between 1980 to 2019.[2] The Caribbean remains the most common region of birth for U.S. Black

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[2] Mark Lopez Hugo et al., Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065 (Pew Research Center , September 28, 2015), accessed April 14, 2022,

immigrants. Just under half of the foreign-born Black population was born in this region (46%). In the 21st century, Jamaica remains the top country of origin for Black immigrants. Jamaicans accounted for 16% of the U.S. Black immigrant population in 2019.[3] Because of the 2nd Great Migration, Jamaicans have transformed the cultural landscape of New York City. As a person of Jamaican heritage who also grew up in a highly Jamaicanized community in Southeast Queens, I am witness to the creation of the *JaMerican* identity. The JaMerican is any person of recent Jamaican ancestry who is born and lives in the United States.

Since 1965, millions of Jamaicans have emigrated from their country of birth. With over 36% of Jamaica nationals living abroad, the United States, specifically New York City, continues to be the premier destination for Jamaican migrants. Philip Kasinitz, a leading scholar on Jamaican immigrants in New York City, has separated Jamaican migration into three major waves. The first wave lasted from 1900 and ended early in the 1920s. The first wave of migration happened concurrently with the Great Migration, a term describing a wave of internal migration in the United States when many African Americans moved out of the rural south and into the industrial cities of the midwest and north in search of better opportunities for employment and improved quality of life. During the first wave of migration, the rate of West Indian immigrants being admitted to the United States generally stayed between 5,000 and 8,000 per year but peaked in 1924. The Asiatic Barred Zone Act, also known as the Immigration Act of 1917, set the stage for restricting immigration laws in the United States. The mounting anxieties over national security during World War I created an atmosphere for Congress to pass this

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https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/.

[3]Lopez Hugo et al., "Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065."

legislation, and it included several important provisions that paved the way for the 1924 Act. The Immigration Act of 1917 implemented a literacy test that required immigrants over 16 years old to demonstrate basic reading comprehension in any language.[4] It also increased the tax paid by new immigrants upon arrival and allowed immigration officials to exercise more discretion in making decisions over whom to exclude.[5] However, the number soon dramatically declined with the introduction of immigration restriction laws. The literacy tests did not deter many potential migrants, including Jamaican migrants. However, the introduction of the Johnson-Reed Act or Immigration Act of 1924 included the Asian Exclusion Act and National Origins Act. This act introduced an immigration quota system "which set three percent of the total population of the foreign-born of each nationality in the United States as recorded in the 1910 census. This puts the total number of visas available each year to new immigrants at 350,000.[6] This act severely restricted immigration by intentionally reducing nonwhite immigration and effectively barring Asian immigration. This act coupled with the diminishing material conditions in Jamaica and in the United States due to the Great Depression decreased Jamaican immigration into the United States.

Because of this, the second wave of West Indian immigration was very small. The second wave lasted between 1930 and 1965. Before Jamaica gained its independence in 1962, Jamaicans had British passports and were considered British nationals. The use of these British passports makes it difficult to accurately record the number of migrants. The British Nationality Act 1948 passed in the United Kingdom, introduced a "home country" quota system, which encouraged

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[4] "Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations," Office of the Historian (Foreign Service Institute United States Department of State, n.d.), https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/immigration-act.
[5]"Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations."
[6]"Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations."

colonial subjects to migrate to the U.K, particularly to work and go to school. Thus the second wave of Jamaican migration was extremely small and restricted.

The third wave of Jamaican migration began in 1965. This wave brought by far the largest cohort of Jamaican migrants to the United States and is the longest-lasting as it still continues today. Following Jamaican independence in 1962, Jamaican citizens were no longer colonial subjects and the privileges provided to them under the McCarran-Walter Act were revoked. This would have stopped Jamaican emigration almost completely if not due to the Hart-Celler Immigration Reform Act (1965). This put an end to the ethnicity-based immigration quota system enacted by the Immigration Act of 1924 which sought to create ethnic homogeneity in the United States. The Hart-Celler Immigration Reform Act replaced the ethnicity-based immigration quota system with a system that privileged refugees, people with special skills, and those with family members living in the United States. As a result, there was an immigration boom. The emphasis on family reunification in American immigration policy shifted the structure of U.S. immigration. With many of the barriers to entry removed, people of diverse ethnic and class backgrounds were able to move to the United States. Under these new liberalized immigration laws in the United States, a new cohort of Jamaican migrants formed.

It is this cohort that my family belongs to. This is the cohort that I will be most focused on in my essay. Their contributions to the culture of New York City have not gone unnoticed. In 2017, following the city's tradition of recognizing ethnic enclaves in places such as Chinatown, Little Italy, and Spanish Harlem; Flatbush, Brooklyn was officially recognized as the Little Caribbean. Despite the tremendous contributions West Indians have made as a whole to the United States, much of the scholarship about immigration in the United States is primarily

concerned with immigration from Latin America and Asia. There is a gap in knowledge produced about the West Indian plight in the United States; in fact, in *Islands in the City: West Indian Migration to New York,* Philip Kasinitz quotes West Indian sociologist Roy Bryce-Laporte, who describes West Indians as a group of invisible immigrants. Before the massive influx of migration after 1965, West Indians were largely an ignored ethnic group within the United States' Black community.

According to sociologist Stephen Castles and political scientist Mark J Miller, all migration is a result of interacting macrostructures and microstructures. Macro-structures are large-scale institutional factors such as the political economy of the world market, relationships between states, and efforts by the states of sending and receiving countries to control migration. Jamaica is a sending country and the United States is a receiving country, receiving about 70.77 percent of all Jamaican migrants globally.[7] Micro-structures embrace the practices of family ties and beliefs of the migrants themselves. These two levels are linked by a number of intermediate mechanisms referred to as mesostructures such as immigrant networks, immigrant communities, new business sectors created for migrants, and the migration industry.[8]

While attempting to maintain the importance of macrostructures, I draw from transnationalist theories to examine the mesostructures and microstructures of Jamaican migrant communities in New York City. Transnationalist theories argue that globalization has increased migrants' ability to maintain network ties over long distances. The improvements in technologies

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[7]"Immigrant and Emigrant Populations by Country of Origin and Destination" (Migration Policy Institute, February 10, 2014), accessed April 25, 2022, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-and-emigrant-populations-country-origin-and-destination.
[8]Stephen Castles, Hein de Haas, and Mark J. Miller, The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World, 5. ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 26.

of transport and communication have not increased migration but they have made it easier for migrants to foster closer relationships with their societies of origin through (mobile) telephone, (satellite) television, and the internet, and to remit money through globalized banking systems or informal channels. This has increased the ability of migrants to foster multiple identities, travel back and forth, relate to people, work, and do business and politics simultaneously in distant places.[9]

The following chapters will include an analysis of mesostructures while the bits of oral history give the reader a chance to see the microstructures, how the immigrants see themselves, and their story. In filling in the mesostructure, I show that migration is a path-dependent process shaped by interpersonal relationships.[10] The interlocutors Byron, Daphnee, Daisy, Paulet, Chester, and Princess describe the various ways that they relate to the people and their chosen community. In various ways, through friendship, business relations, church, and landlord-tenant relationships, and client relationships, these migrants have created transnational networks of various social ties. These networks have shaped New York City's cultural geography and have contributed to its recent Jamaicanization. In our conversation, Daisy stated that she and her husband have been a conduit for many people, and this is true: the Jamaican community has created a network in which each migrant is a conduit through which goods, ideas, money, and resources flow from one nation to another.

Chapter One, "Constructing the Migrant Network," explores New York's City's ' changing labor market during industrialization, the feminization of migration in the third wave, and the flow of resources through transnational kinship networks. Chapter Two, "Constructing

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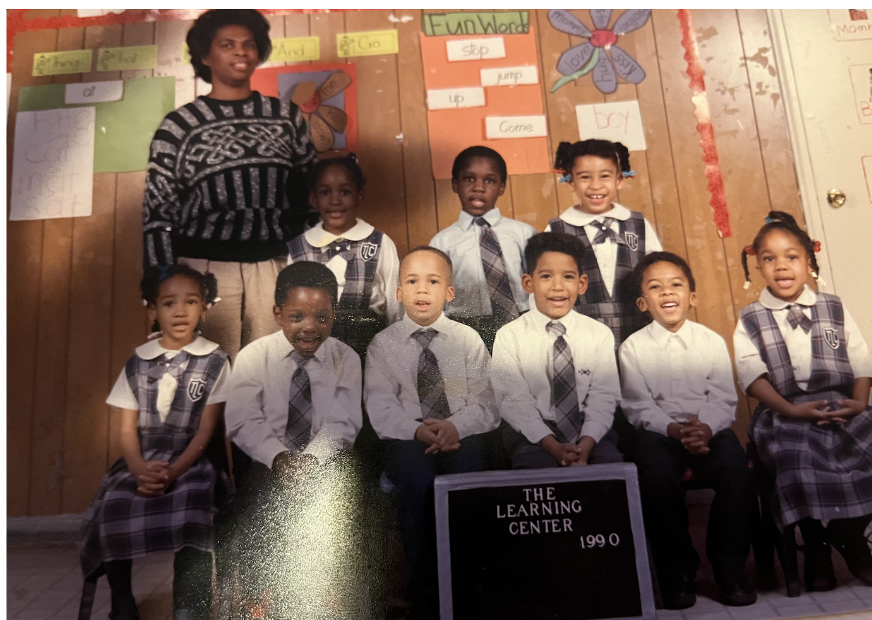
[9] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 40.
[10] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 26.

Ethnic Enclaves," examines the creation of Jamaican enclaves. Chapter Three, "Constructing Ethnicity," examines the ways that Jamaican migrants and their descendants have rejected traditional assimilatory models and culturally adapted while burgeoning a new ethnic identity.

Third-wave Jamaican migrants have defied cultural pressures; instead of assimilating, they have become transmigrants. Transmigrants are migrants that maintain dual economic, social, and political ties to their country of origin and in their destination country. Transmigrants and their descendants defy traditional concepts of citizenship and nationality as they occupy multiple ethnic and national identities simultaneously. Globally, Jamaicans have extensive transnational networks, the following chapters exclusively examine the relationship between Jamaica and the United States, particularly New York City.

Chapter One: Constructing the Migrant Network



Paulet Edwards with her first kindergarten class in September 1990.

1.1 The Feminization of Jamaican Migration and Changes in New York City's Labor Market

The construction of the migrant network is made by many individuals making independent decisions and oftentimes semi-dependent on their relationships with other migrants. Daisy came here influenced by her sister, Byron, influenced by Daisy's husband, and so on; these autonomous decisions made by migrants bridge together to form a migrant network. My interlocutors all came here in search of different things, looking to heal from heartbreak, looking to reunite their family, looking for a new job, looking for an education, etc; but what enabled them to make those choices was the large transformation happening in the world beyond their control. This chapter focuses on the shifts in the labor market that favored the skills of Jamaican

women; who are the head of the Jamaican migrant network. In section 1.1, "The Feminization of Jamaican Migration and Changes in New York City's Labor Market", I focus on the changes in New York City's labor market and third wave Jamaican women's ability to fulfill the city's evolving employment needs. In section 1.2, " Remittances, Barrels, Rotational Savings & Credit Association, and the Kinship Network" I explore how the flow of resources through the mesostructure.

The third cohort of Jamaican migrants has been increasingly feminized. Jamaican women, rather than men, possess the skills necessary to supply the demand for labor. International migration is in part caused by the structural demand within the best economies for both highly skilled workers such as doctors and nurses and low-skilled workers such as Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) and domestic-care workers. By the early 1970s, the United States had switched from an overflow of manual workers to an increased demand for workers in the service sector. This triggered a demand for both highly qualified and low-skilled workers over recent decades, particularly in the service sectors. Domestic supply for low-skilled labor has decreased because many women have entered the formal labor market and young people continue education for much longer which explains why employers have recently relied on low-skilled migrant labor. This is evident in the gender makeup of Jamaica's most recent cohort of migrants. As more Jamaican women migrate they have increasingly become the center of the transnational migrant network.

The Hart-Celler Act changed the gender makeup of the Jamaican immigration profile in New York City for two reasons:

(1) The emphasis on Family Reunification furthered the feminization of immigration.

(2) The act also preferences those with specialized skills. Jamaican nurses are a majority ethnic minority in the city's healthcare industry.

In the latter half of the 20th century, New York City expanded its healthcare and education infrastructure. This contributed to the admittance of women into the immigration process. Many Jamaican women were employed as nurses and teachers. This is illustrated in the employment profiles of my interlocutors; nearly all the women worked as either healthcare professionals (three) or teachers (two). Another significant proportion of gendered specialized labor is domestic care work, particularly for the elderly and children.

The Civil Rights Movement coincided with the 2nd wave of feminism. The mid-century U.S went through massive racial and gender social advancements. During World War II there was a transformation in the labor force participation in the United States. White women began to work. Black women always worked, particularly as domestic laborers. Changes in the gender makeup of the labor force occurred once more in the 1970s when socio-political progress made during the Civil Rights Movement meant that Black American women could seek employment and access to higher education. American women, Black and white, saw increased employment prospects. This meant that there was a demand for domestic workers and Jamaican migrants supplied such labor. Many Jamaican women worked as CNAs, in nursing home facilities, and as home attendants for the elderly. Those who did not gain employment in schools worked as childcare providers. When Paulet moved to the United States, as a trained primary school teacher, she worked in private schools and eventually transitioned to private childcare; Daisy and Princess worked professionally as nurses, and Daphne as a CNA.

On any given day, when I walk through affluent areas of Brooklyn such as Park Slope, I may see a dozen Jamaican women pushing white children in strollers. The exoticization of having foreign nannies furthers the demand for Jamaican child care providers. In the episode, "Winter Solstice", of the Amazon Prime show, *Harlem,* one of the main characters Angie, a struggling entertainer, impersonates a Jamaican nanny to get a job working for a rich white lady. A white mother, Jill, is overheard saying, "I'm totally lost since my Jamaican nanny quit. I am desperate for help but she has to be Jamaican. I had a Jamaican nanny when I grew up and I miss her so much."[11] The show is set in New York City, and the scene illustrates that if not a national trope, then the Jamaican nanny trope is at least a regional one, culturally specific to NYC. It is rooted in some truth, as the trope reinforces the demand for Jamaican nannies. Also, Jamaican parents themselves may also feel more at ease leaving their kids at home-run facilities that are owned by Jamaicans or that employ fellow Jamaicans. Home-run daycare facilities are common practice in NYC, especially before the establishment of free universal Pre-Kindergarten for children aged three to four. Kasinitz notes this phenomenon in the chapter "Role in the Economy" of *Caribbean New York* in his exploration of West Indian entrepreneurship in New York City.[12] Domestic care is a significant employment sector for Jamaican women because it employs both formally trained professionals and informally trained professionals.

Furthermore, the gender makeup of the third wave of Jamaican migrants was partially due to the significant downsizing of the guest worker program and the closure of manufacturing

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[11] Linda Mendoza, "Winter Solstice," Harlem (Amazon Studios, December 3, 2021), https://www.amazon.com/Harlem-Season-1/dp/B09KT9ZVX9.

[12] Philip Kasinitz, Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race, Anthropology of contemporary issues (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 105.

jobs in the city.[13] New York state once had a large manufacturing sector. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's quarterly report, between 1950 to 1977 the city lost half of its manufacturing jobs. At its peak in 1947, the manufacturing industry employed about 1,072,009 New Yorkers; by 1976 it employed 544,002 New Yorkers.[14] While employment levels in the manufacturing industry or goods-producing industries declined, employment levels in service-producing industries increased. Historically men have dominated the manufacturing industry and other goods-producing industries while in service-producing industries, there have been improved opportunities for women to gain employment.

The decline of manufacturing jobs in the city meant that Jamaican men, especially those without higher education, had less specialized skills in demand at the time, while women, regardless of educational attainment, had better employment prospects and specialized skills in demand, making them more likely to obtain visas (temporary or permanent). Deborah Thomas explores the female-dominated industry of hospitality Jamaican migrant work in a small town in Michigan. While this may seem to be outside of the scope of my paper, Thomas explores an

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[13]Hahamovitch, No Man's Land: Jamaican Guestworkers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor, 2.British West Indies Temporary Alien Labor Program (BWITALP) has been an important avenue to US residency since the early 20th century. It is important in understanding the 2nd cohort of Jamaican migrants, which was almost exclusively young males. BWITALP set the foundation for early migrant communities in New York, as the apple farms were premier points of destination for Jamaican guest workers. Most guest workers were either college-educated or skilled workers. The H-2 visa program was built on World War II-era arrangements established by the War Food Administration that brought guest workers from the West Indies to work under arrangements akin those established in the United States Mexico Bracero program. Through the 1940s, thousands of Jamaican guest workers labored on east coast farms. The 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act provided the statutory language to make these arrangements permanent within a nonimmigrant visa category. Unlike previous government-to-government labor agreements, the H-2 visa program allowed U.S. employers to recruit workers directly from any country once the Attorney General accepted their petitions, which gave employers direct control over guestworkers' visas.

[14]Rona B. Stein, "New York City's Economy – A Perspective on Its Problems. " (FRBNY Quarterly Review, Summer 1997), 50–52, https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/quarterly_review/1977v2/v2n2article8.pdf.

important trend in Jamaican migration and furthermore shared cultural values amongst female Jamaican migrants. Contract labor migration programs have always been important to the development of the Jamaican economy, especially, post-independence. The island is densely populated and has always struggled with issues of underemployment, there are simply more people than jobs available. Professional fields such as domestic care, nursing, child care, and education, represent opportunities for long-term employment and therefore permanent residency in the United States, but hospitality is a seasonal industry that employs many women. The U.S. Hospitality Program is representative of a more general global shift whereby service in industries has proliferated and, as a result, migrant female labor has become increasingly desirable.[15] The U.S. Hospitality Program is one of the four overseas employment programs, an evolution of the relationship started by the earlier farm guest worker program, and it is the only one in which women are the majority of participants. The program did not reach a high level of engagement until the turn of the 21st century.[16] During the 21st century, the United States descaled its farm work program. It was through this program (the crux of the 1st and 2nd wave Jamaican migration) that many Jamaican males gained entry into North America, on temporary status. Technological advances in the agriculture industry, as well as the issues of overstaying visas, led to the decline of the farm guestworker program.[17] In 1999 women comprised 70% of hotel workers. This is in contrast to the farm guest worker programs in which males accounted for 85.3% of those employed overseas.[18] While the farm guest work program has been on the decline

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[15]Deborah A. Thomas, "Wal-Mart, 'Katrina', and Other Ideological Tricks: Jamaican Hotel Workers in Michigan," Feminist Review 90, no. 1 (October 2008): 71, accessed March 15, 2022, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1057/fr.2008.30.
[16]Thomas, "Wal-Mart, 'Katrina', and Other Ideological Tricks," 71.
[17]Thomas, "Wal-Mart, 'Katrina', and Other Ideological Tricks," 72.
[18]Thomas, "Wal-Mart, 'Katrina', and Other Ideological Tricks," 72.

it still operates today on a much smaller scale. However temporary work programs are essential to understanding the Jamaican migrant labor market and thus migrant communities. The migrant labor market now privileges women, as the service sector continues to expand, thus more Jamaican women are immigrating to the United States than single men which was the previous trend in earlier waves of migration.

1.2 Remittances, Barrels, Rotational Savings & Credit Association, and the Kinship Network

The emphasis on family reunification is the 2nd driving factor in the feminization of Jamaican migration. Mothers are likely the origin of immigration through chain migration. Chain migration is the process of migration through primary social relationships with previous migrants. Frequently women file for their children and marital partners. Three of the six interlocutors shared that a female family member had filed for them to come to the United States, and three of the four women orators brought their children to the United States. Both Chester and Daphnee were working-age adults when they migrated to the United States and both gained admittance through their mother. Chester was thirty-two when he finally moved to the United States permanently.

> **Chester Gordon:** Okay, well, before I had my permanent papers, I had a visitor's visa, which I used to travel back and forth to the States while I was working with Air Jamaica. So. After that time. After I got laid off my mom filed for permanent status for me, and it took at least, I think a year and a half. Before I could actually come into the States.

Daphne Grant and her sister came to New York in July of 1978 when her paperwork was finally processed. Her mother filed for her and her sister and once settled Daphnee filed for her eight children and husband to join her in Queens.

> **Daphnee Grant:** My mother came here in 1968. And after she came here, she decided to help us, to help me and my sister to come here.

> **Brenique Bogle:** Can you tell me a little bit about the experience at the embassy?
> **Daphnee Grant:** Well, the experience at the embassy. It wasn't that easy. They gave us a hard time. At the first starting point, you know, who are you going to? Where are you going in America? And so on. Those were the questions. And I never liked those questions because my mother was here. Quite a few years before… She sent for us. She applied through the immigration for us in the earlier part in the seventies. So we have to wait quite a long period of time. Before she was able to get us.
> **Daphnee Grant:** … It took me three years to get all of [my children] and it wasn't hard to do that, because when they came, I live in my mother's house, still, she had a two-family house and I live in one family and she lived in the other one. So it was really, you know, it wasn't difficult for me.

The notable exception is Daisy who did not sponsor her children to the United States because she gave birth to them in the United States. However, she along with her sister eventually sponsored her parents' migration to the United States. The US's current immigration system privileges chain migration as opposed to impersonally organized migration which is a movement based on personal recruitment or assistance. The women are the head of the transnational Jamaican family, making it a matriarchal society, but this is not to suggest that misogynoir is not prevalent. Jamaican women are likely to send a higher percentage of their earnings in remittance, they are more likely to organize the transportation of goods across borders, and they are more likely to provide unpaid labor for family members such as child care both Jamaica and in the United States, an important facet to the security of the Jamaican family. According to a policy brief by UN Women, "women typically earn less than men and pay more in transfer fees, the average remittance amounts they send are the same as or even greater than those of men. Therefore, the higher average remittance amounts sent by women implies that they tend to remit a larger portion of their earnings than men."[19] Remittances are essential to the

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[19]Mehtabul Azam et al., "Migrant Women and Remittances: Exploring the Data from Selected Countries" (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2020), 6, https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2020/Policy-brief-Migrant-women-and-remittances-Exploring-the-data-from-selected-countries-en.pdf.

Jamaican economy.

In 2017 Jamaicans sent 1.8 billion USD, which is roughly equivalent to 282 Billion Jamaican dollars (281,898,720,000).[20] The total amount of money transferred is likely significantly larger than what is reported, because these estimates do not include the transfer of other assets, such as gifts, or informal monetary transfers. For instance, it is common practice for Jamaicans to "send a barrel" back to their home country. Barrels are large containers typically filled with goods such as canned and boxed food items, clothes, shoes, toiletries, medicine, and other household necessities. They also may include gifts such as electronic gadgets and toys for children. Barrels are often filled by multiple people and contain items for multiple people within a social circle (this includes friends and family). It is also common for those traveling between Jamaica and the United States to bring an extra suitcase filled with goods. Those in Jamaica traveling to the United States often send goods and items not available in the United States, particularly food and those leaving the United States to Jamaica often bring goods that are a greater variety. The total cost of items can be hundreds or even thousands of dollars depending on the quality of items in a barrel or suitcase. Nonetheless, it is often the most inexpensive and efficient way of receiving goods not readily available on the island. Practices like these illustrate that the total cost of goods and services sent to Jamaica may be higher than the accounted money flow. When Princess first arrived in New York in 1989, she left her children back in Jamaica with her mother and husband. This is another feature of the kinship network for the transmigrant; oftentimes when parents come to the United States, initially they may leave their children in the care of other trusted women, most commonly their mother, aunt, or sister. She often thought of

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[20]"Remittance Flows Worldwide in 2017," Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, April 3, 2019, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/interactives/remittance-flows-by-country/.

returning to Jamaica to be with her children but knew she could not provide for them on her wages back home as she was able to in New York. Some of the highlights of her early years in New York was sending things back for her children and family in Jamaica.

> **Brenique Bogle:** Yeah. So how was your family or your support system structured while you were here?
> **Princess:** Oh, when I was here, their dad was still there. So, you know, and I had my mom was very supportive of me. My dad also, my sisters, you know, they chipped in to help to take care of the kids. So that was not an issue. But for me personally, it was really. It was. It was nerve-wracking. Painful to watch at times.
> **Brenique Bogle:** And did you have to, like, send stuff back?
> **Princess:** Oh, my God. Tons of stuff when I really got the job. Now, that was a happy, happy, happy part. I would send batteries or food. I would send clothes, clothes that I would not be able to buy them while I was there. That was the part that. Really. Maybe it kept me here because other than that, I would have gone over because I said no. I was able to send them not just the clothes and not just the food, but I was able to send them money. You know, so that was good. But it didn't. It didn't, which I say, not cover the emotional feeling that I had for them as a mother. And that that part of it cover is not the correct word—compensate for, you know, me being there as a mother to them. No.
> **Brenique Bogle:** Okay. Can you talk about the process of sending a barrel?
> **Princess:** Oh, the process of sending a barrel. Or you got to, first of all, you got to buy the barrel. You got to have that container to pack the food in. And then you got to go shopping. But there were places that catered for immigrants, people who send stuff back home to their family members, especially foodstuff. So we would seek out those places and see where they have the better cells so we could get as much food items as we could get for the money that we have. You know, we were like even at that point, we were on a budget to get the most for our money. So that's what we did. And then we would pack the barrels, you know, and we would get onto a shipping agent who would come to the house and pick up the barrel and take it to their whatever, their depot and then forward it to Jamaica by way of shipping.

There is a constant outward flow of resources from New York to Jamaica, as Jamaicans support their families on the island. Remittances, both social and monetary, are important feedback mechanisms and contribute to the flow of migration. When people send money back to their native country it often funds future migrants such as their children, parents, or spouses. In

2020 Remittance accounted for 22.2% of Jamaica's GDP.[21] The economic advancements made by Jamaicans abroad are significant to the overall economic health of the island. Further, remittance is a foundational pillar in the establishment of an ethnic enclave because of its aid and arouses interest in migration. In a study completed by economists, Ralitza Dimova and Francois Charles Wolff, they found that remittances contribute to chain migration by providing close family and friends with the necessary capital and resources to fund migration. In fact, they invoke a loan repayment model, stating, "When a potential migrant turns to the extended family for help to cover the costs of migration, it may be of mutual benefit for both parties to allow for an implicit part of the repayment contract to include helping members of the extended family to migrate in the future."[22]Also, new migrants can provide unpaid labor for family members such as child care. It is common for immigrant families, including Jamaican families to live in multigenerational households in New York City. Daphne Grants mentioned that when she arrived in the United States, she lived with her mother, and eventually when her husband and children joined her, they all lived in the same home with her mother before she was able to purchase her own home.

In my case, my grandmother provided daily childcare for me and my cousins. This is not an uncommon practice. The kinship support model is an important strategy employed by the transnational Jamaican family often to cover the family in an economic security blanket by reducing the risks and optimizing the benefits of migration by providing both financial and

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[21]"Personal Remittances, Received (% of GDP) - Jamaica ," The World Bank (The World Bank, n.d.), accessed April 21, 2022, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=JM.
[22]Ralitza Dimova and François-Charles Wolff, "Remittances and Chain Migration: Longitudinal Evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina," The Journal of Development Studies 51, no. 5 (May 4, 2015): 1–2, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00220388.2014.984898.

non-financial support among family members with the expectation of reciprocity; "in the kinship support model family members support each other through assisting with everyday needs of housing, meals, child care, and eldercare. Other support includes remittances to family members in the home country, caring for children of absent parents, the financing of initial migration, and assisting in settlement and obtaining employment in the receiving country."[23] Further, transnational relations and kinship connections have been shown to help sustain individual and community ethnic identities and buffer Black Caribbean immigrants from prejudice and discrimination post-migration.This aligns with my interlocuter's experience with racism in the United States. When questioned about racial or ethnic discrimination faced in the United States, one of my interlocutors, Paulet, found it difficult to recount a time. She did not suggest that it did not exist, only that she could not remember an interpersonal experience because of who she surrounds herself with on a daily basis. However, she did recount that support she received from her network influenced her decision to stay once she arrived in the United States.

> **Brenique Bogle:** Did you encounter any stereotypes about being Jamaican or your race or your gender?
> **Paulet Edwards:** No, not really. No, I didn't. I didn't get any problem along that way. No. Of course, where we stayed it was mostly people of our same color where there, you know.
> **Brenique Bogle:** What about your same ethnic background where there are a lot of West
> **Paulet Edwards:** West Indians, yeah, a lot of Jamaicans too. Yes.
> **Brenique Bogle:** And did that influence your decision? To come here
> **Paulet Edwards:** To come here. Not really. But when I came to stay here, yes. Because I had my former co-worker, and um, my husband's cousins, you know, they were around, and so it was easy, you know, to be among them and easy to fit in.

Oftentimes third wave migrants are in the midst of a transnational ethnic enclave, which provides

[23] Ivy Forsythe-Brown et al., "Kinship Support in Jamaican Families in the USA and Jamaica," Journal of African American Studies 21, no. 2 (June 2017): 187–202, accessed March 15, 2022, http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s12111-017-9355-7.

social insulation. Kinship networks are the backbone of the ethnic enclave. The appendices filled with personal accounts are evidence of this; each person is in a relationship with one another, and as an extended kinship network, they have supported each other in various ways.

Another example of an extended kinship network is known as the “partner”, or the Su Su in other West Indian countries. This is a common informal capital accumulation system, typically headed by women, known as the Banker. The Banker collects and distributes the money among members. Every member of the partner contributes a predetermined amount (a hand) weekly, biweekly or monthly. Once the sums are collected one person gets the entire sum or gets their “draw”. This is repeated until the cycle is over where each participant gets a draw. In some cycles, the participants get more than one draw if they put more than one hand. If the participant does not play a full hand they receive less. For example, if I were a Banker, and nine other people were in a partner, and each played a hand of $100, every two weeks, a person would receive a draw of $800. As the Banker, I may charge a fee, so the draw could be less than $800. In my experience, my grandmother often served as a Banker and never charged a fee. The order in which each person receives their draw is determined by the Banker and often based on the person’s rank. The most trustworthy person, or the person with the most experience, perhaps this person was once a Banker in a partner the current Banker was in, or simply the person of whom the Banker has the most faith, or the person in need of immediate cash relief, will receive their draw first. In essence, the first person to draw receives a loan and spends the rest of the cycle paying it back. The order goes in decreasing rank so the newest person or the least trustworthy person will receive the money last. The last position can also be beneficial because essentially the last person to draw received the total amount of money they saved throughout the cycle or a

100% return on their investment. Each cycle is not a long-term commitment but people often opt to go again, starting another cycle with many of the same people and often the same Banker. This is how it becomes an informal saving institution because each person can join multiple partners concurrently or consequently, by playing their hand, they eventually receive a sum equivalent to what they paid.

The Banker is a trusted individual that is highly connected within the community. This is why the Banker position typically falls on women as they are often builders of the community. This is a typical savings system common in Jamaican communities. Paulet Edwards states the partner is the only way that she and her husband were able to purchase their home in Queens. Partner is a practice that Jamaican migrants have brought from their home country. Partners are recognized in the Jamaican Courts and there are accounts of members who have failed to pay their contribution being taken successfully to court.[24]

Due to a history of racism, many Black Jamaicans were excluded from the formal banking institution so they have resorted to private practices to save and accumulate money. In some cases, people can draw early which means that they essentially received a loan. Jamaican migrants in the United States are still met with institutional racism from US banks. Also depending on their immigration status many may opt away from banks and deal with primarily cash exchanges and informal saving practices.

Partner or Susu is an example of a Rotating Savings and Credit Unions (ROSCA), a term coined by F.J.A Bouman in 1979. The name refers to the fact that both the credit positions of the

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[24]Hari Srinivas , "Jamaica's Partner System," The Global Development Research Center (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, July 1987), last modified July 1987, accessed April 21, 2022, https://www.gdrc.org/icm/partner-sys.html.

members rotate and their savings positions. The partner demonstrates solidarity amongst members who are usually closely linked socially. In New York people in a partner are usually a part of the same extended kinship network, and often belong to the same country (Jamaica) or ethnic group (West Indian). ROSCAs are characterized by certain institutional features which include their voluntary involvement, community orientation, organizational autonomy, and self-sufficiency. The operational framework for ROSCAs is rooted in the close social links between members of the participating group, which may be the extended family, village, community, workplace, or some other social entity.[25] Husband and wife, Paulet and Byron, describe the way that they used ROSCA, to obtain their home and establish themselves financially in the United States

> **Paulet Edwards:** Yeah, it's like, um, people like, say, a group of 10 people. Each week. You put a certain amount of money, say, 50 dollars, everybody put 50 dollars. So that would be 50 times ten. That would be five hundred dollars. So each week somebody would get five hundred dollars, and that's all the partner is. And then you, you get your five hundred dollars. In our case, we save it. You know, and that is one of the reasons that's one of the outcome, we get the house, so you put away your partner money, you know, you're saving towards getting a house. So my husband was in the partner, I was in the partner and it was quite a lot of people in that partner. So when you get a draw, when it's your time for your draw, you get, uh, three thousand four thousand dollars and it would go around for years, you know, but each week, so you know, it's fifty-two weeks in the year and each week somebody gets a hand. So sometimes you would get more than one hand for the year. And with me and my husband, it would be two hands. We get one a year and you could also put more than one and a hand. And that helped a lot. You can see you save that way. Yeah.
> **Brenique Bogle:** Is that a common practice?
> **Paulet Edwards:** Mm! Yes, a common practice about us, we know that from Jamaica.

Byron shared a similar experience as his wife, they were able to buy their home and subsequent

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[25]Claremont Kirton, "Rotating Savings And Credit Associations In Jamaica: Some Empirical Findings On Partner," Social And Economic Studies 45, No. 2/3 (1996): 198, Accessed March 15, 2022, Https://Www.Jstor.Org/Stable/27866091.

properties in Brooklyn and Queens due to the money they saved through ROSCA. Although Byron is not a woman, and technically falls outside of the scope of this chapter, his experience is still relevant because it shows the importance of the mesostructure, the inner workings of the mesostructure are often invisible to those outside of the transnational community. Things like Susu are informal ways that Jamaicans support each other in the migratory process. Furthermore, it is likely that the Susu's that Byron joined were headed by women, as they are typically the Bankers. Here I extensively quote Byron as he illustrates how exactly he used Susu to buy his house and invest in his business and build his credit during his early years in the United States.

> **Byron Edwards:** Yes, I joined a Susu in America that is what it was being called and I saved my money and I tried to accumulate credits for purchases. Fact of the matter, a friend of mine was saying to me, in order for me to have a good credit, you have to show the history of how you pay back money. So I joined a Susu. I joined a Susu Where I could accumulate a certain amount of money. And then I joined the bank and I was able to borrow some money from the bank in order to fix up my ice cream truck. At the time when I fixed that truck – fact of the matter- I paid only $5,000 for that truck, and by doing it for about four/five years, I was able to buy another truck for $130,000. You know, it's credited, you know, and all those things helped to build my credit up. And so in buying the [truck], I was able to buy a house because I had good credit. The history of my credit was good. So I was able to have a very good credit and we were able to buy the house.
> **Brenique Bogle:** So do you feel that Susu helped you build your credit?
> **Byron Edwards:** Well, my credit was built not from the Susu, was there to give me that income that I [needed] to pay the down payment on the house. But what helped me to build the credit was I borrowed $5,000 from the bank and it so happened that I was told to open the account so that the money comes from my account each month to the bank. So I don't miss any payment. And that's what I did because of doing that it was able to boost my credit rating because there and then each month the money was taken at a specific time at all times and go to my account. So I didn't have any late payment. So when we were buying that house my credit was superb. Right. Very good – in the 800. Right. So I was able to get the house through the umm... what do you call? Housing- what they call that now I don't remember the name of what they call that. FHA!, I got an FHA house. I'll tell you what, I paid $145,000 for that house - $145,000. I was told only to pay it on like $10,000 on that house. And I got 100% financing and it's a two-family house. So I was able to use the payment from the rental part of it to help me with my payment of my mortgages. And at that time, my mortgage was $1,500 a month. Because what happened is that my interest rate when I bought a house was 11% interest rate. Interest rate was very high. But I still get it done. And as time goes by, I refinanced house

in order to cut down on the amount the interest rate. [Incoherent] I have done so until right now, interest rate, that house is only 2%. And not only that, with the price that that house has been risen. Now, I can probably say um, the house worth approximately about $800,000. Right. That's what it's is right now. And within that time, I borrowed money from equity in my house and buy other houses. That's what I did, buy other houses, even borrow money from it to help me do what I'm doing in Jamaica to a point. So you see, it was very good.

Susu or partner is an example of the mesostructure. At any given moment there are millions of dollars rotating amongst West Indians who have created an underground microeconomy to support themselves here and their families abroad. As leaders of the Jamaican kinship networks women occupy the position of power to create and sustain extensive financial networks. For many Jamaican mothers, ROSCA has been an avenue for them to prepare for their children's arrival in the United States. In preparation for her children, Princess entered a ROSCA because it would help her achieve the funds necessary to move out of a studio apartment in a basement into a two-bedroom apartment, and eventually a home in Southeast Queens where she and her children have resided for over 21 years.

Princess: Oh, it was all about Susu, I, oh my God. I was in like two, three. I remember at one point it was three Susus and as soon as I got the money, I put it aside. So soon as I got my money, I was laughing all this time, and I just saved enough until I was able to. I had my down payment, plus I had enough left that people marveled because about, say, about three months after I moved into the house, even though the house needed fixing up. It was a fixer-upper at the time, but I was working, so I wasn't worried about that. I said, wow, I got my house. I got no, I got to do something better for me, something else. And I went and I got I bought a brand new SUV. It was a leased vehicle, but oh my God, I was on top of the world. Now I have my house. Now I'm driving a brand new SUV. Oh, oh. Butterflies. The American dream. Mm-hmm.
Brenique Bogle: So tell me a little bit about the Susu. Like, were there any ever, like, people who didn't pay?
Princess: I had one that I was in even before I started thinking about saving towards the house. I was always because it's a tradition from the islands. Most islanders know about Susu. So I used to have that and I would have a little backup, you know if anything happens. I had my mother in Jamaica, my dad, you know, I could always have a little extra money. So that one ran for a number of years and it was okay. I never had a bad experience. I even started one. Towards

> the end when I said I wanted to do this quick thing much faster, I started one where I became the Banker , and the only people that I had in that Susu who were professionals that myself were able to pay their money and paid on time. So that was so helped. But the other one was also the hospital where I work. They had a nice one and that was what really propelled me into getting the house. It was good.

The demand for high and low-skilled immigrants labor is structurally embedded in modern capitalist societies such as the United States.[26] Urban areas such as New York City, are a hub for employment opportunities, and Jamaican women migrants possess the skills necessary to supply the demand for labor. The third cohort of Jamaican migration is distinctly headed by women, and as matriarchs and skilled professionals, they are the leading migrants from Jamaica. The heart of the Jamaican community in New York City is the women who provide the material and immaterial resources and support to create a transnational community. Jamaican women create and fulfill roles in a network of relationships dependent on each other for communal success; this is evident in the practices mentioned in the chapter, remittance, sending barrels, and Rotational Savings and Credit Associations.

[26] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 35.

Chapter Two: Constructing Ethnic Enclaves

Byron Edwards posed in the Mister Softee Warehouse in Brooklyn cir. 1996

2.1 Changing Routes: Jamaican Enclaves in Brooklyn and Queens

In New Yorkers we know it's springtime when you hear the Mister Softee trucks ringing through neighborhoods. As a child, I knew it was spring when my freezer was packed with boxes of Cyclones and Bomb Pops from Mister Softee. Various members of my family owned and operated Mister Softee ice cream trucks. For many of the adults in my family working on the ice cream truck was their first job and rite of passage into adulthood. My older cousins, my mother, aunts, uncles, and father worked on the Mr. Softee trucks that my grandfather owned and operated. The change in the demographic of the Mister Softee ice cream truck owners and operators in several Brooklyn and Queens neighborhoods illustrates the shift in neighborhood demographics during the last three decades of the 20th century. In this chapter I will explore the effects of white flight in the early years of Jamaican enclave construction, changes in legislation

that increased homeownership for Black people in the United States, and the class profile of third wave migrants.

The racial transformations in the demographic of Mister Softee truck workers reflect the larger changes in the demographic of NY and its subsequent Jamaicanization due to robust housing reform at the national and local levels. Mister Softee is a soft-serve ice cream truck franchise founded in 1956, initially, franchise owners and operators were primarily Italians, and to a lesser extent Irish and Greek. According to my interlocutors, by the 90s Caribbean Americans began to dominate the routes in Southeast Queens and Central Brooklyn. This is indicative of the changing ethnic makeup of New York City suburbs. My grandfather, Byron, recounts the story of how Mister Softee launched him into a life as a homeowner, and entrepreneur in New York's largest Jamaican enclaves in Brooklyn and Queens

> **Byron Edwards:** Well, when I first arrived, as I said, my friend was an ice cream dealer and he was the one who employ me to work with him in the company and work with him for about two years. And then I was able to purchase my own truck and he gave me help and teach me the business. So I become a ice cream dealer for Mr. Softee Ice Cream since then. And then I was able to buy my own truck and route, and then I was able to employ other people to work alongside me. Right. I was able to buy two other trucks. So I become an entrepreneur in the ice cream industry. But, you know, the ice cream industry is in the summer. And so I seek other work to be done. As a result, the fact that I was self-employed, I continue with my self-employment wherein I started to work as a real estate agent. That was in 1997, as an agent. And then I become a broker about four years after. And then I bought my own house in 1991. And then I started to buy other buildings. Fact of the matter, I bought a building in Brooklyn in 2000— It was 20[0]1 I bought that building and then I fix it up. 11 years after I was able to sold it and buy an office when I became a broker, I was able to open an office here in Queens, Guy Brewer Boulevard, about half a mile from JFK Airport. And there I work to employ other agents for about three or four years.

Mister Softee, represents just one of the many Jamaican entrepreneurial staples in New York City. Now, Mister Softee is a much smaller cultural institution compared to my childhood, but what made these trucks so important to the community's fabric is that they sold items

emblematic of a community experience. Children, adults, and everyone in between have memories of Mister Softee in the summer, whether it be employment or service. With the city's declining manufacturing industry, Mister Softee became a popular avenue for Jamaican men to be self-employed and provide for their families financially and offer employment for them as well. Often these men would recruit family members such as teenage children to work for some extra change during the summer. As Byron explained, he first gained money in the US from working on his friend's truck and then later was able to buy his own and employ several others including his four children, cousins, and other family friends. While ice cream may not hold any specific cultural origin to the island of Jamaica, Mister Softee is an important cultural iconography for the Jamaican New Yorker.

While Mister Softee trucks have evolved to be a cultural icon in New York City culture at large, in Brooklyn and Queens, it has become emblematic of the West Indian in New York experience. Mister Softee owners buy their trucks and specific routes that they drive. Each truck has a designated route. Once they buy it, no other Mister Softee truck is supposed to drive on the same route, and although unspoken, no other ice cream truck, regardless of company affiliation, is supposed to drive on that route either. This rule is taken seriously by ice cream dealers, and usually by community members as well. In the rare occurrence that a truck tries to sell in the wrong neighborhoods, many families may opt not to buy from them. When Jamaicans and other West Indians began to move into neighborhoods in New York City, not only did white families move out, many ice-cream dealers sold their route, not wanting to sell in neighborhoods deemed dangerous. Daphnee Grant who moved to Jamaica Queens in 1978, remarks on the changes she observed throughout much of the 1980s.

> **Daphnee Grant:** Yes, there was a lot of Black families, but the area that I came into, they were all mostly Italians. That was South Jamaica there. And there's a lot of Italians and other. And others live there, but I was mostly with the Italians, right?—But after a while, people starting to, you know, not the way when I first came here. Things started to change. And the neighborhood started to change because those Italian, they started to move out and other folks started to come in from different, different islands, so it changes, then.

When Daphnee first moved to Jamaica Queens, the area was predominantly filled with Italian and Jewish families. By the end of the 1980s, many Italians and Jews left as more West Indian migrants began to move in. While Daphnee did not recount any bad experiences with her white neighbors, Daphnee also recounted the rise in crime in the area, particularly nonviolent drug-related crimes. What she describes is in line with a larger trend occurring in New York City and urban areas across the country, white flight which ghettoized Black neighborhoods.

The Civil Rights Act of 1968 also known as the Fair Housing Act, was intended to outlaw individual acts of housing discrimination and foster integration. It was the first time that Congress declared it illegal for private individuals to discriminate based on race in the sale or rental of housing. Before this law, it was legal and common practice for brokers, banks, and homeowners, to prevent the purchase of property by Black people. The advancements made by African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement are critical to the ability for mass migration coming from the Caribbean. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 provides a basic human necessity: the need for shelter. Black immigrant groups have always lived in communities with Black Americans due to the segregated housing system and shared cultural ties. Oftentimes living in predominantly Black communities sheltered Jamaican migrants from violent anti-Black acts. Of course, living in an all-Black neighborhood is not complete armor against interpersonal racism, and does virtually nothing to protect an individual from structural racism so I am not

suggesting that Jamaican migrants never came in contact with violent acts of racism. In fact, in Canarsie, one of the more recent Jamaican communities in Brooklyn, many homes were torched before Black immigrants could even move in.[27] In our interview, Princess recounts many stories of racial antagonism in her early years working as a domestic worker in the 80s.

> **Princess:** I got this job where I was taking care of, you know, an older woman and she called me some names. Go back to your country, where you come from. You the N-word. You know you all come here. You know what? You need to go back. And I looked and I said, I didn't say anything to her, but I said to her I'm here taking care of you and this is what you're telling me… (See Appendix B)

Despite incidents of racial violence, residential neighborhoods served as a form of refuge from the racial and ethnic alienation that many Jamaican migrants faced in the United States.

2.2 Housing Reform and the Creation of West Indian Enclaves in Brooklyn and Queens.

The Fair Housing Act (1968) outlawed discriminatory buying and lending practices; this increased homeownership within the Black community. Following the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the suburbia craze that captured the rest of the United States in mid-century transformed the city's Black housing landscape. The creation of highways and parkways allowed for easy access to the city. This meant that boroughs such as Brooklyn and Queens, expanded, and Black suburbia began to increase. Semi-urban neighborhoods in the outer boroughs such as Queens became a site for the growing Black bourgeoisie, in *The New Noir: Race, Identity & Diaspora in Black Suburbia*, Orly Clerge states "upwardly mobile Black families selected Queens because of its suburban appeal and location on the outskirts of the city— Black media outlets such as Essence and Ebony magazines advertised local real estate opportunities to affluent residents of overcrowded areas like Harlem and portrayed moving to Queens as a sign of upward mobility

[27] Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 66.

and Black progress."[28] Jamaican migrants followed the patterns of Black Americans, and third wave Jamaican immigrants began to settle in different areas of New York City than first and second wave Jamaican migrants. The majority of the Jamaican community moved in the latter decades of the 20th century from Harlem to central Brooklyn, southeast Queens, and to a lesser extent northeast Bronx; but in this chapter, I will primarily focus on the creation of enclaves in Brooklyn and Queens.

Queens and Brooklyn are important boroughs for middle and working-class Black New Yorkers because many families could enjoy urban amenities: public transportation, less tax burden, and proximity to Manhattan, while also enjoying suburban amenities: such as cheaper rent, yard space, diminished traffic and congestion, and more square feet in houses and apartments. Despite the Jamaican community's long historical ties to Harlem, the 1980 census found that less than 8% of New York's West Indians live in Manhattan.[29] This number has likely been reduced. A unique characteristic of the third cohort of Jamaican migrants is the increase in group migration. Early migration to the United States was characterized by the sojourner mentality meaning mostly single men who came to the United States, saw their time as temporary or even transnational. Many sojourning laborers were either single or left their wives and children behind in their homelands, intending to work in America for a few years and return to their families. According to Clerge, this changed with the third wave as more families began to come to the United States. It remains common for at least one parent to migrate before and prepare for accommodations for children, but in the third wave, more than before, marital

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[28]Orly Clerge, The New Noir: Race, Identity, and Diaspora in Black Suburbia (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019), 85.
[29]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 55.

partners, parents, and children came in groups. This meant that migrants sought more family-friendly housing accommodations.

Once outside of Harlem, Jamaicans had increased opportunities to purchase homes. New York City is split into five boroughs: Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Manhattan, as the central business district, Manhattan is the most densely populated, congested, and highly urbanized; because of this, there are limited avenues for homeownership. The outer boroughs provide more space for family living. However, when Jamaican families began to move into neighborhoods, white families moved out. White flight describes the phenomenon of white people moving out of the urban neighborhoods and into new white suburbs when Black people move in. Early Jamaican communities often were in African American enclaves, close to other ethnic enclaves such as Jewish, Italian, and Irish neighborhoods, fearful that their property values, quality of education, and neighborhood safety were threatened by the presence of Black people, ethnic whites violently resisted and then fled to the more suburban suburbs of Long Island.

Jamaicans and other West Indians were able to develop distinct ethnic enclaves because of the increase in the sheer number of immigrants. At the time Central Brooklyn and Southeast Queens had a large number of relatively affordable one family and two-family houses for Black homebuyers.[30] These places were considered (and still are) Black middle-class areas. Jamaicans were able to find homes in areas such as Flatbush, Crown Heights, Laurelton, and Springfield Gardens because there were already established African-American enclaves that had experienced white flight during the late 60s and 70s. Many whites abandoned the city entirely and moved to areas of Long Island.

[30]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 58.

Brooklyn is home to the largest and oldest Jamaican enclaves. The oldest Jamaican enclave in New York is Crown Heights. A small number of Black Americans have lived in Crown Heights since the 1830s but in the 1950s more Black Americans and Black West Indians began to move in increasing numbers to Crown Heights, which previously was a predominantly Jewish neighborhood.[31] In the 1970s West Indians began to branch out of Crown Heights and moved steadily into East Flatbush and Flatbush. Today Flatbush remains the heart of the community. In Northern Bronx neighborhoods such as White Plains, many Jamaicans moved into formerly Italian neighborhoods, creating smaller enclaves. Because of the semi-suburban nature of Brooklyn and Queens' housing scheme-higher owner-occupancy rates- they did not suffer economic declines as much as the Bronx did when whites left. In 1950 very few Black people lived in East Flatbush, 30 years later, by 1980 80.2% of Flatbush residents were Black and 46.3% were foreign-born.[32] According to Kasinitz most of the Flatbush residents were not wealthy but they were generally better off than those in Crown Heights. Initially, Flatbush had few of the cultural amenities that Crown Heights had, but this has since changed. A large number of Jamaican enterprises (both formally and informally) are concentrated in Flatbush. So much so that to flex the city's diversity and honor its Caribbean heritage, in 2017 Flatbush was officially named the Little Caribbean. In the 70s the housing market in Flatbush experienced a brief slump due to white flight but it recovered in the 80s as more Jamaicans and other immigrants swell the demand for housing. Together Flatbush, East Flatbush, Crown Heights, and now Canarsie make up a contiguous West Indian neighborhood that runs across various districts.[33]

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[31]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 57.
[32]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 57.
[33]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 57.

The second most expensive enclave in NYC is in Queens. Similarly, Queens Village, Laurelton, Cambria Heights, Springfield Gardens, and St. Albans, represent a continuous Jamaican enclave in Queens. Orly Clerge states, "although Jim Crow permeated New York's Urban and Suburban neighborhoods and institutions, many neighborhoods were well-known sites of Black aspiration, achievement, pleasure, and creativity. Nowhere is this more evident than in early twentieth-century Queens. Queens became the second site of settlement for Black [people] who wanted larger living spaces than Harlem could provide."[34] When the Tri-borough Bridge was erected in 1929 it facilitated automobile travel and hundreds of Black people of the upper, middle, and working classes moved to Queens. Those who did not drive commuted on the F and J subway train lines or the Long Island Railroad. As Clerge states the increase in Black migration (from both the US south and the post-colonial Caribbean) "caused by global, national, and local political and economic shifts created the middle-class neighborhoods of Black New York.

In *Caribbean New York*, Kasinitz observed the importance of the kinship network in homeownership among West Indians. Jamaican families tend to live close together or in multi-generational households. This makes the accumulation of capital necessary to buy a home more achievable because there are multiple streams of income and often multiple heads of households. In two-family households, it is common for two or more nuclear families that belong to the same extended family to jointly own and occupy the house, " It's like our own little village here—It's an old Caribbean tradition of families living close together. What happens is one person will come here, and with hard work and some help, he'll eventually be able to afford a

[34]Clerge, The New Noir, 115

house. Other members of the family follow and you begin to have something like a neighborhood."[35] It is also common for families to live on one floor and rent out the remaining floors. All the people that I interviewed shared that, at least initially, they rented a room or studio in another Jamaican's home. Rental units are often informal and advertised by word of mouth amongst community members. This means that for every Jamaican house unit on a block there can be several Jamaican families.This contributes to the establishment of distinct West Indian communities. West Indians, at large, often live together, but there are also culturally distinct national and ethnic enclaves, such as the Indo-Guyanese community in Richmond Hill or Afro-Jamaican community on White Plains Road in the Bronx.

2.3 Class and Home Ownership

Compared to other Black immigrant groups in New York City, Jamaicans have high homeownership rates, which allows for distinct Jamaica communities to form. This is possible because historically, Jamaican migrants possessed the skills and capital necessary to be a part of the Black working-class or Black middle class. This is common for almost all immigrant groups in the United States. There is a widely accepted stereotype that immigrants are poor, low class, needy, or even criminals. In the American collective imagination, immigrants and refugees are often conflated when in fact the United States does not accept many refugees annually. Yet, Jamaicans buy into this ideal because it fuels their position as the model minority.

The model minority label undermines positive relationships between ethnic minorities in the United States. The model minority myth is typically employed to compare the success of

[35] Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 58.

non-white ethnic minorities to Black Americans. The term model minority was coined in 1966 by sociologist William Petersen who emphasized hard work and academic success as the reason that Japanese Americans overcame the discrimination against their group and achieve a measure of success in the United States.[36] The consequence of the model minority myth is that it drives a wedge between people of color who experience similar racial oppression and it also attributes positive cultural characteristics to success. This is appealing to those of that culture as they attempt to celebrate a retain a certain amount of cultural distinction - as opposed to the negative racial stereotypes that they may face such as the lazy negro. It reinforces the American Dream by promoting the image that hard work pays off. When I asked Chester, a successful entrepreneur if he feels Jamaican migrants could mirror his success today he employs very similar rhetoric about the ideology of meritocracy that many Jamaican migrants cling to.

> **Chester Gordon:** Yeah, sure. I think they could. Mhm. Yeah…Because there are opportunities here and also if you want to have a better lifestyle than you used to live before. I think the United States is a land of opportunity. I think the sky is the limit. And if you come here and you put hard work in and dedication, then. I'm pretty sure you can be successful.

This can be divisive because it can be used as a tool to reinforce the subordinate position of other minority groups. Jamaicans hold steadfast to this mindest not to be divisive but to leverage their position within white America and fuel their migratory process. The belief in the American Dream is a security blanket, something migrants need to feel safe in the things they have given up in exchange for the promise of economic liberation.

The Jamaican model minority myth begins as early as the 1940s. American scholar of immigration and labor, Cindy Hahamovtich, describes relations between American Farmers and

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[36]S Cheryan, and G.V. Bodenhausen, “ Model Minority,” in Routledge Companion to Race & Ethnicity, ed. S. M. Caliendo and C.D. McIlwain (2011; New York: Routledge, n.d.), 173–176.

Jamaican guest workers when they arrived in the United States. For many Americans, encounters with Jamaican guest workers were the first time they had come in contact with foreign-born Black people. "Jamaican migrant workers defied American stereotypes that Black people would be cheap and submissive laborers, many farmers were willing to entertain the notion that Jamaicans, were if not quote their equals, an exotic and superiors sort of negro who required and deserved special treatment."[37] It was easier for American farmers to see Jamaicans in this light as many of them were highly skilled and educated people. This was not representative of the largely illiterate agricultural laborers that represented the majority of Jamaicans. Just like the highly politicized guest worker program tickets, access to an American visa is difficult to get now; those most desperate for Green Cards are often not even in a position to begin the process. There are many barriers before even stepping foot in the embassy. Transportation is hard, as the island is still largely rural although in the last decade there have been major improvements to the island's infrastructure. Money and time are also barriers to those who are not given time off or work. Jamaicans who come to the United States are often from the middle or working classes on the island with access to education, transportation, and shelter. Oftentimes their class status diminishes, even if only temporarily when migrants immigrate in adulthood. Although Princess was a trained teacher in Jamaica, when she came to the United States she worked as a domestic care worker for a few years before switching professions to nursing.

> **Princess:** My first impression is it wasn't for me, it was like I was not happy. After I made a decision, I stayed and then to think that I already gave up my job in Jamaica. If I returned, then I wouldn't have a job and my kids would be in a worse place than they were when I left them. So I stayed. But it was not easy. My impression at that time of the

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[37]Cindy Hahamovitch, No Man's Land: Jamaican Guestworkers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor (Princeton University Press, 2011), 51, accessed March 29, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7sc7r.

> place. Well, to be honest, prior to staying, I always thought that it would be much greener pastures. Everything was just going to flow. I was going to get a job. But that was not the issue. That was not the case. It became an issue because I couldn't pick up a job. Whatever jobs I got were menial. And coming here, leaving my country as a teacher and I had to come here. Getting a domestic job was, you know, it was not the best thing that— And it was not the best feeling. But I had to do it to survive.

While Princess represents an anomaly among my female interlocutors all of whom stayed within the same professional fields, her situation is not anomalous to the Jamaican migrant experience as a whole. Jamaican migrants are inserted into the American class and racial stratification in a myriad of ways that are not always contiguous to their experiences in their native country.[38]

In New York City Jamaicans remain one of the most educated migrant groups and also on average, the median household income of Black immigrants is $11,000 more than native-born Black Americans, with no recent foreign ancestry. This can be attributed to the class of people that immigrate in the first place. Those who immigrate are more likely to have resources and connections already established in their desired country of migration. Many Jamaican immigrants are educated workers whose skills are in demand, "[Jamaican] immigrants can be directly inserted into the middle class in a city such as New York, where incomes are typically higher and more competent."[39] Paulet Edwards, a trained teacher in Jamaica, was not recruited to work here, but found finding work relatively easy and even chose not to work in the public education system but in the private education system. She describes how she and her husband were able to establish themselves relatively quickly.

> **Brenique Bogle:** So how long did it take for you to start teaching again?
> **Paulet Edwards:** Well, it didn't take me that long because I came in eighty-nine December, and by 90 September, I was working.

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[38]Clerge, The New Noir, 161.
[39]Clerge, The New Noir, 115.

> **Brenique Bogle:** And then how long did it take you to buy your home?
> **Paulet Edwards:** Oh, my husband had been saving, so it took us Ummm. Ninety-one. Ninety— We bought this house, paid down on this house in ninety-one! Mmm-hmm
> **Brenique Bogle:** So you came here and within a year you bought a home?
> **Paulet Edwards:** Yeah, because my husband was here before, you know, he had been here for some time before.
> **Brenique Bogle:** Then what happened to your house in Jamaica?
> **Paulet Edwards:** Oh, my sister-in-law lived there. She lived there for quite a while, over probably–over 10 years. I can't remember how long. Um? Probably between 10 and 12 years somewhere there. She stayed there. She lived there because she was going to be there with my sister. But unfortunately, my sister had passed away and so she stayed there. Keep the house and, you know, they lived there while we were here.

Because of the skills that Paulet possessed she had no trouble finding a job as education was an expanding employment sector at the time of her migration. Despite a brief dip in status when she originally arrived, she was able to retain her class status, and field of profession, and maintain her home in Jamaica, despite settling in New York. A retired nurse, Daisy Jensen remarks how easy it was for her to get a permanent visa in 1969, the U.S Consulate official told her it would be easy for her to find a job as a trained nurse in the United States.

> **Daisy Jensen:** Actually, I don't. Understand what's going on now, really, because like I said when I first went to the embassy, you know, and I applied when my sister said, you know, said, why don't you come up and I said, OK, and the process for me was so different in the sense that my interview went after I applied and everything, and I went. The interview was so minuscule. I mean, I wasn't there for 10 minutes. Really, [the consular] said to me this, he said to me—he called me my name and he said, you're a registered nurse and you don't have you won't have a problem because I didn't have a–I didn't have a job offer or anything. I was just coming up to me with my sister, you know, and he said, You're a registered nurse. You couldn't get a job anywhere in America. It would be no problem... It's actually he did like this, he looked over the application form and he called me by name and he said. You are from a progressive family. You won't have a problem finding a job in America. And that was it.

As a skilled nurse, and early third-wave migrant, Daisy was able to find a job relatively quickly, she even turned down a job in Boston, where her sister resided, offered to her by a family friend. In 1969 Daisy had made up her mind to move to the Big Apple. She had seen an advertisement for nurses on the flight to Boston and within three months had gained employment in Manhattan

as a nurse. (see Appendix A for the full story) This is another example of third-wave migrants possessing the skills to be inserted into the Black middle class.

This is not a universal experience for all Jamaican immigrants and is largely indicative of immigrant status. Those who are undocumented, skilled or not, have more barriers to economic mobility and less safety in the workplace. Jamaican migrants as a whole also face racial discrimination in the workplace, being under-compensated, and their protected immigration status jeopardized by employers. Yet Jamaicans are still seen as ideal employees, Clerge states that "Black Jamaicans are interpreted differently than Black Americans by whites and white ethnics who engage in divide-and-conquer cultural politics. White employers, for example, report preferring Jamaicans for employment because they have a better work ethic. Middle-class Jamaicans, in particular, are seen as the model minority."[40] In the chapter "Fish Soup", Orly Clerge argues that

> members of the Black diaspora who live in middle-class [spaces] occupy complex class positions that require us to expand how we understand the micropolitics of social stratification. Black migrants must negotiate multiple systems of racialized capitalism as they traverse New York and the Caribbean. Their changing relationships to these systems encourage articulations of class identity that reflect their past as well as their current situations.[41]

Jamaican migrants occupy complex class situations and requirements and disruption to the typically socio-economic stratification often employed in the United States. Due to their position as transmigrants, they may occupy many economic positions at once depending on where they are and who they are in relation to.

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[40]Clerge, The New Noir, 119.
[41]Clerge, The New Noir, 161.

Jamaicans were able to buy into Black suburbia because they had the existing financial and human capital necessary to be inserted into the Black Middle-Class in New York. The heart of the Black community shifted from Harlem as Black people bought into the dream of suburbia. For many Black Americans, Black suburbia fulfilled the abandoned dream of returning to the southern homeland, for Black Jamaicans it fulfilled the quintessential American dream: a house with a white picket fence.[42] As Jamaicans began to fill Black American neighborhoods- specific ethnic enclaves and by the mids 80s separate Jamaican enclaves existed in Brooklyn and Queens. Brooklyn and Queens in particular continue to be appealing because they hang on the fringe of suburban and urban.

Ethnic Jamaicans in NYC have constructed dynamic cultural codes around race, class, and nationality. This cultural system is rooted in their trans-geographical identities and practices and shapes their relationships with one another and to the New York metropolitan area. The local cultural space reveals the complex intersections of Blackness, [class], diasporic identity, and [transnational] placemaking. [43]

Following the passage of the Hart-Celler Act (1965), distinct West Indian enclaves were formed in New York City. It is in these enclaves that new cultural practices are produced, remixed, and exported. As the presence of Jamaican immigrants increased in New York City, they transformed the art scene, particularly in music and dance. Jamaicans are the largest Black immigrant group in New York City. Due to a large number of Jamaicans, and the increased visibility of their cultural products, West Indian enclaves have a hearty Jamaican flavor, thus

[42]Clerge, The New Noir, 161.
[43]Clerge, The New Noir, 235.

West Indian enclaves were Jamaicainized. The new cultural products that emerged were evidence of the growing transnational Jamaican community.

Chapter Three: Constructing Culture and Ethnicity

The Edwards Family in Byron's hometown, Saint Thomas, Jamaica, August 2015

New cultural practices fundamental to the new Jamaican transnational identity and experience emerged in Caribbean ethnic enclaves in New York during the 3rd wave of migration. What began as a Jamaican innovation, built on local Jamaican musical practices, for example, provided vital elements in the transnational phenomenon of hip hop. In its evolution, it established New York as a center of Jamaican culture and home to a new Jamaican identity that transcended that of 3rd wave migrants. In this chapter, I describe two cultural products of a transnational Jamaican identity centered in New York, hip hop and the West Indian Day Parade. I conclude the chapter with a short reflection on one growing category in the new transnational identity, the JaMerican. The term embraces the origin and destination in a word that captures what it means to be a Jamaican in America.

3.1 Transnational Cultural Production Practices: Hip Hop and Dancehall

Jamaican migrants living close to Black Americans, and other immigrant groups, are foundational creators of America's biggest cultural export at the moment: hip hop. DJ Kool Herc, a Jamaican immigrant living in the Bronx, is credited as one of the creators of the genre of Hip Hop music. Hip Hop is only 48 years old and was created in 1973, directly coinciding with increased Jamaican migration. DJ Kool Herc was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and moved to the Bronx in 1967, making him an early member of the third cohort of Jamaican migrants. The traditions that he and others drew from were familiar to other Jamaican immigrants like those that I interviewed. The Dancehall world and the Bashment parties that provided a nurturing environment for the development of hip hop and building blocks for a new transnational identity were part of their everyday lives and Jamaicans in New York.

According to the biography on DJ Kool Herc's website, when Herc moved to the Bronx from Jamaica, his love for music came with him. He incorporated his Jamaican style of DJing, reciting improvised rhymes with the dubbed version of his reggae records. This evolved to using instrumental and percussion sections of the day's popular music. In 1973 Herc DJ'd a back-to-school party for his sister which was held at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue Bronx, New York in the recreational room, now named Hip Hop Avenue because it is officially recognized as the birthplace of rap. Herc introduced the Jamaican style of calling out the names of the dancers – the sort of rhythmical pattern that would eventually be set to rhymes, now known as rapping and picked up by other MCs.[44] The birth of rap music is distinctly a transnational phenomenon. It is an example of early Jamaican-transnational communities. Through music, DJ Kool Herc bridged

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[44] "DJ Kool Herc: Father of Hip Hop Bio ," Djkoolherc, accessed March 31, 2022, https://www.djkoolherc.com/copy-of-bio.

his communities together and created a unique genre. While rap music is distinctly a Black and American musical tradition, early Jamaican influences and continued influences throughout its history are very evident. Many influential rappers out of New York are Jamaican, Busta Rhymes, Biggie Smalls, Peppa from the rap duo Salt n Pepa, Heavy D, KRS One, and many more are of Jamaican heritage.

While in the United States, Jamaican influences in Hip-Hop may be subtle; in Jamaica, songs from the popular genres of Dancehall and Reggae repeatedly reference Brooklyn, Bronx, and Queens. Dancehall is a genre of music In his hit song, " Pon De River, Pon De Bank, DanceHall artist Elephant Man, says "Inna Di River Pon Di Bank, John has a new dance a lock Jamaica an' Bronx". The song was a hit in Jamaica and also performed well in the United States, peaking at number 86 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 2003. Grammy Award-winning Jamaican Reggae group's Morgan Heritage song, "Brooklyn and Jamaica" the chorus reads,

> *`Just ask about Brooklyn, and how the ganja move in the street. And when you poor you can't sleep. Ask mi bout Brooklyn, where every day another bites the dust. True so much gunshot a buss. Just ask mi bout Jamaica, where life is gettin harder. And if you ever come on yah Ask mi bout Jamaica, whether policeman and soldier nuh stop charge man fi murda."*

The song juxtaposes the plight of Jamaicans at home and abroad, their interactions with the carceral state, generational poverty, and turning to a life of crime as means of upward economic and social mobility.

Super Cat, a pioneer in the early dancehall scene, has a song titled Dance inna New York. This song is much more lighthearted and simply describes his arrival at a dance in New York City. In this song you can hear the musical technique of *toasting*, talking in a rhythmic and rhyming fashion over a record that rap was based on. "Dance inna New York" was released in 1990.

In many ways Dancehall and Rap have evolved simultaneously – although the toasting technique predates Rap by about 10 years, the genres; they are Irish twins, roughly the same age and from the same parents. In Shinehead's "Jamaican in New York ", he states, *"Don't drink coffee, I drink roots my dear And I love my morning ride. You can see it in my motions when I walk, I'm a Jamaican in New York. See me walking down Church Avenue."* Church Avenue is an avenue in Flatbush Brooklyn one of the most densely populated Caribbean ethnic enclaves in the United States. Dancehall legend Buju Banton states in his hit song "Drivah", "*Drivahhhhhhh, don't stop it all/Drop this Arizona down a Albemarle*." The song tells the story of a drug mule traveling across the United States to distribute drugs. Albermarle is a street in Brooklyn and the accompanying music video is shot in Williamsburg Brooklyn. The frequent references to New York in Dancehall is a recognition of the transnational community. It reflects the lived realities of both the artists and their target audience: the growing Jamaican transnational community. It also shows that the focal point of the Jamaican transnational community has switched from London in the 50s and 60s to New York City.

In his multimedia exhibit, *No Gyal Can Test*, JaMerican artist, Akeem Smith, displayed the Dancehall scene in Kingston and Brooklyn through the female gaze. Smith reveals a certain underground culture in New York City. Dancehall or Bashment parties often happen in basements, backyards, and party halls. Not many outside of the West Indian community are even aware of the level of grandiosity displayed at such events. Smith states, "But I really wanted to also understand the visual loudness and why people of color are always considered loud, both sonically and visually. And I also wanted to put more focus on the women because the women were the nucleus of the parties, at least during the time that I grew up. It was their looks that

really got the party going. The music is always there, but I was more interested in the anthropological aspect of it."[45]

The Dancehall culture in New York City is indicative of distinct cultural practices that arise and remain in Jamaican New York. As Smith explored in his multimedia exhibit, Jamaican women and their elaborate fashions and style of dance were the centers of the Jamaican-New York party scene. Princess, whose personal and professional success, I share above, was one of those who always combined her professional engagement with devotion to that party scene. After living in the United States for over 25 years, she even opened a clothing boutique in Jamaica. She recounts the many parties she attended and even hosted in her own home.

> **Princess:** Oh my goodness, we were talking about that the other day! I was a party animal. When I got off, especially when I was a housekeeper, I would come home like twice a month. The first thing I did was I went to the ear dresser and I got a, oh, my God, I should have to speak just to show you. I don't have any of them. No, I had to have a very. I'll do your style for the weekend that I'm off. And I would remember this particular weekend I went into a store and I bought a dress for $300. Back in the days a dress for $300 is like Beyoncé buying a dress for thousands of dollars. Yes. And I got it. I'm looking at the dress right now. And I got my nails done, bought my dress. I had to buy shoes and everything to go. And I'm ready for the party. So every time I'm off, it has to be a party. And they had a club that most of us Jamaicans would go to. I'm trying to remember the name of the club, but we would be there.
> **Brenique Bogle:** Was it Moments?
> **Princess:** Moments! We would all meet. And there were other people like I met. Like that was at Moments where I met people who were professionals. They had nurses from Jamaica. You had teachers, quite a few teachers there. You had policemen, I mean, uniform people who were there. And it was oh my goodness, it would kill the nights. Paint the town red! Oh, reggae music. And you had. It's mostly reggae and old-school Lovers Rock. We used to love Lovers Rock. And you're my cousin, your granddad, we would always go there, you know. We had good times, really, really good times.
> **Brenique Bogle:** Did you host any [parties]?
> **Princess:** I hosted many basement parties. Yes. Even when I got to this house. Ooh, many, many. I like that. I like to entertain. And that's something that I really enjoy doing. Yeah.

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[45]Felix Burrichter, "Akeem Smith On Recreating The Architecture Of Jamaican Dancehall," Pin-Up Magazine, Fall Winter 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://pinupmagazine.org/articles/interview-no-gyal-can-test-akeem-smith.

3.2 Labor Day and the West Indian Day Parade.

In the United States, the end of summer is marked by the celebration of the federal holiday, Labor Day. For most Americans, it is the last day to barbecue and for those living in colder areas, it is typically one of the last warm weekends of the year. In New York City Labor Day belongs to West Indians. The end of the summer is signaled by the West Indian Day Parade on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn and many parties are held around the city in a distinctly Jamaican fashion – the people, clothes, music- and style of dance. Jamaican DJs and entertainers from Jamaica often perform at concerts and make club appearances on Labor Day weekend. The tradition of the West Indian Day parade has a long documented history and exemplifies the birth of a unique Caribbean American culture. It is an homage to the many West Indians who enrich the city's culture. If New York City is the focal point of the transnational Jamaican community, Brooklyn is the focal point for the Jamaican Community of New York City. It has the largest percentage of Jamaicans in the city. So it is fitting that the parade is held on Eastern Parkway.

New York City's annual West Indian Day Parade illustrates the creation of a new unified West Indian identity in New York that emerged after 1965. The parade correlates to the West Indies Carnival tradition. While Carnival may not be distinctly Jamaican it is important in understanding the making of the West Indian diaspora as a whole, particularly in New York. Jamaicans were not the only West Indians arriving in New York but Jamaicans were the biggest group from the West Indies. Carnival is a relatively young tradition in Jamaica, drawing from Trinidad and the former French colonies in the Caribbean. Every city with major West Indian

influence: Miami, London, Toronto, and New York, has a festival or carnival honoring the city's West Indian heritage.

While Carnival is typically associated with the Catholic tradition of pre-Lenten celebration, in the Anglophone West Indies, the Carnival season varies by country. Effectively Carnival season lasts all year long as different countries observe it during different times of the year. New York City's West Indian Day Parade has distinct roots in Trinidad and Tobago. In 18th century Trinidad, Carnival began as an Afro-French, pre-Lenten celebration and most activities were held on estates owned by French planters who had come to Trinidad under a policy set down by an earlier Spanish government of the island. The French influence lives on in words like *Jouvert,a contraction of 'jour' and 'ouvert', which designates* the first day of festivities. Following the emancipation of slaves in Trinidad, a new version evolved into a celebration of emancipation.

By the 1880s newly arrived migrants from nearby islands and indentured Africans joined emancipated slaves in a raucous street *bacchanalia*, which explains why Carnival is bacchanal, in Jamaica. By the close of the 19th century due to British colonial intervention, Carnival was anglicized and a new colonial British cultural layer was laid over the old Afro-French carnival to satisfy the desires of British colonel authorities and the creole middle and upper classes. By 1900, the new creole Carnival had two major ingredients: masquerade bands and calypso music. [46] Jamaica's Carnival has adopted the style of the Trinidad carnival, on a much smaller scale. It is relatively new, dating back to 1940 when Trindandian university students in Jamaica missed their cultural tradition and brought it to Jamaica.

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[46]Donald R. Hill , "A History of West Indian Carnival in New York City to 1978" (State University College, 1993), accessed March 22, 2022, http://employees.oneonta.edu/hilldr/brookc.htm.

The story of the West-Indian Day parade and its eventual move from Harlem to central Brooklyn illustrates the change in Jamaican communities in New York. In the earlier half of the 20th century, when the heart of the West Indian community resided in Harlem, small balls, parties, and the small street parade was a common way for West Indians to celebrate Jouvert, typically this occurred in December. This changed in 1947 when Jessie Wattle, an immigrant from Trinidad, got an official permit to close Lenox Avenue in Harlem for a Trinidad-style Carnival parade featuring fancy costumed mas bands.[47] Because of the harsh weather conditions of New York Winter and the unpredictability of spring weather, the celebrations were changed to the Monday of Labor Day weekend, rather than during the traditional mid-winter/ early spring season in Trinidad. The early Harlem parade was restricted; it did not represent the flamboyant culture of Carnival. Only invited guests, masquerade bands, and community organizations were allowed to march. Music was provided by conventional American-style marching bands and by Calypso bands.[48]

By the 1950s the anxieties about the violence surrounding the already restricted parade had increased due to the Civil Rights Movement. City officials felt that the passions of Black folks would be stroked if allowed to congregate in large groups.[49] During the Harlem parade in 1961, there was a fight between a spectator and a performer; the confusion that followed resulted in a broader outbreak of violence. In 1964 there was a rock-throwing incident. The incidents in

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[47]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 140.
[48]Ray Allen, “J’ouvert in Brooklyn Carnival: Revitalizing Steel Pan and Ole Mas Traditions,” Western Folklore 58, no. 3/4 (1999): 258, accessed March 17, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1500461.
[49]Allen, “J’ouvert in Brooklyn Carnival,” 258.

1961, 1964, and the white anxieties of the Civil Rights movement led to the revocation of the permits for the parade.[50]

In 1969, the parade was brought to Brooklyn. The shift from Harlem represents the shifting of the West Indian community from Harlem to Brooklyn. Once outside of Manhattan, distinct West Indian communities began to pop up. The new location for the parade was Crown Heights, the oldest West Indian enclave in New York City. Initially, the plans for the parade were met with much resistance, particularly by white community members but in 1969 permits were obtained and the parade was moved to Central Brooklyn.[51]

Phillip Kasinitz states that New York's West Indian Day Parade is now a pan-West Indian event, and has been an important factor in the "development of a pan-West Indian consciousness."[52] The annual West Indian Day carnival is largely ignored by the city's press but it is very popular amongst West Indians in the tri-state area. Many people travel to participate in the weekend festivities. On average, a little over two million people attend the West Indian Day Parade annually, making it one of the largest ethnic parades in New York City.[53] Celebrations typically begin Thursday night of Labor Day weekend and last until Monday night. Many DJs and artists travel both domestically and internationally to host events outside of the main parade. Kasinitz states, "Scheduling carnival on Labor Day had several anticipated consequences. Many new york-based band leaders and costume makers attended Carnival in Trinidad, which occurs approximately six months before, and bring back the latest songs and fashions popular. Famous

[50]Allen, "J'ouvert in Brooklyn Carnival," 258.
[51]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 141.
[52]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 134.
[53]Allen, "J'ouvert in Brooklyn Carnival," 256.

West Indian artists and entertainers frequently spend Labor Day in New York. This event generates a lot of money in the transnational Caribbean economy, Particularly for entertainers. "

As in the case of hip-hop, this bi-directional influence on Carnival reflects the larger pattern of linkage between home and host societies that is an important feature of the new transnational identity..[54] While Carnival in New York City is not exclusively a Jamaican event it is still important in understanding the Jamaicanization of New York City. Every Labor Day, whether you are in Brooklyn or not, you will hear Jamaican dancehall music blaring from speakers, Jamaican DJ's on the radio, Jamaican artists hosting nightclubs and concerts, and the smell of Jamaican Jerk chicken will flavor the streets. But these are all now synonymous with West Indian culture at large.

The West Indian Day Parade makes a bold ethnic statement; it visibly embodies the emerging pan West Indian identity now evident in New York. It draws on common elements of African Caribbean culture to form a conscious West Indian identity."[55] This is not to say that insular nationalism does not occur but in New York City, for first third-wave migrants and their descendants, the lines between nationality and ethnicity become blurred.

The cultural evolution of New York City through the third wave era is one that can not be ignored. When West Indian enclaves emerged in the 1970s due to policy changes regarding housing reform, it created the optimal climate for NYC neighborhoods to become underground sites of cultural production. Through art, Jamaicans at home and abroad have recognized the growing transnational community and increased international cultural influence. If Jamaica is the

[54]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 142.
[55]Kasinitz, Caribbean New York, 150.

soul of the transnational community then New York City is the heart. New York City is a place where the retention of cultural identity is important to the city's overall cultural identity within the United States. The city prides itself on its ethnic enclaves and all that comes with it: parades, restaurants, and street fairs. Now there is a growing group of JaMericans who have spent most if not all of their lives in New York. For them, it is much easier to retain a strong cultural identity compared to children of first and second-wave Jamaican migrants whose parents oftentimes married Americans and assimilated into American culture. [56]

3.3 Constructing Ethnicity in the Second Generation

In *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age*, Kasinitz, et al, state that compared to other immigrant groups in New York City, children of Jamaicans cited music as one of the most important parts of their culture.[57] Jamaican artistic expression is one of the most distinctive elements of its culture, and usually what is passed down to their descendants. As a JaMerican, when I was a child my family members often referred to me as a *Yankee*, meaning I was born in the United States. This is an important cultural distinction that is recognized in the Jamaican community. Those born and raised outside of the island hold different cultural features than those raised on the island.

Because Yankee is a term used to designate any American regardless of their ethnic background, I used to be offended when my family referred to me as such, although usually semi-jokingly. Yet there is still a shared recognition or shared cultural values like music, food,

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[56]Nancy Foner, "West Indian Identity in the Diaspora: Comparative and Historical Perspectives," Latin American Perspectives 25, no. 3 (May 1998): 184, accessed April 27, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2634172.
[57]Philip Kasinitz et al., Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age, First papercover edition. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009), 273.

and family structure, important features of the Jamaican transnational community that I have explored in previous sections. Jamaicans have coined the term 'JaMerican' to capture what my family meant, and it applies well to generations 1.5 and 2 in the 3rd wave.

JaMericans are an increasingly large proportion of New York, not to mention Black New York. Of the Black immigrants, Jamaican represents the highest country of origin, "Jamaica is the largest source country with about 682,000 Black immigrants born there, accounting for 18 percent of the national total."[58] Thus the Jamaicanization of New York City continues, and the ethnic group becomes apparent. Despite not sharing a country of origin, Jamaican transmigrants and JaMericans alike share an ethnic identity, and this is likely to be maintained through ethnic enclaves and transnational networks.

As a country, Jamaica acknowledges the growing transnationalism of its citizenry, and as a result, welcomes the JaMerican as one of their own and honors the citizenship of the ethnic Jamaican. Unlike the United States, Jamaica honors dual citizenship. Jamaican transmigrants may gain citizenship in the United States, but Jamaica does not require them to give up their Jamaican citizenship, meaning they enjoy full benefits of citizenship while residing in another country. In addition to this, the Jamaican government honors Jamaican citizenship by descent meaning anyone born outside of Jamaica to parents (mother or father or both) who are citizens of Jamaica at the time of birth can claim citizenship. Through formal avenues such as the state and informal conduits such as family relationships, JaMericans, and Jamaican transmigrants are

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[58]Monica Anderson, A Rising Share of the U.S. Black Population Is Foreign Born (Pew Research Center , April 9, 2015), 6, accessed April 25, 2022, https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2015/04/09/a-rising-share-of-the-u-s-black-population-is-foreign-born/.

disrupting the understanding of nationality, meaning that national allegiance is often not as important to them as it may have been for previous migrant groups. There is no longer a need to shed one in exchange for another or reject one in the protection of another. Many ethnic Jamaicans have dual national allegiances, and further national and ethnic identities are becoming increasingly compounded for their descendants in New York City. Dual citizenship, the guarantor of rights for migrants in the United States and in their home countries, reinforces the strength of deterritorialized nation-state building.[59]Dual citizenship, a viable option for Jamaicans and JaMericans, demonstrates some of the properties of transnational citizenry. The construction of ethnicity is important to Jamaican migrants, but it is also in the best interest of the Jamaican state to recognize its extended ethnic group outside of the borders of the state. Not only does this increase cultural visibility but it also ensures the flow of resources through transnational network practices such as remittances and investments. This is a strategy that has contributed to the ethnicizing of Jamaicans and lays a foundation for a deterritorialized Jamaica.[60]

As Kasinitz states, "expressions of ethnicity are grounded in objective realities such as neighborhoods, economic niches, and [cultural] institutions; group identity is created in the interplay between ethnicity from the ground up (relationships between Jamaicans) and 'ethnicity from the top down (relationships between the Jamaican state and its citizens)."[61]

Across New York City, in newly formed Jamaican enclaves, Jamaicans brought with them their cultural traditions and made new ones. On summer nights, many turned even their

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[59] Nancy Foner, ed., Islands in the City: West Indian Migration to New York (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 137–8.
[60]Foner, Islands in the City, 137-8.
[61] Foner, Islands in the City, 137-8.

own backyards into beautiful displays of their culture. This served as a respite to offset the constant emotional labor of migration and also a chance to honor their newly formed transnational community. Through music, dance, and other celebratory traditions, third-wave Jamaican migrants displayed their culture in their own enclaves, shared it with others, and passed it down to their children. This has also given rise to new cultural products (i.e. Rap) representative of the transnational experience and a new transnational identity: the JaMerican

Conclusion

In the introduction, I asserted that the flow of Jamaican migrants was not limited to the Jamaica-US relationship, but follows a larger trend of increased migration, particularly of non-white migrants. The increase in Black migration has led to the formation of various distinct Black ethnic groups that were not in the United States prior to the passage of The Hart-Celler Act (1965). I have employed the wave model by Philipp Kasinitz, to describe Jamaican migration patterns. According to Kasinitz, the third wave began in 1965 and the primary reason for this is a change in macrostructures: the Hart-Celler Act (1965) and Jamaican independence in 1962. Third-wave migration is part of a larger trend: the 2nd great migration result of shifting macrostructures globally. The second great migration refers to the overall increased migration of Black migrants to urban centers in the United States. This has mirrored the social and political causes and effects of the Great Migration; Orly Clerge states:

> Although the Great Migration from the US South, the mass migration of Black people from postcolonial Jamaica…are usually seen as separate movements, they had similar world-historical causes; each exodus flowed through and enlarged small tears in the fabric of global White domination over the "darker races." This crisis was the result of the weakening of European and American colonial legitimacy by two world wars and multiple, yet simultaneous, political mobilizations from below to overturn centuries of racial and economic oppression. Together, these Black migrants have followed the footprints of generations before them and forged diasporic communities in cities never created with them in mind, and hostile to their progress..[62]

The mass migration of Jamaicans is not unique to Jamaicans but evidence of the end of the colonial regime which they fought against, and a postcolonial world that the members across the Black diaspora have had to reckon with. Shifting global structures led to the forging of a new path by pioneer migrants and rise to the Jamaicanization of an already Black metropolis.

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[62] Clerge, The New Noir, 238.

In the preceding chapters, I have examined that (A) Jamaican women possess the skills to be nuclei for transnational communities in NYC; this is largely due to the kinship structures of Jamaican societies on the island that migrants have brought with them to the United States, (B) "The creation of West Indian transnational communities, as glocal spaces whose culture economy and politics are deeply tied to both New York and to trans-geographical home [Jamaica]," [63](C) the creation of ethnic identity and its cultural products unique to the Jamaican N.Y. transmigrant experience.

In an increasingly globalized world, the wave model as an analytical tool may no longer be useful. The robust transnational communities that third-wave Jamaican migrants have created, allow for a constant stream of migrants to be flowing into NYC. Migration theorists have asserted that migration is a self-perpetuating process. In this project, I have explored the mesostructure: what motivates people and social groups to migrate, how they perceive the world, and how they shape their identity during the migration process. Mesostructure theories explain how migrants' agency can create social structures, such as social networks, which can make migratory processes partly self-perpetuating.[64] Third-wave migrants have created a durable network that extends beyond national borders. Through this network of migrants, former migrants, and nonmigrant ethnic Jamaicans, in both Jamaica and New York, Jamaicans are increasingly sharing the risk of migration and settlement.[65] [66] Through my discussions with my

[63] Clerge, The New Noir, 236.
[64] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 37.
[65] Migration refers to the life-long process of movement.
[66] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 45.

six interlocutors, I have uncovered the role of migrants' agency in creating mesostructure social, cultural, and economic structures which tend to make migration processes self-sustaining.[67]

The creation of worldwide communication networks through technologies like cell phones, television, and computers have allowed for third-wave migrations to change the assimilatory patterns normal to earlier migrant groups. Instead of shedding cultural ties to their native countries, third-wave migrants and JaMericans have retained their cultural identity. Migration and settlement are long-drawn-out processes that will be played out for the rest of the migrants to apply and affect subsequent generations too.[68] Unlike previous cohorts of migrants, third-wave Jamaican migrants have abandoned the sojourner mentality and have carved a space for themselves in the city's cultural geography. The creation of worldwide communication networks through technologies like cell phones, television, and computers have allowed for third-wave migrations to change the assimilatory patterns normal to earlier migrant groups. Instead of shedding cultural ties to their native countries, third wave migrants and their descendants have retained their cultural identity. Kasinitz states that with today's ease of communication and transportation, migrants and their children are not really immigrants in the traditional sense. Rather they are transnationals or transmigrants living in social worlds that cross national borders. This is particularly appealing to non-white immigrants who do not want to give up ties to the community where one was part of the ethnic majority.[69]

Transnational kinship networks remain an important aspect of transnational Jamaican enclaves. It is in these kinship networks, typically headed by women, that a micro-economy is

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[67] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 45.
[68] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 45.
[69] Kasinitz et al., Inheriting the City, 257.

created. Remittances make up a significant portion of Jamaica's GDP, but money, goods, services, and knowledge that is transmitted in informal networks such as barrels, ROSCA's, and frequent contact through social media and ease of air travel, are critical ways that Jamaican migrants care for their social circles in Jamaica and fund migration to New York. Kinship networks not only help generate financial capital through money sharing but also social capital necessary for migration.[70] Social remittances: "the flow of ideas, behavioral repertoires, and social capital, from [the U.S] to [Jamaica] is instrumental in facilitating migration by increasing people's migratory capabilities and changing people's cultural repertoire."[71] Social remittances foster a culture of migration that is seen as indicative of success.[72] This is true for the Jamaican transnational community.

Through cultural production methods that extended beyond the physical boundaries of either Jamaica or New York, Jamaican transmigrants have created an ethnic identity to be passed down to their children. Third-wave migrants have rejected many assimilatory patterns common to earlier migrants partially because their racial identity prevents them from full assimilation but also because they have chosen to be spatially concentrated within specific neighborhoods, and also because they have adopted specific ethnic identities that differentiate them within Black America.

In *Islands in the City*, Karen Fog Olwig talks about an emerging scholarly question of whether segmented assimilation occurs so that certain immigrants become integrated into separate subcultures rather than into mainstream American society. In an article on

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[70]Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 41.
[71] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 41.
[72]Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 41.

second-generation West Indian and Haitian Americans in New York City, American sociologist, Mary Waters asks whether the "process of immigration and assimilation for nonwhite immigrants resembles that of earlier white immigrants or do these immigrants and their children face very different choices and constraints because they are defined racially by other by Americans?"[73] Based on my investigation of the mesostructure, Jamaicans have taken up segmented assimilation or acculturation meaning that instead of completely assimilating into either white or Black America they have assimilated into Jamaican-America or West Indian-America that intersects and diverges with Black America at varying degrees. The result of the networks created by third wave migrants is that "the present-day [ethnic Jamaican] population of New York is integrated into a transnational sociocultural system according which means that the model of immigrant/ ethnic incorporation into a culturally pluralistic American society is not the destiny of the migrant [Jamaican].[74]

On my most recent visit home, as my mother took my cousin from Jamaica – who has been temporarily staying with us these past few months – and I went dress shopping for my upcoming graduation, we drove by the first house in which she lived in New York City. She looked at the house and remarked on all of the people– some whom I did not know, some whom I knew– who lived in that house. This was the first house that Daisy Jensen bought with her husband. As my writing for my senior project comes to a close, I am repeatedly drawn to Daisy Jensen's comment, responding to my questions about her relationship with my grandfather, Byron Edwards, that she and her husband were a conduit for many others. This was where my grandfather 'couch surged' when he arrived in 1986, four years before my mother, and before he

[73] Foner, Islands in the City, 137.
[74] Foner, Islands in the City, 144.

moved into the basement and into their basement and eventually bought his own home. As Daisy told the story, it was just a small ‘micro’ tale of personal connection, that opened up a window on the creation of the mesostructure:

> **Daisy Jensen:** He used to work with my husband at home [Jamaica]. So when he wanted to come up here, he actually stayed with us when he first came up here and your grandmother too. We were living in Queens Village at the time, and he said he wanted to come. And I said then he said he could stay with us. So he came and he sent for her[my grandmother]. So they both stayed with us in Queens Village when they first came up here….When the girls came up and your mom and [aunt] we told him that you could stay at the house in Hollis, you know because he needed more space…Yeah, but he stayed with us. We have been a conduit for people, you know…

Daisy has perfectly illustrated what the mesostructure is all about: relationships. I have examined the ways that Jamaican transmigrants have formed relationships to help migrants mitigate the lifelong process of migration. Migration is a self-perpetuated process made of individuals making micro-decisions in relation to one another that enables the construction of the mesostructure and by extension a broader transnational community. Jamaican migrants have shared resources: human capital, social capital, and financial capital to help alleviate the risk for themselves, their families, and the broader transnational network. In an increasingly globalized world, in which there has been a widening, deepening, and an acceleration of global interconnectedness in all aspects of life, Jamaican transmigrants have created a network that transcends space; this network, the mesostructure, reveals a lot, although not all, about migration as a process.[75] Migration is rarely a simple individual action, instead, it is a collectively achieved process that migrants and their descendants do through extensive networks existing in, between, and outside of national borders.

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[75] Castles, Haas, and Miller, The Age of Migration, 33.

Afterword

In so many ways this senior project has been an examination of my identity, my relationship with my community, and those who construct it. My family was one of the first West Indian families to move on my block and have lived there longer than any other family second to my 90-year-old neighbor. In some ways, they belong to a cohort of pioneer architects of this contiguous West Indian Enclave in southeastern Queens. I have titled this project in the words of my grandfather which he mentioned in our interview, *Tek dem han an tun fashion*, which translates to take their hand and make a fashion. Essentially this means to make something beautiful out of what you already have. I think that my interlocutors have all shown the ways that they have constructed a life for themselves, a network, and a rich subculture in New York City, but have not lost connection to Jamaica. They live in a world where they simply do not have to forgo allegiance to Jamaica in order to affirm allegiance to New York and most importantly, they do not want to.

Originally this project was intended to be an oral history but has evolved into much more and less than an oral history. Despite my personal affinity to the project I tried to decenter my voice and center the voices of the migrants. In the preceding chapters, I minimally manipulated the dialogue between myself and my interlocutors but in writing, I had to condense our dialogue to clearly illuminate my arguments and for my information to remain digestible, to you, my reader. I have included the full transcripts in the following appendices because I think it is important to consume the words of the migrants and their stories in their own words. The transcripts are full of rich history and recounting of a Jamaica and a New York City (1969-2000)

that I have not experienced but have attempted to show. The Appendices are transcripts of my conversations with Byron, Daisy, Princess, and Paulet.

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Appendix A (Daisy)

Daisy Jensen: I call here home because I've been here for a good close to 50 years, actually. Yeah, I came here in nineteen sixty-nine.

Brenique Bogle: Oh, so you came here before my grandparents?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah, actually, we helped your grandfather to come here. Oh, really? Yeah, my husband did.

Brenique Bogle: So you came here with Mr. Jensen?

Daisy Jensen: No, no, no. I met him here.

Brenique Bogle: Oh, you did?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah. I came here because I was in. I came here because I was in a failed relationship and I got upset. My sister was already here, my older sister was already here. So she asked me if I wanted to come and I said Yes. So I came.

Brenique Bogle: So you came with your sister?

Daisy Jensen: No, I didn't come with her. I came because she was here, but I stayed three months with her because I couldn't deal with her, really. She lives in Boston and I came to New York, so on my own.

Brenique Bogle: So when you first left Jamaica, you went to...?

Daisy Jensen: To Boston for three months. Yes. And then because my sister was here, because being a nurse, I worked with—my sister took all my money. So she always had a need for some more. So I just decided one day on my way here from Jamaica on the plane. I had seen a hospital advertised for nurses, so I called and they said, Come in. I said I have no place to stay. They said It's OK. We have housing for the nurses. So I came to New York after three months in Boston and I never went back. I mean, I've been back to Boston, but not to live.

Brenique Bogle: So when you came to New York, where did you go, to Queens?

Daisy Jensen: No, I actually was in and I first came, I was in. Let me see. Yeah, I was in Queens first because, no, I was in Manhattan. I lived in Aldeman Building that's in Manhattan. And then after that, I went to Queens and not Queens, Brooklyn, Brooklyn, first, 1st street, Brooklyn. And then we bought the first... we bought the house in Queens, and that's when I moved to Queens...after that, by this time, I was married. You know so.

Brenique Bogle: Wow. And so who was back in Jamaica when you left?

Daisy Jensen: My parents were still there, and one sister, one sister, has already migrated to England with her husband and one, and my older sister was here. So I had one sister and one brother was a track star, an Olympian. So I came to New York, you know, so I could help. He was at the University of El Paso. You must have heard or you or you might not have heard of him, but he's an Olympian. So I was here to kind of help him out because where he was when he was at Excelsior School in Jamaica and when he went to meetings across the world. He was running up some telephone bills, and my father decided he wasn't going to pay so I used to pay those bills for him, so I came up here so I could help him out.

Brenique Bogle: So you worked before you came here, you had a career?

Daisy Jensen: I'm a nurse. Yeah, I graduated from the University of West Indies and I was working.

Brenique Bogle: What made you want to be a nurse?

Daisy Jensen: Actually, when I was nine years old, I was a patient. I had a skin graft and I like the nurses and I decided to be a nurse. I wanted to be a pediatrician, pediatrician, really. But I was very weak in chemistry, and I don't like to fail. So I decided to do nursing. I don't like to fail. And whenever I do, I must do it. So I did nursing.

Brenique Bogle: Ok, so tell me about your experience, like when you first came here. Was it scary?

Daisy Jensen: I wasn't scared. I was lonesome, really, because I think times have changed since I came to America and when you could move freely, I used to take the bus so, you know, to work and I didn't have a problem with that. But times have changed. I lived in.., I lived in The Alderman Building in New York, in Manhattan. They used to call him the bridge apartment, and I was on the high floor, I was on the 31st floor. So that was scary, but it was nice because every night you could hear the ambulances, you heard the fire department, you heard the police cars, everything was going to was crazy night at night. Noisy. But I wasn't scared. I was, you know, moved around freely. But the times have changed and it started to change because I used to take the subway to work and take the bus to work. But then, like I said, times have changed. It's different now. When I first came, it wasn't like that, you know? We might not have thought about it, but my you know, the prejudice was there, But we know because being from Jamaica, you know, I never watch those things because if you mess with me, I going mess back With you.

Brenique Bogle: Right, yeah were there a lot of West Indians or Jamaicans?

Daisy Jensen: Actually when I came, I worked where I worked. I had. There were two nurses, I think, from Trinidad. I never worked with a lot of Jamaicans. It was mostly from Trinidad and other, you know, islands. But eventually we, you know, we got, you know, I to it. But I still never really mixed with a lot of Jamaicans because they were never like in the field, you know, so I never, you know, and I kind of stayed with the people in my field and not to, you know, launch out to anything else. So.

Brenique Bogle: So when you came in, came first to Boston, then to Manhattan. So those are like big cities. Where are you from in Jamaica, like ah, Kingston? So you are used to city life?

Daisy Jensen: Oh yeah. I'm used to city life, actually when I graduated from high school, they needed a teacher in St. Elizabeth and my mom is from St. Elizabeth and—but they didn't know that, but they and I was young, 18 years old going on 19. But so I have no teaching experience, but they needed a teacher. So they came to get me and I did it for three months, but I never liked the country life.

Brenique Bogle: Did you like teaching?

Daisy Jensen: It was fine because I had, you know, seven and eight year olds and it was fun.The only thing is on Monday mornings I had a table for a desk and I had no place to put anything because they'll bring me all breadfruit. They bought me everything, every Monday morning, but it was fun. But I was lonesome, really, because the country life was not for me because the first time they showed me around the teacher's cottage and I'm looking at when the girl was working in the teacher's cottage she said, showed me the bathroom and I looked in the bathroom and I almost had a stroke.

Brenique Bogle: Why?

Daisy Jensen: There was nothing in the bathroom but a big wash pan. I didn't see no toilet. I didn't see no shower. So then, she said. She said she called. She called me by name, and she said, Don't worry, I'll set your bath for you. And of course, I had a slop pail in my room to go to the bathroom at nights and then to do number two it was an outside bathroom toilet. And I, you know, I'm deathly afraid of lizards. So the first time I went and I saw a big old lizard, I never went back there.

Brenique Bogle: Really, so what did you do?

Daisy Jensen: I would go to somebody's house in the daytime and try to train myself to go to somebody's house. Not one of the teachers. She said I could use her bathroom, so I use her bathroom. And then on weekends, I go back home to Kingston.

Brenique Bogle: By car?

Daisy Jensen: Or bus or anything, you know? Yeah. But, I never liked the country life because it was different...It was different. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle: You were born and raised in Kingston?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah.

Brenique Bogle: And your parents are from Kingston, too?

Daisy Jensen: My mother was from Saint Elizabeth, but she went to Kingston when she was 18 years old. So my father is from West Moreland, but he went to Kingston when he was 18 years old also and they never looked back. So we didn't know anything about it and till this day I don't know where my dad is from. I know he's from [incoherent Westmoreland, but I had never been there.

Brenique Bogle: Have you ever been to St. Elizabeth?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah, when I was teaching in St. Elizabeth. Yeah, and I've never been to— my mother's from Guidee Hall, but I'd never been to exactly where she lived in St. Elizabeth when she was a girl. But I was teaching and get [unintelligible]. But my grandmother used to come to the teacher's cottage. I didn't go, yeah, because she said it was too much terrain for me to, and she didn't want me to go through that because I'm not used to that.

Brenique Bogle: So how was growing up in Kingston like your family life?

Daisy Jensen: It was fun, you know, we, you know, we never had we didn't have a lot of friends. We...It was six of us. We had enough friends there. But you know what it was good? We went to school. My brother did, like I say, he was in, you know, and he went to the football games and all of that but we never really had a lot of friends, friends, friends. It's not like up here. We went to school, we went home.

Brenique Bogle: And so did your parents ever come?

Daisy Jensen: Well, yeah, my mom, both parents came here, they both died here, but they're in Boston. They were staying with my sister in Boston and actually my father died in New York... In Boston, but he was, they both stayed with me. But we lived in Queens Village at the time and they were here. My mom never knew this house. Yes she did. She came here, she knew this house but my dad didn't. He died when we were in Queens Village.

Brenique Bogle: So when you moved here, did you get to travel back and forth to Jamaica and the states or did you just settle here?

Daisy Jensen: No, no. We've been back and forth to Jamaica, but not... You know, for vacation, for weddings, for funerals, all of that. But we didn't spend a lot of time there. We just... Longest I've spent there since coming to America was two weeks, you know? Yeah, because my parents were here already and we were not close to family to stay with them. We never – growing up, we never stayed with family. We – they came, but we didn't go. My mother was stush. She didn't like this, you know? So yeah, they came. They could come and stay, but we didn't go.

Brenique Bogle: Do you ever miss it? Do you ever miss Kingston?

Daisy Jensen: Actually, yes and no, because I like gardening and my father was a horticulturist. So we had nurseries. We bought and sold flowers, and we did that thing. So I missed that because I can't do it all year long. The weather is different, you know, but I miss that. But otherwise, you know, there are certain things. Like home, now, right now I'm looking for somebody to clean the house for me because I can't manage anymore. But home, it was different. You know, we had somebody to do that to do the laundry. But here I can't find anybody. Everybody wants your paycheck. The whole thing, or they don't want to do it, you know so. But it was different. You know, that is the difference here. Finding somebody that you, you know, you're comfortable with and trusting in your house. You know but otherwise... you know I don't miss home that much. Just the weather, just the weather.

Brenique Bogle: When you first came here, did you feel like there were any cultural differences, did you feel like you were a foreigner?

Daisy Jensen: You know... think ....I know, you know, my sister and I talk about that all the time because, because of how we grew up, we never really felt like an outsider. I didn't like some of the real American people, something—because I didn't like the way they spoke for one and their grammar is poor so I did not like that. And then but otherwise, no, because they're people and I...We are the same, you know, and we never noticed the differences. They said there were subtle differences of the prejudices. And so. But I know I got it. I'm I've. I had that once when I Was, I used to work at one of the hospitals and a patient didn't want to take I. I happened to be doing medication one day and she didn't want to take the medication for me. She was a white woman and she said something, and then she didn't want me in the room because what I did, the doctor ordered. It wasn't really because I was, you know, but she did mention that during the course of the conversation. I was doing medication because we didn't have the medication nurse and. She did the order—the doctor wrote that she supposed to get 1 milligrams and he put two tablets. But the medication came in 1 milligram tablets. He didn't want it to have 2 milligrams, he wanted her to have 1 milligrams. I'm just giving you a number, but he put two tablets in parentheses. And so I was giving medication that day and I guess I was young and little then, she thought, And she, she said the other nurses gave her two tablets. And I said, But it's wrong. It's wrong because the doctor says 1 milligrams. But in parentheses, he put two tablets, but the tablets, the medication came in 1 milligram tablets. So she said something about "that's why I don't something about Black people", and I was upset about that. So I went and I told, I call the administrator and he came and he said to her, look out there you have a lot of Black nurses. And then when they look at the order, the doctor was reprimanded because he was wrong. The other nurses who were giving her the medication was wrong. Because I was giving the right medication because he put two tablets, but the medication came in 1 milligram tablets and he wanted her to have 1 milligrams… That was the first time I experienced anything like that, yeah. You know, so and then I started being more careful and more aware of their behaviors. But until then, I never really made a thing of it. It never bothered me because I don't mix a lot. I go to work and do my work. I go home right, I go shopping, I pick up what I want and I go home.

Brenique Bogle: Right

Daisy Jensen: Because like Jamaica, and not like up here, we never had a lot of friends. We are six of us. We didn't need friends…You know, so you know, so [it] never bothered me that—but when she said that I was upset about that because I wasn't wrong, I was giving her the right medication,

Brenique Bogle: Mm hmm. Yeah. So you said you came here in what year?

Daisy Jensen:I came here in sixty...sixty... let me see. I graduated in sixty-seven... sixty nine.
Brenique Bogle: What kind of nursing did you do?
Daisy Jensen: General. Just to let everybody just—when I came to America, I didn't like [how they] behave because a lot of them don't know anything, really. No, they they, you know, because we did nursing, but we had to know we had to—we were going along with, especially on Saturday mornings, if you have when you're on the wards and you're doing grand rounds, you better know what the medical students and residents know because if they call on you first, if a patient came in last night, by the time we making grand rounds on a Saturday morning, if you're there, you have to know everything about that patient treatment, everything. So if you don't know they shame you.
Brenique Bogle: And then how long were you a nurse?
Daisy Jensen: No, no, no, I did nursing, I just retired in like 10 years ago. This – this December will be 10 years, actually, so it's nine years….I did administrative end of it in America, mostly, yeah. I didn't do physical nursing nursing, you know? Yeah.
Brenique Bogle: Um. Did you feel like? Your relationship with your family or friends, did you feel like it changed once you were here and they were still there?
Daisy Jensen: No, no, no, not really. No, because. In fact, when I first came here, even my parents were still home and sometimes my father would say to me, I must go to bed or so because I would call him a lot, you know? And one one morning, I actually called him and said to him, I didn't feel like going to work that morning, so I was calling from my morning coffee. And he laughed, You know, because this is what I used to call my parents a lot, you know? And then my father once said to me, it's costing you to call so called collect, and I said, No, I'll I'll I'll pay for it, you know? So I used to call him a lot.
Brenique Bogle: You miss them?
Daisy Jensen: I did. I did miss my parents, especially my dad. We were tight.
Brenique Bogle: You and your dad?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah, because like I said, I love flowers and I tell you, one time he left me. I was nine and he left me in the nursery because he had to go someplace and he left me. And there was a man who was supposed to come for a delivery plants, and my father told me how much he should give me, you know, and everything like that. And when he put all the plants on it, you know, they cut the sealings, put them on his thing, and then he told me how much he had put on there and I told him, No. I told him what my father told me, and he said, no, it's so I said, Well, put that back. And when my father comes, you could come back. And he looked at me and then he gave me what it was he was supposed to give me, right? Then he asked my father when he saw him, where he got me from. I, my father said that's why I left her there, because I know you couldn't rob her.I was nine years old,

Brenique Bogle: Right, that's amazing. You know,You were smart, you were quick.

Daisy Jensen: Yeah. You know, for the most part, I knew one sister, my older sister, who wasn't that, you know, you wouldn't do it couldn't be. You couldn't wrap us around on your finger. No.

Brenique Bogle: Was life in the United States what you expected it to be?

Daisy Jensen: I had no preconception of what America was going to be. I hadn't, you know, I just, because my sister say, come because I was having a problem, you know, and I was miserable, really, and my sister said, Why don't you come and stay with me? And I said, OK? But to be honest, some of the things I saw here, I was surprised because so called, you know, the nursing sometimes that I saw here was so different because people didn't seem to care. You know, did you know and that was a big, big difference for me? You know? And I remember being in Boston and before I came to New York and I went to this, my sister's friend, her brother was a doctor, he had a clinic and she said, Why don't you go there? Because I didn't want to work in Boston. Why don't you go there and see what the clinic is like? And I said, OK. And I went and. He was making rounds that morning, and he said to me, I made him, I am making his medical students and his residents look stupid, and I say why? Because that was answering questions they couldn't answer.And and you say you sure you did nursing, and I say, yes, I'm just a registered nurse. Nothing more. But then I realized that when I first came, because I questioned doctors all the time here and I was working because I noticed that they go to school and they learn and they get a degree and so but the in-depth thing about patients, nursing and care, they don't know. So when I came, I fought a lot with people. And they – one person say you're not easy, you know, because you're quiet, but you're not easy. You know, my patients come first. I'll fight for them. You know, if the doctors – one doctor in my most recent job, he wrote an order for a patient and I called him. And I say this is that that order you wrote for the particular

situation won't cut it. He said, Did you go to medical school with me? I said no, but it still won't cut it. I need a better order. So he told me, he said write whatever order you take A telephone order to write whatever order you want to. And I'll cosign it when I come. And so I did.Well it was supposed to be for a wound. And when the wound care doctor came two days later, the assistant director told him, he said but the order that Daisy wrote, is the right order. So she told him she told him what and he said you were right. I didn't go to medical school, with him but he was wrong.You know, because I – my patients came first. Yeah. Um. But, you know, what can I tell you? But nursing up here is so... Because the nurses they go there and they fancy and all of this, but in depth, some of them, not [at] all. There are some very good nurses in America, but some of them are not. They're just there for the flare, but not for the, you know, the real business of nursing. You know?

Brenique Bogle: Were you passionate about it?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah. And I knew how to do right by my patients. Don't just put an order there and go about your business. That's why the doctor and I had a fuss and he told me that all they put in won't cut it. And he said after I didn't go to medical school, I said, I don't care. And he told me, Whatever you want to put it, put it, and then I could sign it. It so happened that he was wrong for it. I had the right answer. But because see, we had to be on on weekends when we did grand rounds, like I said, we had to answer just like the medical students or the residents. If they asked us, we had to know the answer. If the patient came in last night, by the time we did grand rounds you better know about that patient and what the treatment should be and stuff like that. And so in essence, if I wanted to, the only reason I didn't do medicine, really, I was weak in chemistry and I didn't want to make a fool of myself. So I stick – stuck with nursing.

Yeah, that's the only reason I didn't go, and I wanted to be a pediatrician, but I stuck with nursing because I was weak in chemistry. I didn't, I didn't fail it, but it was too close to failing. You know, so I didn't bother.

Brenique Bogle: Did you feel like when you were coming here, did you feel like you had to sacrifice anything in order to come here?

Daisy Jensen: No, not really. You know, I actually when my sister was here, I was glad to come anyway because my sister was here and she was alone in New York. So that was.. and the six of us, we always were together. So at least I was here for her if she needed anything or I needed anything, she would be there for him. So four of us left home. But no, my sister, my sister, was in England. She was in England with her husband. So the rest of the three boys were there. I was still in school and Trevor was still in school. My other sister was working. Yeah, but one brother is still home. He comes up and down, been back and forth, but he still he doesn't like the cold. ferent here in a lot of ways, But like I was talking to somebody down there, but you home yYeah. So he'll come, you know, but yeah.
Brenique Bogle: I noticed you said home when you're referring to Jamaica you say home.
Daisy Jensen: Yeah, it was home. Yeah, I was— it's difficult. It was warm all the time. You had helpers. You had people coming. You know, I do my own gardening, although sometimes people come and say, let them help me tidy. I love to do it myself, you know? You know, but it was still home. I was born there and I went to school there. You know, I don't know if I would go there because the last time we went home, actually, maybe five or six years ago, we went home for vacation and we still say Jamaica is home. But we went to Jamaica for vacation and I was sitting in the car waiting for my husband. He went in to get something and I was in and then the taxi driver, because he was we had a taxi driver, you know, and when he saw he was looking because he was like standing in the door, standing, looking for and looking, you know, both ways because I guess Jamaica has changed so much, and all of a sudden he sprinted and came to the car and said, Mrs. Jensen, come, come inside with us. And I didn't think about it until after we got here. You say he saw the man and he saw his behavior. He was about to rob me. So this is what he said. I didn't even think about it. So since I don't, I don't want to go there. Hmm. You know, unless we, you know, because I'm afraid, you know, because it's not that you can't leave a door open anymore. You know, when I used to be home, I couldn't leave my bedroom door open, my dog was sleeping right here. And nobody could go in there, not even my dad. But at the same time. You could just leave the door open. You know, Winton used to be sitting there. He would tear em up. Oh yeah. Nobody could—but if I was sleeping and he was there and my door was open, he would stay right there until I got up. He would come to wake me up in the mornings too. He did. One morning I was pretending that I was sleeping and he came and he nudged me with his nose, his cold nose and he nudged me, and I didn't move and I was laying there and he jumped on the bed and started pushing me the other way. And then I did so, and then he jumped on and he started, you know, because he was waking me up and I didn't move. And he was. But I

don't like dogs in the house, so I don't have dogs up here. You know dogs don't stay in the house in Jamaica.Yeah. Oh yeah, it's different. I like dogs, but I don't, you know, I don't... they would have to stay in the house and in the wintertime it's hard. And then most times in Jamaica, we head back porches so they could stay in the back porch if it's raining. So here there's no back porch. Most of the time, you know, you know, it's still a part of the house, but it's enclosed, you know, but here it's a different story. It's a deck or it's a patio, but it's not part of, you know, so I don't know. And it's warm in the wintertime. It's cold, you can't leave them out here. Oi! But it's life. Yeah, I still refer to Jamaica as home because it's still home. I was born there, I went to school there, I did courses up here, but I went to school there. I mainly, you know, so when parents died and they were buried up here we didn't take them home. You know.

Brenique Bogle: So was it what was the first time you ever came to the states?

Daisy Jensen: In nineteen sixty nine, I came here in sixty - nine.

Brenique Bogle: And that was the first time you had ever been here when you moved here... and your sister was here?

Daisy Jensen: My sister was here before, yeah.

Brenique Bogle: So when did you meet Mr. Jensen?

Daisy Jensen: I came here in March of sixty-nine, I met him in October sixty-nine. And, um, we got married… I met him in October in sixty-nine and we got married in seventy-two. In seventy-two.

Brenique Bogle: Did your family come up for the wedding?

Daisy Jensen: My sisters were here. Two of my sisters were here. My mother didn't. My mother was really upset about it, really.She didn't like him. So she was upset. She would not come. She. She said she thought... Because she had met him— actually what happened, he had gone home and I had given him stuff to bring home for her, for them and it…She gave him stuff to give me, you know? And he wanted to pay her, and she was very insulted. That he wanted to pay for this stuff, she was giving to send for me.. to bring it for me. And she said that... It just didn't sit well with her. It didn't sit well with her at all. But she came up and she got to like him after we got married.You know, but at that time, it didn't sit well with her at all. She said she sent it to me, he had no right to offer her money.

Brenique Bogle: But you guys created a very beautiful life together.

Daisy Jensen: Yes, we did. We did. You know, sometimes even my second one, he he works hard and the second one, sometimes he didn't know if daddy came home because he would come home late and leave early. But it's because we had businesses in Manhattan and he would come

home late and go and, you know, but, yea well we did. And it is, you know. Good, dear. Mm-hmm. And they have a good life, and they're both all three of them. You know, thank God. Knock on wood. Never had problems with them any way, shape or form. I never had to go to school. Of course I went to school, but not because not because they were in trouble at school, but because I was angry. I'm bad. My my, um, my middle one, Davis. He had a paper and he asked me to read the paper and I read the paper and I said. Um, no, and, you know, because it was filthy, you know, you had so many scratching of the anything, and I say your teacher gave you extra credit for this because she gave him credit. A hundred percent, plus 1 percent for extra credit. And so she gave you credit for this. And you said, yes, mommy, because and I got so angry and I said, but it was it wasn't because, you know, he was still in grade school, you know? And I said, But this is not right. We could never present this to our teacher home and, you know. So I went to school the next day,and she said, Mrs. Jensen, at least he had the idea. And I said I didn't send him here to get the idea.I send him here because I want him to learn. But how could you? She said, I said, No, no, that doesn't sit well with me. You know, so there were, you know, another time. So I did. Oh, I'm a mean mother because I, when he wrote his his thing for college and he asked me to read it. I know read it. And I said, OK. And I took pencil and paper. And I wrote something. I said, No. Compare them. And he said, Mommy, yours is better. So what did I do? [tearing motion] Both of them! Both of them! I say now go write for college. You're not going to high school. You're going to college.
Brenique Bogle: And it was better?
Daisy Jensen: Of course it was. Of course it was better. Because we couldn't... We couldn't. Don't present – you can't present that, you're representing us. You don't, can't, no no no. You know, my middle, my middle one.Yeah. The parents were strict!. Yeah. So. Somebody say, "you ripped it up", and say I sure ripped it up, both of them. Because they did. They're not stupid. And it was nasty, you know, you the paper and you scratch things out and they give you a hundred plus. No! I went to the school in the morning and I told her and she said, but I said, No, no, no, no, don't make a buffoon out to my child. Mm hmm. You know, I'm a messy Jamaican right? Don't make a buffoon out of my child. And I say you're going to college, you're not going to do primary school or high school you're going to college.
Brenique Bogle: Yeah. Did you feel that it was... Or did you feel that it was different raising your kids without your – Where are your parents here when you were raising your kids?

Daisy Jensen: My mother came up. Yes, she came up when I had the first one and we were in Queens Village at the time and she was living with me. And yes, she. But my father had gotten, you know, he was not well, but my mother was well, you know, so she was here with me, you know? Yeah, it was good that she was here because I wanted them to be part of her life and she knew all of them and she knew their ins and outs there. But my father was he had gotten a little bit, you know, he was senile, he got senile. But then too, we had a problem because he had a problem. When we were home, he had a very bad car accident and we didn't know. And his head went through the windshield and then we didn't know. But he always had a headache. But they did. But what happened? Eventually they did. They did a cat scan of the brain when he was living in Boston with my sister, and I realized that at the time. The piece of the windshield I tear, it went in through his skull and it closed up, so there was a piece of glass in your early years. He was having this headache. They never did any cat scan or anything, just, you know, to see what. And when I did that, they found that also they took it out. But by this time it was this it started filling up with, you know, liquid all the time. You never survive long after that, you know? Yeah, but it was years it was there, you know? He also complained about his headaches just before the car accident. But my mom was here, which was, yeah, she would like to get me to take care of the kids.

Brenique Bogle: Hmm. Did you ever bring your kids to Jamaica?

Daisy Jensen: Yeah. No, because they were here and like I said, we didn't go back and forth. They have been to Jamaica, right? But not because I, you know, been when they got older, they did go on vacation. Davis just came back with his wife and children. He just not my oh yeah. My youngest has never been to Jamaica. He lives in Canada. But he has never been to Jamaica. But the older two have been there, to Jamaica.

Brenique Bogle: Did you feel that? When you first came here or just throughout your time being here, did you feel that their stereotypes about Jamaicans or women?

Daisy Jensen: Yes, they are there, because they have this idea that the people have asked me in the past if I'm sure I was from Jamaica. Because I don't sound like a Jamaican, and I say I don't know what the Jamaican sounds like because I have been like this all my life and this is the way we all are. You know, so they say, yeah, but. To be honest, when I was a student nurse, I give you an example. A student nurse and a woman came to visit. She came to the ward and she and I went to her and I said, May I help you? And she looked at me like I was coming from the moon. And I asked her and I said, May I help you? And she. And then one of my classmates, he said he heard me after the third or fourth time. And she said, Let me, let me show you. She said, who you want to see? And she said she's like, she say brother, Tom. And I'm perplexed now because you have no brother, Tom, you know? But I guess he was the pastor, and that's what they used to call him, so my batch mate, you know, took her to the person she wanted to see. And then she said, you know, you have to learn to talk to these people. And I said, I don't know differently. I can't speak the way they speak because I never grew up that way. Mm. Yeah, it's a big deal. So I find in Jamaica, I had problems even with Jamaicans. In Jamaica, an up here was... You know, because we couldn't speak poorly. My mom would say I didn't send you to school for that. Yes, ma'am. Oh, yes. We don't don't even know if we saw, if we were outside and we heard somebody said something. Honestly, sometimes I didn't even know what it meant. And we were going on, mimicking them and she said she didn't send us to school for that. You know so, my aunt, my father's sister, was the headmistress of [unintelligible] school. And she also said she loved to come to our house. Because she said she just loved the way we spoke. We couldn't speak badly in the house. Not even to mimic anybody else. Right. My mom would be so upset with us. So. Other people actually lots of time, if I am from Jamaica and I say yeah. You know.

Brenique Bogle:And are you proud of that?

Daisy Jensen I am proud of. You know, and I'm glad I went to school in Jamaica, too. The schooling up here is so different. I know you don't know different.

Brenique Bogle: Yeah, I don't.

Daisy Jensen: You don't know different, but. You know, spelling, correct spelling, correct grammar, for my kids. I know they thought I was a mean mother, but I didn't care. Don't make an idiot out of my kids. You know. So much so that one of my my oldest, Kyle's math teacher, anywhere he see me he call out to me now, he was Italian, you know, because, I say don't make it. It's not going to happen. Don't give them a mark that they don't deserve. If I read the paper or I do the thing, and it's not right and I give it, don't give them because you might like them, don't, they don't deserve that. Be fair to them, because they won't learn that way. Always believe that they're supposed to get high marks when they don't deserve it. Two things I do grammar, neatness, and, you know, and and it has to make sense. I was a bad mother.No, they appreciate it, because they talk about it all the time and said, Mommy, you didn't joke. I said No. In fact, I told you when my son, I told you—I ripped it up when he wrote.—I said, your one is messy. I need to. And I just say now read what I wrote and read what you and somebody say really ripped up, I said. I ripped them both up. And say you're going to college now go write the essay for college. You know what? He got a full scholarship to college. Well, I don't joke. We never smack them, but you have to do it right.

Brenique Bogle: Oh, so you never hit your children?

Daisy Jensen: The oldest one, sometimes I would have to, you know, I, to be honest, I didn't belt them but like one day I was in the kitchen here doing the breakfast dishes and the two boys were eating their wrestling in the living room. And I said, stop playing in the house, like that and they're playing. And I honestly, I had a breakfast plate in my hand and I stood there and I got it! You see that entire cabinet over there. I had to change the door. It hit the cabinet and broke some of my stuff too. Stop playing in the house like that. You know, but they stopped. But didn't belt them. Never, never, but took things away from them. Yeah.My parents didn't belt us, either. Only my oldest sister. My oldest sister was, I wouldn't say bad, but she would sometimes go visit her friends and then sometimes she would be late coming home and sometimes my mother would send us to look for her and she wouldn't be where she said she was. She was visting somebody else and so. You know, but yeah, but we didn't, you know, we didn't, my parents didn't have to belt us. Only that one that and the brother. This one. Yeah. Because he – because he could run. I mean, when he was a little boy, I remember one neighbor who was having a birthday party a Saturday. My mom say I don't think she didn't think we were going to be able to go to the party because it was raining and before she's finished that sentence, he was gone!

Brenique Bogle: He started running to the party?

Daisy Jensen: He was off. He was bad. And then one day he was running around the house running, you know, she was running after him to belt his behind anyway and – and he eventually he circled her a few times and eventually said, Mama, why don't you sit down and rest? And what she did? She laughed! Nothing she could do, and she, you know, because he she's running after him and he's helping her. Yeah. So we – we knew he was going to be an Olympian one day, you know? Yeah, world traveler.
Brenique Bogle: How did you feel when he told you that he was going to be in the Olympics?
Daisy Jensen: We were happy because we knew that he was. He went to the other before he went to the Olympics. He won one Olympic Day because when he was at the University of El Paso, they wanted him to run for America, you know, and he said, No, you were. If you've been to the Olympics, he was going to continue to run for Jamaica. So then they did. They told him that they said he had rheumatic fever, so he couldn't run, but it wasn't true. So they Black listed him. That Olympics rheumatic fever. Oh, so he couldn't go. So, you know, he was sick or anything. But of course, because he didn't run because he was at the University of El Paso at the time and he said he wouldn't run for America. He was going to run for Jamaica. So he didn't. So that was it. He didn't go back to the Olympics after that. You know he used to say, forget about it. You know, yeah, but. Yeah, but he's still used to run for Jamaica when he came, he was at El Paso. Yeah. He went to different places, Switzerland all over the place for Jamaica, but not for you know... But when they [demanded] that he stop, he stopped running. He didn't do it anymore. Right. I tell you, he was, my mom was running and he said, Mama, why don't you sit down and rest? That was so funny. Yeah. So we knew at the time to say, you know, this child is something else. But we, you know, we had a good life and we had fun. It's not the same in America in the sense that, you know, we have to be a bit more aware of our surroundings in like people, you know, but at the same time, it's not about lifestyle, you know? Right? You know, because we had a good foundation and we worked on it. You know we didn't, we didn't slack off it, you know? Good foundation, both parents were there. And we, you know, we had to be, like I said, we have to be on par or better. Because when my father didn't like the fact that I wanted to do nursing because his sister was a teacher. I didn't like teaching. I wanted to be a nurse.
Brenique Bogle: Why didn't he like that you wanted to do nursing?

Daisy Jensen: Because his sister was a teacher, so she had the headmistress of [unintelligible] and he figured that I should follow in her footsteps and I didn't want that. So I wanted to be a nurse. And because when I was nine or ten, I was in the hospital and I liked it. And I like nursing, you know, like everything around, you know, and then I decided to be a nurse. Actually, like I said, I wanted to be a pediatrician, but because I knew I was weak in chemistry. I settled for nursing, but I was glad. Yeah. I knew my weakness and I didn't want to fail. Failing wasn't in my book. Failing wasn't in OUR book.

Brenique Bogle: Do you feel like your migration process, the way you came up here, do you feel like people coming from Jamaica to the United States, do you feel like they could mirror that process or do you feel like it's changed?

Daisy Jensen: Actually, I don't

Daisy Jensen: Understand what's going on now, really, because like I said when I first went to the embassy, you know, and I applied when my sister said, you know, said, why don't you come up and I said, OK, and the process for me was so different in in the sense that my interview went after I applied and everything, and I went. The interview was so minuscule. I mean, I wasn't there 1 minute. Really, nobody said to me this, he said to me. He called me my name and he said, You're a registered nurse and you don't have you won't have a problem because I didn't have a I didn't have a job offer or anything. I was just coming up to me with my sister, you know, and he said, You're a registered nurse. You couldn't get a job anywhere in America. It would be no problem.

Brenique Bogle: And he gave you a stamp?

Daisy Jensen: Visa. And I didn't have to...It wasn't that I was getting a temporary, it was a permanent visa. It wasn't a temporary, Permanent.

Brenique Bogle: Were you nervous?

Daisy Jensen: No, actually, because like I said, it was just another person. It's actually he did like this, he looked over the application form and he called me by name and he said. You are from a progressive family. You won't have a problem finding a job in America. And that was it.

Brenique Bogle: And you feel like that can be done today or...?

Daisy Jensen: I don't think so, because I've seen people who are trying and trying and trying and nothing is happening, you know? Yeah, but then it was crazy. But when I went, I went home and I handed my mother the envelope. And she said, “what's this”? And I said, Remember, I told you I was going to. She said yes, and she said, “what happened”? And I said, Look. She said “oi!”. My father said “so when did you start this” when he saw it. Said when did you cause – I said a couple of weeks ago, it's like maybe three or four weeks”. And he say, “what”?! And I said yeah, it wasn't no problem, I guess, to – you know, say That's it. Because my father didn't know, because like I said, I didn't tell him because first, he didn't want me to do nursing, he wanted me to be a teacher. And then for me to be leaving now when my sister was up here, she was lonesome, too. But at the same time, I couldn't live with her. Yes, my sister was too much. You know, so. So I came to New York. I knew not a soul in New York, not. I had no clue what I was getting into. Like I said, I saw the job when I was on the plane and I called em up and they said, come in and I said I had no place to live and they said, we have housing. And that was it. I never went back to Boston to live.

Brenique Bogle: Oh, really, oh, so how did you meet my – my grandfather?

Daisy Jensen: My husband knew him from home, he used to work with my husband at home. So when he wanted to come up here, he actually stayed with us when he first came up here and your grandmother too. We were living in Queens Village at the time, and he said he wanted to come. And I said then he said he could stay with us. So he came and he sent for her. So they both stayed with us in Queens Village when they first came up here. And we sold the house in Queens Village, and we moved here and they were staying at both your mother and your aunt, we have a house in Hollis and they stayed there for a little bit and. Yeah. So and then when we, you know, because he used to stay, so when the girls came up and your mom and thing... We told him that if you could stay at the house in Hollis, you know because he needed more space. Yeah. So that's when, you know, and then he bought his house. So. Yeah, but he stayed with us. We have been a conduit for people, you know…

Appendix B (Princess)

Brenique Bogle: Okay. So now it's ready. Tell me a little bit about yourself, your name, and where you call home.
Princess: My name is Princess. And home is Jamaica, where I'm from.
Brenique Bogle: Where in Jamaica?
Princess: I'm from the eastern end of the island and namely Saint Thomas.
Brenique Bogle: So can you tell me a little bit about how your community looked in Saint Thomas when you were growing up?
Princess: Oh, extremely fruitful. What I remember most of all is the greenery. We had a lot it was kind of mountainous, you know, the undulation of the mountains. And there was a lot of, you know, Jamaica is a land of wood and water. And I experienced that also because the property that my father owned, we had like streams running through, which was very comforting. And as children, we liked to play in water. So that was really good.
Brenique Bogle : And so tell me a little bit about your education— growing up, going to school, friends, stuff like that.
Princess: Wow. That's the question. Growing up, going to school, bittersweet memories. We were from like not the wealthy, the well-to-do. You know, we were I could say not the poverty level either, because, you know, we had enough food. My father always ensured that we had food in the house. But the finer, finer things of life we did not have like other kids had. Not many kids, but you know that you would wish to have. You know, we didn't have those things. School for me was good. The early days, though, were some bitter. We had bitter memories because those were the days when we had I don't remember if they call it Capital Point, what was it when you would call it— Yes, corporal punishment where you would be lashed if you didn't know your when you call it, your table's like your multiplication tables and all of that stuff. You know, you would be lashed for any little thing for talking in class, you would be lashed. So those to me were bitter moments. But then again, we had very happy times, you know, playing games. There was little games ring a ring around roses, you know, little games like that. You know, we had memories. And I remember part of my early days, we used to have like a cookout on Fridays behind the school where the teachers didn't know about it. We would hide and we would select times to go out and cook, you know, and it was mainly dumplings and a tin of sardines, but it's the one we used to call it tin mackerel. But it's the bigger ones, not the ones that exist today. And we had good times. We shared a lot. And going looking for fruits. The schoolyard was always

filled. We had mangoes, we had rose apples, you name it, all kinds of fruit. So we used to enjoy that, had kids and also, you know, like playing volleyball games, volleyball, cricket, you know, athletics was also a good part of my early days. But as I got older, I went into high school. Another bitter moment for me because my dad could not afford my parents could not afford financially to keep me in high school. So I had to leave high school and I went back to what they would call primary school. But there was also a program where we did they call it first-year, third-year, second-year exams. And that put me at a level, at an entry-level for college. So that was good. So from that, I went into a teacher's college and that was a good thing for me. I, you know, I excelled there, you know, and I became a teacher. And then I also went on to university for a year for a diploma course. So I felt good about that. And then I migrated. And ultimately I'm here as a registered nurse.

Brenique Bogle: Tell me about the process of migration. Like, did you always want to come here or what made you want to come?

Princess:...You know, as the years went by and, you know, migration was from even back then, from my parents years, you know, even though it was different with like flights, it was mainly boats getting on a boat and going to England. But as the years went by, I always wanted to migrate, not solely to—in the beginning it wasn't about a better life, it was just about an experience to see what it was like in another part of the world. And then. When I came, my first trip was to Canada. Beautiful. And then I came to the United States of America. I looked around and I saw where maybe life could be a little bigger. The opportunities were here. I went back home, and as things got a little bit not so good financially, I opted to come here to the United States for a better life. So immigration for me was just not because I wanted to be here, but I just wanted a better life for my family and myself.

Brenique Bogle: So you came to the United States through Canada?

Princess: No, no, no. I went back; from Canada I went back home. It was just one of my first trip. And then I went back home. Then I came here, I think, two years later. And then I think I made three, three trips here before I decided to stay. And when I decided to stay, it was to seek a better life, because financially things weren't going good. And then I decided to just take that as an opportunity to do better for my family.

Brenique Bogle: So were you a nurse before you came here?

Princess: No, I was not. I was a teacher.

Brenique Bogle: Talk about your experience at the embassy. Like the process.

Princess: Wow. My first experience was I was turned down and I was denied. Yeah, my first attempt I attempted the first. My first attempt I was denied. And that was. After no, prior to going to Canada. And then somebody say, you know what, you got to take a trip to some other country before if you really want to go to the United States. What a lot of people do is that they make a small trip maybe to one of the islands or they go to Canada. And when they see that you go and you return to your homeland, they will say, oh, she's not going to run off. She's going to just visit. So that's what I did. So my second trip, I was granted a visitor's visa and I came here like I made three trips here as I didn't remember if I stated that before and when things got really bad financially, I came here and I decided I wasn't going to go back then. This was an illegal act, but I took that leap of faith and I'm happy today.
Brenique Bogle: What year was that?
Princess: When I took the leap of faith to stay? I think it was back in 19. I can't recall, to be honest, but it's in maybe 87, 88, somewhere around there could be earlier.
Brenique Bogle: Did you know anyone before you came here?
Princess: Yeah, I had a friend. I had a girlfriend, family-friend that I knew and I stayed with her.
Brenique Bogle: Yeah. What were your first impressions?
Princess: My first impression is it wasn't for me, it was like I was not happy. After I made a decision, I stayed and then to think that I already gave up my job in Jamaica. If I returned, then I wouldn't have a job and my kids would be in a worse place than they were when I left them. So I stayed. But it was not easy. My impression at that time of the place. Well, to be honest, prior to staying, I always thought that it would be much greener pastures. Everything was just going to flow. I was going to get a job. But that was not the issue. That was not the case. It became an issue because I couldn't pick up a job. Whatever jobs I got were menial. And coming here, leaving my country as a teacher and I had to come here. Getting a domestic job was, you know, it was not the best thing that— And it was not the best feeling. But I had to do it to survive.
Brenique Bogle: And so your children stayed in Jamaica?
Princess: My children stayed in Jamaica? Yes. Which was painful as a mother. Yeah, very painful. I spent many days crying, couldn't eat. When I got the food, I would sit there and I'm thinking, are they eating? Are they hungry? Are they okay? So I just couldn't swallow the food.
Brenique Bogle: Yeah. So how was your family or your support system structured while you were here?
Princess: Oh, when I was here, their dad was still there. So, you know, and I had my mom was very supportive of me. My dad also, my sisters, you know, they chipped in to help to take care of

the kids. So that was not an issue. But for me personally, it was really nerve wracking. Painful to watch at times.

Brenique Bogle: And did you have to, like, send stuff back?

Princess: Oh, my God. Tons of stuff when I really got the job. Now, that was a happy, happy, happy part. I would send batteries or food. I would send clothes, clothes that I would not be able to buy them while I was there. That was the part that. Really. Maybe it kept me here because other than that, I would have gone over because I said no. I was able to send them not just the clothes and not just the food, but I was able to send them money. You know, so that was good. But it didn't. It didn't, which I say, not cover the emotional feeling that I had for them as a mother. And that that part of it cover is not the correct word—compensate for, you know, me being there as a mother to them. No.

Brenique Bogle: Okay. Can you talk about the process of sending a barrel?

Princess: Oh, the process of sending a barrel. Or you got to, first of all, you got to buy the barrel. You got to have that container to pack the food in. And then you got to go shopping. But there were places that catered for immigrants, people who send stuff back home to their family members, especially foodstuff. So we would seek out those places and see where they have the better cells so we could get as much food items as we could get for the money that we have. You know, we were like even at that point, we were on a budget to get the most for our money. So that's what we did. And then we would pack the barrels, you know, and we would get onto a shipping agent who would come to the house and pick up the barrel and take it to their whatever, their depot, and then forward it to Jamaica by way of shipping.

Brenique Bogle: So when you first came, your kids were still in Jamaica?

Princess: Yeah, they were.

Brenique Bogle: And then. So did anyone come with you or did you come?

Princess: No, no, none of them came. It was after I think after a year or two that I got one. And that was Janice. I brought her up because she had a visa before I left, but the other three did not have visas. So she was the only one who was really eligible to come at that time because she had a visitor's visa as well.

Brenique Bogle: And then how did the rest of your friends come up?

Princess: They came up after I filed for them. I petitioned for them after I went through the process of acquiring residency. It was that time that I put the paperwork in and they were able to get here.

Brenique Bogle: So you became a nurse once you got here. So tell me about how your professional or academic career evolved once you migrated.

Princess: Well, even though I had gone to, I had education at the university level. At the time when I came, I still had to, which I learned. After that, I didn't have to go through the process of getting a GED, which was not necessary. I could have gotten some— they would not have taken all the credits from Jamaica, but they would have accepted some of them. But this was not told to me, you know, and I started all of this prior to actually to getting my residency. So there was not much I could speak about or go after. I just wanted I just knew that I didn't want to stay at the level of just cleaning floors, mopping floors, and doing all of that stuff. So I got my GED. And then I did the entry-level exam to Queens Community College. And that's where I pursued my associate's degree in nursing.

Brenique Bogle: Hmm. Did you enjoy it?

Princess: There were bittersweet days because, you know, I was older than most of the students in the class. So, you know, there was a lot of ridiculing. There was a lot of, you know, what she'd do. And she's an older person. And then when I started excelling, they started you know, they were all over me because everybody wanted me to write their papers or to assist them with their papers because I actually got. Special. I got an honorary—what is it again for writing?

Brenique Bogle: It's like a scholarship?

Princess: Like it wasn't a scholarship. Like a distinction in writing an award. Yes, sorry about that. You could fix it, right? Yeah, an award for writing. And then, you know, they realized that not because I was older, I was keeping up with the class and not. To see. I was doing a lot, much better than most of them. So that changed after a while. The picture changed and they started more respecting me and all of that stuff. But I went through that, but it was good. I enjoyed every minute of it. It was something that I really wanted to do and I just put my whole self into it because I said No way. My motivation was I'm not going to leave my country as a professional and still come here to stay at the level of being a domestic helper. Yeah, that was my motivation.

Brenique Bogle: How come you didn't pursue teaching?

Princess: No, I. I had had enough of that and I had seen from the get go when I got here, the kids here in the US were like night and day to the kids in my country where I was coming from. It was just a free for all. And then they would use the curse. Curse words. I say, I can't get into that. I wouldn't be able to answer that. So that was the reason I changed. That was a personal thing.

Brenique Bogle: Um. So why did you decide on New York specifically?

Princess: Because this is the first place that I came. When I came to the US, I landed in Queens, New York, and this is where I've been ever since. And no matter where I go, I go to the other boroughs, I go to Brooklyn, I go to the Bronx. There's no place like Queens, New York, as far as I'm concerned.

Brenique Bogle: Can you tell me a bit about the process of setting up a home here? Buying your home and why you decided here?

Princess: Yeah, it's coming from. It's coming from living in a one-room basement. When I got here, I got a little room in a basement. You could you couldn't turn, but I had to take that. And I remember I left Jamaica. I had my own home, which I owned. And coming here and to take, like it's a step down to living in a room that you could barely turn. I said, Princess, you're not going to stay here. This is going to have to be your motivation. And I got from that one room, one little room. And then I went and I rented a two-bedroom, two-bedroom, and then I went and got my children by now. The papers were processed, so they had to get here. So I had to make sure I had that accommodation and I didn't want to get them from what they had to, you know, something worse than what they had. So I made that and I set up a nice two-bedroom apartment. And from that, I left and I went into one of these buildings, you know, where? It was the rental was a little bit because I knew what I wanted. I knew that I wanted to buy a house. So if I had gone from there to where I really left that house also is that the lease was up and they were raising the rent. So I said, no, I can't stay. So I got into a building and I stayed in that building, save my money, until I was able to buy this house right here. And I've been here now for 20 some odd years.

Brenique Bogle: So in the process of saving for your house, did you join like a partner or sus?

Princess: Oh, it was all about susu, I, oh my God. I was in like two, three. I remember at one point it was three susus and as soon as I got the money, I put it aside. So soon as I got my money, I was laughing all this time, and I just saved enough until I was able to. I had my down payment, plus I had enough left that people marveled because about, say, about three months after I moved into the house, even though the house needed fixing up. It was a fixer-upper at the time, but I was working, so I wasn't worried about that. I said, wow, I got my house. I got no, I got to do something better for me, something else. And I went and I bought a brand new SUV. It was a leased vehicle, but oh my God, I was on top of the world. Now I have my house. Now I'm driving a brand new SUV. Oh, oh. Butterflies. The American dream. Mm-hmm.

Brenique Bogle: So tell me a little bit about the Susu. Like, were there any ever, like, people who didn't pay?

Princess: No, I had one that I was in even before I started thinking about saving towards the house. I was always because it's a tradition from the islands. Most islanders know about Susu. So I used to have that and I would have a little backup, you know if anything happens. I had my mother in Jamaica, my dad, you know, I could always have a little extra money. So that one ran for a number of years and it was okay. I never had a bad experience. I even started one. Towards the end when I said I wanted to do this quick thing much faster, I started one where I became the banker, and the only people that I had in that susu who were professionals that myself were able to pay their money and paid on time. So that was so helped. But the other one was also the hospital where I work. They had a nice one and that was what really propelled me into getting the house. It was good.

Brenique Bogle: So how are people chosen? Do they ask or do you kind of propose it?

Princess: Yeah, I propose to others for the susu. For mine when I started it, I proposed and I got a couple of people, just enough that I wanted. And the type of people you have to be very selective in who you know, you get to ride out your susu so to speak, because you don't want anybody with, you know. Dishonest. A dishonest character or anything like that? No.

Brenique Bogle : Okay. Switching gears a little bit. So did you feel like you had to sacrifice anything when you were moving here and do you feel like you gained anything in return?

Princess: Yes, I sacrificed. Um. My kids, my family, so to speak, you know, not just the kids, because I remember I left my mom there. I left my dad there, you know, so it was a big sacrifice in terms of family, you know, and that I think that's the biggest sacrifice of all that anybody could ever make in their entire life. Actively sacrificing your family, your kids, your husband. That's that's. Seems like unreal. But it happened. Yeah, it happened.

Brenique Bogle: Do you feel like you made a return on that investment?

Princess: Yeah, I did. I certainly did. And making a return on the investment is not just by being here and say, oh, I came to America, I came to the United States. You have to work hard. It's not just coming here and thinking you have to be doing. You really have to put your work in because it was not easy. I can't tell anybody that it was easy. It was not easy. But you know what? If you work hard at it and work hard enough, you can achieve it.

Brenique Bogle : Were there cultural differences you had to navigate?

Princess: Yeah. Oh, yes, I did. Yes, I certainly did. I remember my first job as a housekeeper was a Jewish home and they were Orthodox Jews. You know, that comes with a lot of stipulations as to the food. You had to have special utensils, special flatware and all that. It was not easy. And they were stuff that you could not do. You couldn't mix dairy with meat. It's

culture. It was the food. Remember our food? The island food is so totally different. We eat differently. We cook differently because islanders like a lot of spice, you know? Or the way we prepare meals, prepare food is totally different from Caribbean or island cooking from the islands. So that was kind of one of the things too, because most of the food and the other traditions didn't really bother me because I, you know, you have to respect people for. Who they are and their. Religious affiliations, you know, that you have to respect. So that didn't bother me. But, you know, we Jamaicans, or Caribbean people, we love to eat and we like our food. So we miss that wherever we go, we are. There's always a longing for especially Jamaican food.

Brenique Bogle : Yeah. Did you experience any negative stereotypes?

Princess: Yes, I did. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Yes. You know, it's. I feel kind of a little bit. It's sad thinking about some of the things I went through. You know? Sacrificing my kids to be here and coming here to be living a life that's so menial. I was told at one point that. I cannot eat with the family members. What I had to do, I prepared; I set the table; I did everything. Put the food out. I would assist with the cooking. In the beginning, I never cooked whatever they taught me. And they watched me. And they say, okay, she's ready. And I prepared all that food. Set the table. I had to leave. Go sit in another room or go sit in the basement. And when they were finished eating, they would call out and say, Oh, you know, princess, you could come up. And that was when. It's a bit emotional. They would say, oh, you know, you can have whatever you want. And I remember this was. I never dreamed that. I would be eating what people ate and left on their plate or in their. It was hard. It was very hard for me to have prepared the food and you could sit there and eat and then whatever you had left on the table is what you were going to tell me. And I had to do it because when I left my country, my kids needed me. They needed me, but they needed a better life as well. And I was prepared. To tell. Give them a better life.

Princess: So it was, sorry about that, but it was really hard. And that was one of the things I went through. And then I remember. I got this job where I was taking care of, you know, an older woman. Yeah. I was taking care of her. And she called me some names. She called me names. Go back to your country, where you come from. You the N-word. You know you all come here. You know what? You need to go back. And I looked and I said, I didn't say anything to her, but I said, we are here to— I'm here taking care of you and this is what you're telling me. I remember I didn't do anything to her. She wanted me to do something which was not my job description. My job description was not to go walk her dog. I could have done it. I did it for her a couple of times. But then she took it as, Oh, you need to go walk the dog. Now, the tone that she used, it's not even a matter of, you know, not helping her by walking the dog is a tone that she used, you

know, as if or. And I, you know, I—that day I said, no, I'm not walking the dog today. And she really, you know, she really got at me. That was another that was. Number two. And then. Another instance I took this data to, I think it was a doctor's visit and I was the only one there with her. She didn't have a family member there. And she said to me, when I go in to speak to the doctor, I want you to come in. I said, fine. So I went in with her and the doctor got up and said to me, Why are you here? And she said, No, I want her to be here. I asked her to come in. No. No, she can't be in here. And he took me and he pushed me through the door, literally pushed me out of the door. And I remember there was another one there, several instances. Then there is another one. I was taking care of another lady. She was going to her. I think it was her granddaughter's wedding. And when the son came to me, that is her son is the son's daughter that was getting married so the son came to pick me up, he and his wife. And they picked us, both of us up, the lady and myself. And when I got in the car, they were driving. And he turned around and he looked at me and he said, Oh, the only thing you need to make one of us is if you put some white paint on your face. Yeah. I went through all of that. I went to all of that and I'll not mention anymore. Those four stand out more than anything else in my mind. I don't know if this is something you want to put on there, but I'm just telling you as it is. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle: That's real. I'm sorry. When you had those types of experiences, like, did you have people here or community here that you felt like you could talk to about that stuff?

Princess: Not really. Not really. Just in my mind, I just told myself that this is not going to be forever. And I'm working on myself and I don't want it if I should use this term. But there was a term that would that, you know, in my head, I hang on to it. It says you have to kiss ass before you can kick ass before you have to kiss ass before you can kick them. So I kept that in my mind. I said you know what? I'm going to kiss all of these asses because I know one day I'm going to kick them. Yep.

Brenique Bogle: Do you feel that the nature of your relationships with your family and friends changed as you migrated? Um, in terms of, like, those who were back home.

Princess: Yeah, they were happy because, you know, especially after I became a nurse and then, oh, I could send them more money, I could send them gifts, I could go visit them every time I'm going. They would look forward to my coming because they know auntie's coming or my sister is coming. And it was a good feeling. I felt so good at that time.

Brenique Bogle: How did you communicate with them when you first moved?

Princess: It was mostly letters and cards. I remember there was not much of a phone thing back then. They had these phone booths. It wasn't like what we have today, you know? So most of it

was I, I would be writing five, six letters a day. I would be sending off letters to my kids, letters to my mom, letters to my sister. And I always went, I love to do cards. I would always buy a whole bunch of cards and just keep sending them.

Brenique Bogle: How do you communicate with people now?

Princess: Oh! Technologically it is so different. It's so, so different. You have the phone and then you have so many different aspects of technology. You have Zoom, you have what you call this one?

Brenique Bogle: Texting.

Princess: Texting. Then you have FaceTime. Oh, which is Oh, that's the best one for the grandkids. I love FaceTime. Basically, that's it. And a lot of phone calls. You know, there's so much, so much better. It's like you're right there, especially FaceTime. If I had FaceTime when I'm back then or I would have been so much happier because I would maybe at that time, instead of not wanting to eat the food, I would have had it because I could be faced. They could FaceTime me to say, Mommy, this is what I am having for dinner. That would have made such a big difference. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle: Was life what you expected it to be in the United States?

Princess: Yes and no. No, because I did not envision experiencing the levels of. Discrimination that I experienced. I did not. But yes, my achievements. I feel fulfilled. I wanted to do more. I wanted to have gone back to school. I wanted to even go to at least do my master's. But then I had to put my kids first. I had to take care of my kids. So I was alone, you know, as a single parent. So there were not many things that I could juggle at that time except to, you know, take care of the kids.

Brenique Bogle: So do you ever go back to Jamaica?

Princess: Oh, I love to go to Jamaica. My mom is still alive. I was just there. You know, I went to see her because, during the COVID time, I didn't see her for like almost two years. And that was not always the case. I usually go back two or three times a year. So I went back. It's always a pleasure going back, you know?

Brenique Bogle: And you still think of Jamaica as home?

Princess: I still think of Jamaica as home.

Brenique Bogle: Do you ever want to move back? Have you ever thought about mixed feelings?

Princess: I would love to move back, but I— one of my biggest fears is health care. Now that I'm, you know, senior health care is an issue because. My country is not. Third World countries are not as equipped as the United States, especially when it comes on to emergent care. We do

not have that kind of facility. You get into an accident. You don't have like the ambulances, the EMS, and all of that service. So it's kind of scary. So for that reason. But outside of that, I would go back right this minute. Yeah. It's beautiful.

Brenique Bogle: Do you still have your store?

Princess: My store? No. I was talking about my store this morning. No, I let it go right prior to the COVID pandemic.

Brenique Bogle: Explain. Can you explain a little bit about your idea for that and how that came about?

Princess: I was also a little fashionista. I've always been and I enjoy fashion. I'm always looking into it, looking at the trends, you know, what's trendy, looking at even this at 71, I just looked like three days ago. What is fashion? What's trending for the fall? You know, and even though I might not want to wear the styles, but the ideas, you know, I could tap into. So that's how my store came about. I wanted to supply the young, especially the young people, which are the ones I cater to mostly because I was into it and I knew what they wanted. And there were other stores that did not do as well as I did because I did my research. So I love it. I love, you know, watching people get dressed up. You know, I like to dress up myself. And, you know, I did pretty good, you know, for a while. And then, you know, when you can't be there all the time, then the business goes under. Then you don't have, you know, that proper even though you put accountability things in place, sometimes it doesn't work because you have people try to override the system. So I just got out of it.

Brenique Bogle: Um, can you talk a bit about, like, other things you used to do for fun? Like when you came here, did you go.

Princess: Oh my goodness, we were talking about that the other day! I was a party animal. When I got off, especially when I was a housekeeper, I would come home like twice a month. The first thing I did was I went to the ear dresser and I got a, oh, my God, I should have to speak just to show you. I don't have any of them. No, I had to have a very. I'll do your style for the weekend that I'm off. And I would remember this particular weekend I went into a store and I bought a dress for $300. Back in the days a dress for $300 is like Beyoncé buying a dress for thousands of dollars. Yes. And I got it. I'm looking at the dress right now. And I got my nails done, bought my dress. I had to buy shoes and everything to go. And I'm ready for the party. So every time I'm off, it has to be a party. And they had a club that most of us Jamaicans would go to. I'm trying to remember the name of the club, but we would be there.

Brenique Bogle: Was it Moments?

Princess: Moments! We would all meet. And there were other people like I met. Like that was at Moments where I met people who were professionals. They had nurses from Jamaica. You had teachers, quite a few teachers there. You had policemen, I mean, uniform people who were there. And it was oh my goodness, it would kill the nights. Paint the town red! Oh, reggae music. And you had. It's mostly reggae and old-school Lovers Rock. We used to love Lovers Rock. And you're my cousin,your granddad, we would always go there, you know. We had good times, really, really good times.
Brenique Bogle: Where there are other places that you guys liked.
Princess: Moments was a big place. There was another club—and there was another one, but I didn't see we went there like twice. It wasn't our thing because when we go to moments you find more. It was classy. People got dressed up, you know, you could have a decent conversation with the people were there. It wasn't just like, you know, the little ghetto type know it was different. So we would prefer to stay at Moments and then we had a lot of basement parties. That was a thing then.
Brenique Bogle: Did you host any?
Princess: I hosted many basement parties. Yes. Even when I got to this house. Ooh, many, many. I like that. I like to entertain. And that's. That's something that I really enjoy doing. Yeah.
Brenique Bogle: Did the artists ever come here and like to do shows and stuff like that ?
Princess: You mean artists, like to my events?
Brenique Bogle: No, no. In general, like concerts.
Princess: Of course. I went to the first concert that I went to was all the way up in Westchester. And I took Dean, my youngest, and we went to that. It was, oh, I had to be there. When I went there, there was hardly anybody there, but I was ready. And you had Beenie Man, you had Ghost. You had Freddie McGregor, you had these dead. No, Peter, not Peter Tosh. There was another one. I don't remember his name. No, there was. Marcia Griffiths was there, too. You know, the old-time Jamaican, you always love that kind of thing. So in between all the struggles and all of that, I found a little time and I. I used to love not just parties, you know, church too, you know, church was a big thing for me on a Sunday. I had to go get my spiritual thing on my spiritual groove on yeah. On a Sunday. I never left God out of anything that I did.
Brenique Bogle: Okay. This is my last question. Do you think your migration process can be mirrored, mirrored by individuals seeking to move today from Jamaica to here?

Princess: Yes. You know, you just have to have to be in the right frame of mind and know why you're not just coming here because you want to migrate. You have to have a purpose. Why are you here? Are you here because you want to make a better life like I did? That was my purpose. Made a life for my kids. So if you are coming— because if you are coming to achieve something. You know, and something better, not something worse or the same lives. Why would you want to come? But if you are, you. You are thinking of, you know, getting here for a better life. Yes. And it's not going to be easy, because my process was not you know, it was not all, you know, roses. They were thorns as well, you know. And I had to endure the thorns so I could get to the roses. So that's it.
Brenique Bogle: Is there anything else you would like to share?
Princess: What would I like to share? You could. Yeah, you certainly have to really adhere to your purpose regardless of what's going on around you. As I said before, they're going to the rose that comes with thorns, and you have to endure the thorns in order to get to the rose. So whatever your purpose is, you come here and you stay on line with what you want. And everything should be okay.

Appendix C (Paulet)

Paulet Edwards : I am Paulet Edwards. I'm Brenique's grandmother, and I came here in December. I came to the United States in December of eighty-nine.
Brenique Bogle : And was that your first time in the United States?
Paulet Edwards : No, I had had some visits before. Eighty-six, eighty-seven, eighty-eight. Because my husband was here.
Brenique Bogle : Did you come alone?
Paulet Edwards : No, I came with my children and my two children, Monique and Brenique. I'm sorry, Monique and Roushelle.
Brenique Bogle : Um, every single time you came, you came with them?
Paulet Edwards : Except one time only one side didn't come with them.
Brenique Bogle : What were your first impressions?
Paulet Edwards : I was. A little bit disappointed because I thought, you know, the roads would be better. There'd be no dirty streets. And another thing I– I came knowing that back home, everybody goes to church on a Sunday and here nobody was going to church on a Sunday. Everybody just stayed sitting like or go to work.
Brenique Bogle : And so where do you call back home?

Paulet Edwards : Jamaica is back home, Jamaica, West Indies.

Brenique Bogle : Tell me a little bit about where you're from in Jamaica.

Paulet Edwards : Well, originally from Browns Town. in St.Ann, and that's where I grew up until I was about 20. I left the country and went into the city, Kingston City to go to Moneague Teacher's College, where I was trained as a teacher.

Brenique Bogle : How long were you a teacher?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I went into training. Oh, let me see…In 72 September to 74. I was at the college. Then we did internship, we call it, I don't know what you call it here. We did internship for a year, so I actually went to teach as a trained teacher in September of 75.

Brenique Bogle : How was school, did you like it?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I went to two schools and St Andrew. To prepare us to teach. We spent three weeks at each school and I liked it…Some people had to go into the country areas, but I stayed in a city and I liked it. I like the school. Like the children, the children were ready to learn. They were enthusiastic and just ready to learn. Whereas when I went to the country, when I first left, oh, that was a different ball game. The kids would be absent regularly and you had to do different things to motivate them to want to come to school.

Brenique Bogle : Well what are some of the things you have to do?

Paulet Edwards : In the school, I did primary education, so I did all subjects. And in addition to that, I developed or formed a Girl Guides Association. On the first job, I went after training.

Brenique Bogle : So. How did your career change or evolve when you moved from Jamaica to the U.S..

Paulet Edwards : Oh, well, I still stayed in teaching. But this was different because this was kindergartens strictly. I did kindergarten strictly when I came here, and it was, uh, I would say, easier here, working with the kids here than in Jamaica, it was easier. Um, yeah.

Brenique Bogle : Why was it easier?

Paulet Edwards : Uh, because the kids came willing to learn, you know, their parents bring them here. It was a smaller class because in Jamaica, whoa. Those class sizes were huge. And here it was like, Oh. Ten or so kids, 10, also kids, the one to myself, I had 10 kids. In Jamaica that was way over at one point in Jamaica. I had 60 kids to teach by myself for the whole day. I think we started at eight o'clock until 2:. I had all those kids by myself,

Brenique Bogle : And they were all the same grade?

Paulet Edwards : Yeah, they were all the same grade, but different levels. Some were reading at levels A, B, and C, so although I had up to sixty, they had um, which isn't ideal and which is

done now too you put them in different groups. But it was difficult to get around to each group because everybody needed – There was hardly any kid or hardly a group of kids who could work independently.

Brenique Bogle : Did you always know you wanted to be a teacher?

Paulet Edwards : No. No,

Brenique Bogle : What made you decide to be a teacher?

Paulet Edwards : Just opportunity, because I wanted to be a nurse. But I'm glad I didn't become a nurse. But when I left high school that's what I wanted to do. But when I left high school, I did some pre-trained teaching for two years and I had friends who motivate me say, "Come on". I felt comfortable just, you know, being in that. What do you call that zone now? Laid back environment? You know, it was easy going just to get money out of it and responsibilities. And then my friends said, "Come on. They're recruiting. They're looking for teachers. They're looking for people to train as teachers". And I said, All right. And then that's why I went into teaching.

Brenique Bogle : So when you went to Teachers College, you had friends there already.

Paulet Edwards : Oh yes. Matter of fact, the person who encouraged me to go into teaching, she was there. She went in the same time I did. And a few other students from my high school in Jamaica were there to.

Brenique Bogle : So tell me about growing up, what did your community look like, your family look like?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I was proud of my community and my family, of six of us, six of us, two boys and four girls growing up and our father especially was very strict, extremely strict. We could not play with other kids as it were, because he said. There were six of us, we don't need any more company. So we were restricted to whom if we dared. Go pass our gate, that was it we would be in trouble. But we did it sometimes anyway. But that was it. We had to just play with our, you know, among ourselves.

Brenique Bogle : Did you guys go to school?

Paulet Edwards : Yeah, we had to go to school. I remember one occasion when it was the principal and two kids, me and one other that were in school because it was a rainy day, it was raining torrents, but we had to go to school.

Brenique Bogle : Um. So tell me. Tell me more about your young adulthood experience, Teacher's College, teaching in the city, leaving the countryside in Jamaica and going to the city, what was that like for you?

Paulet Edwards : 0: Oh. It was a rude awakening, really, when I went into college, now, I thought everybody was so. Proper. Everybody was doing the right stuff. And especially going into teaching, you think nobody would do anything unkind? Well, me, I thought nobody would do anything unkind or 0 for example, uh, I was shocked out of my mind when I realized people stole at college. They would steal your food, they will steal your clothes! Your underwears because of course not, they couldn't take your Top wear because you know it's different, but... taking your underwear, taking your food, and then I remember one occasion, a girl that I looked up to, she told me she showed me how to steal bread. The sliced bread, she told me, just open a little bit and take from the middle. Of the slices. Take in the middle, and nobody will know you go in there because the back and the front is still there. I was told this day it was with me. And, you know, that girl became a lady representative. She represented the students, the women 2 students at Mico College. I shake my head.

Brenique Bogle : Okay, so then did you – so how long were you in Kingston before you moved to the United States?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, well, I wasn't in Kingston proper, but people just call it Kingston. We were in Portmore, and I was there from 79. 2 Uh, nineteen seventy-nine until I came here. Ten years, roughly ten years.

Brenique Bogle : Ok, so tell me a bit about what made you want to come to the United States.

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I'd been visiting for a while, and um, my husband was here and my older daughter, Monique, wanted to be with her father, she said talking to her father was not the same as seeing him and talking to him person-to-person so that one of the things that motivated me to want to come here.

Brenique Bogle : Um, did you want to come here? Um, in your youth, did you have dreams of coming here?

Paulet Edwards : No, no. Definitely not.

Brenique Bogle : So what were your first impressions when you arrived here? Like in terms of what did the community look like?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, it was kind of, um, not what I expected. It was kind of a rude awakening because I thought it would, you know, the roads would be paved nicely. No trash on it. No rubbish, you know. But then I saw it was the streets were just like in Jamaica and um, it was too dirty too. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle : What about the people when you first came to the United States, where in the United States did you go?

Paulet Edwards : Queens Village in um, Queens Village in Queens. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle : And so tell me a little bit about what that community looked like in terms of the people.

Paulet Edwards : Well,

Brenique Bogle : The culture?

Paulet Edwards : Well, I – I didn't do much because I stayed in for most of the time. And but just happened to see, you know, looking outside, um, like on a Sunday, it struck me that nobody was going to church. Everybody was just in their yard – in their house doing work– because back home we kind of had like – Sunday was like a special day. You didn't do any housework or anything. You go to church. That's what— if you did, the only thing people would do, some parents would stay home and cook. But going to church was the thing, and then I just said nobody going to church, everybody inside or they're doing the sweeping their yard or cutting the grass or something like that, it was unusual because we never thought that could happen on a Sunday.

Brenique Bogle : Did you go to church here?

Paulet Edwards : No, I didn't go to church here, because there was nobody to go to church with.

Brenique Bogle : So how did you find community here in terms of friends and stuff like that? Did you know anybody before coming here?

Paulet Edwards : Yes. I had a friend, a former co-worker, and she had children about the same time I did. So we met and I would go to our house and spend time, you know, a little hour or so. And um, sometimes she would come to the house where I stayed and spend a little time, and then we would go out with the children. She would take her kids and I take my kids and we would go out, you know, different places like to the park and, uh, we'd go to the park and they were, um, places of interest. We'd go.

Brenique Bogle : Why did you decide on New York specifically,

Paulet Edwards : Because we just knew people in New York, we didn't know anybody well I didn't know anybody out of New York and my husband's friend was willing to, you know, let us stay with them for a little bit until we got our feet on the ground. And so that's why we came to New York.

Brenique Bogle : Did you encounter any stereotypes about being Jamaican or your race or your gender?

Paulet Edwards : No, not really. No, I didn't. I didn't get any problem along that way. No. Of course, where we stayed it was mostly people of our same color where there, you know.

Brenique Bogle : What about your same ethnic background where there are a lot of West

Paulet Edwards : West Indians, yeah, a lot of Jamaicans too. Yes.

Brenique Bogle : And did that influence your decision? To come here

Paulet Edwards : To come here. Not really. But when I came to stay here, yes. Because I had my former co-worker, and um, my husband's cousins, you know, they were around, and so it was easy, you know, to be among them and easy to fit in.

Brenique Bogle : Did you ever feel alienated?

Paulet Edwards : No, not really, no.

Brenique Bogle : How did your career change or evolve as you moved?

Paulet Edwards : Well, I was a trained teacher in Jamaica, and I came here. One thing I knew from the experience that I spoke with about my friends here, I never wanted to go into, um, teaching. As such, because I heard the kids were unruly, and I even had evidence of one of my neighbors got – a kid threw something at her and I said, Oh, not me, not not not with the background I came from where teachers are respected and stuff and , No respect for teachers. Hitting! And most times it's like the kids had a rights and the teachers had no right, so say, you know what? , but I still stayed in teaching, but I stayed with the kindergartens in a private school.

Brenique Bogle : How did your relationships with your family and friends change.

Paulet Edwards : Well, I never anticipated that, but um.

Brenique Bogle : Well, did your relationship change that?

Paulet Edwards : Yeah. With some of my friends, my co-workers about there, I thought I would just keep in touch with them all the time. But remember, this was before we had this social media thing, you know? And I thought I would write them letter or call on the phone, and it didn't happen. I just. Forget about some of them because of, you know, focusing on my children and stuff and my work. I just lost touch with some of them and it never picked up. And some I wrote to and I took, I don't know, they didn't answer and I had a friend who said, Paulette, I know that when you go to America, you're not going to remember me. And I said, no. And she was one of them. I – I communicated with her, but it wasn't as strong as I was thinking at the time. And then it just... It just died. But I do have some that even now I communicate with.

Brenique Bogle : How do you communicate?

Paulet Edwards : I know the text. Text messaging, now, and also, um, regular phone call. .

Brenique Bogle : Do you feel that social media has changed the way you communicate?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, yes, it has. It's such, It's so much easier. You know, so much easier to get in touch with somebody. You just text or leave a message or something, you know, it's so much easier. .

Brenique Bogle : Um. To go back a little bit, how was your family or your support system structured before you came to the United States and how did that change?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I had a good support system in Jamaica. I am from a family of six one has passed, but they were always there for me. I was there for them too, because my niece used to travel, stay with me and my kids. And in Jamaica, it was the same. We used to live in the city area and to go back home to my mom, my sister would load up the car with me and my children and her child. And, you know, the support system was always there. Mama is there to help me, in any difficult financial way, you know, and she's always and my husband's family, too. They helped, um, financially. And so that was a good system there. But here, you know, it wasn't like that. We had no system, no support system. You just have to be on your own. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle : Who lived in your house with you when you were living in Kingston?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, my two children, my sister-in-law, and my sister.

Brenique Bogle : So walk me through like a typical day when you were married and living in Kingston.

Paulet Edwards : Oh um, A typical day I get up early, like 5:00 a.m. I make sure I get the children's breakfast and lunch ready and Get myself ready, get them ready. Now, I had a – there was a bus that leaves very early in the morning, and so I would put my kids on the bus and send them to school. There was a teacher there who always was early so she would receive my kids. The bus was always packed at the peak hour time and that's the time I got on the bus so I couldn't afford to have my children crushed up and squeezed up in the bus. So that's why I set them ahead of me. And then I would be at work for eight o'clock.

Brenique Bogle : Then when you came home?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, when I came home, it's cooking dinner, washing for my kids every day, washing clothes for them for the next day and cooking dinner, getting them ready, getting them eating, you know, and um, Homework. And myself preparing for the next day to work. And evaluating my, um, my job, you know, what I did with the kids and stuff like that and preparing for the next day.

Brenique Bogle : Um. What were the– So you said that one of the reasons why you came to the United States was to reunite your family? Yes. But what were some of the things that were encouraging you to leave Jamaica?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, that I said already to have the family united and really to see... We always think that it was better to be in the United States economically. There were opportunities that we didn't have in Jamaica. Opportunities to better yourself, to better your children, better future for your children. That's one of the best. That's one of the things I aim for. What let me leave and let me stay here for a better future for my girls.

Brenique Bogle : Um, did you find that to be true?

Paulet Edwards : Yes.

Brenique Bogle : Do you feel that? You had to sacrifice anything. To come here. And did you feel do you feel like you gained anything? Did you think you were sacrificing anything in the moment?

Paulet Edwards : Um, yes, I knew that I had to put myself at that time, I had to put myself behind and put my children in front when I came here that same year. No. Yes. That same year, I got accepted to the University of the West Indies. And as a matter of fact, they were. Three hundred applicants and I was one of 10 who was accepted, and I gave that up to come here for the kids to be better. So that's one of the things. I know I put the kids in front of me that way.

Brenique Bogle : What are you going to do at the University of West Indies?

Paulet Edwards :I was going to do language when language, you know, we speak patois. And then I wanted to use that to teach children because some of them don't can't even speak English properly. So I wanted to take them from the patois and put them into speaking proper English. But I know how to meet them. I couldn't just trust it, but thrust it upon them. At that point, I had to go into the patois, speak with them in patois or teach them in patois and then turn it in, gradually evolve into speaking English so that they could understand. What somebody saying, they would understand in the patois, but if they spoke it in English, they would understand.

Brenique Bogle : Do you have any regrets?

Paulet Edwards : Somewhat, I regretted not further than myself coming here, but furthering my education, you know, because my husband was doing very well and we eventually we had a home, we purchased a house and he was doing well and I was just looking at it in the moment I wasn't looking beyond. And so I regretted not furthering myself in the process. I was taking care

of my kids and putting them forward. I should be. Sacrificing more and. Doing more for myself education-wise.

Brenique Bogle : Did you gain anything?

Paulet Edwards : I don't even know. I don't know if I gained anything. Well, I have a house, I have a house and my husband and me, I mean, we bought this house together. So I gained, this is a big gain because a lot of people don't - don't have a house for themselves.

Brenique Bogle : Um, talk a bit about the experience at the embassy.

Paulet Edwards : Oh, I think when I go to get my stay here. Oh, that was a funny one because believe me, I was praying. At one point I was saying. I wish I don't get through. I pray and I say I hope I don't get through. And the man told me, you know, you had to go early in the morning to line up. To get called because you don't want that place to cut... The numbers to cut and you're not inside. And I'm praying, please don't let me get through. And. I know they say come back in the afternoon and pick up your card. But I'm glad that it happened that way, I'm glad it happened, you know? You know, part of you wants to come and part don't want to come. And then at the time when I was actually going in and praying not to get through, but I did get through to come.

Brenique Bogle : Did you go alone or did your children go?

Paulet Edwards : No, I went alone.

Brenique Bogle : Talk a little bit about the part of you that didn't want to get through.

Paulet Edwards : Oh, yeah, I love Jamaica. And I, you know, although there was a good future here, I'm saying, Oh, boy futures in Jamaica too. I really don't want to leave friends and workplace. And, you know, I had a good, uh, a good um. Good friend, they're good friends, coworkers, and friends. And, you know, to leave, just to leave. Abandon everything and to start over. Uh, was a little challenging, you know, that part of me say, no, don't don't go, don't go, you're going to leave, your friends are going to leave your family to my family, my sisters and brothers and nieces and nephews, you know? So uh, but. But I did come and I did get a better future for my children.

Brenique Bogle : How was the goodbye process like saying goodbye to your loved ones?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, oh, my goodness. That was so hard. That was so hard. It was so hard that some of my co-workers, I didn't even tell. I just upped and came. But. Oh, my parents! Well, my mom. Well. It was hard, and then I didn't know when I was going to go back. It was tough. It was really tough. It was emotional, a lot of crying and stuff like that, you know?

Paulet Edwards : Did you think that you were ever going to come back?

Paulet Edwards : You mean, go back to Jamaica?

Brenique Bogle : Yeah.

Paulet Edwards : Yes. But at that time, I didn't see how long because, you know, we have to come and build again, start, start building again, start making... like we have the family, but start building a future, stop making... Getting a house. And, you know, I don't know how long it was going to take for me to go back.

Brenique Bogle : And what did you tell your children?

Paulet Edwards : Well, eventually the kids came with me. Did I say that before, they did come with me? They did well on holidays. They didn't come. But when I came, um, they did come with me. They were so happy, especially my older daughter. She was so happy to see her dad. Yeah and I think if I even wanted to go back, she would just not, you know, accept that I think she would hide or something. But yeah. . And I thought it would be wrong to not, um, let them grow up with their father. I know it's a sacrifice. But um, I thought growing up with their father was important to me.

Brenique Bogle : Talk about the process of building against starting from scratch.

Paulet Edwards : Oh, my. My husband had a friend and he had...he had more than one house, but one house was rented. It was like three. We call it two apartments. Yeah, to walk the floor, first floor and the second floor and then the basement. So the other two were rented, so we went to the basement. And oh, my gosh, that little there was a little room, the living room was big enough, but there was a little tiny room. It's like a tiny bathroom that's how tiny it was. And so myself and my husband were in that room and the girls were in the living room on a pullout bed where you call it, you know, those sofa, you pull it out as a bed. Yeah, they were in that in that room and there were, uh, it was something new to them, but the fact that their dad was there, it was all right for them.

Brenique Bogle : So how long did it take for you to start teaching again?

Paulet Edwards : Well, it didn't take me that long because I came in eighty- nine December and by 90 September, I was working.

Brenique Bogle : And then how long did it take you to buy your home?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, my husband had been saving, so it took us Ummm. Ninety-one. Ninety... We bought this house, paid down on this house in ninety-one!

Brenique Bogle : So you came here and within a year you bought a home?

Paulet Edwards : Yeah, because my husband was here before, you know, he had been here for some time before.

Brenique Bogle : So. Do you also... Then what happened to your house in Jamaica?

Paulet Edwards : Oh, my sister-in-law lived there. She lived there for quite a while, over probably over 10 years. I can't remember how long. Um? Probably between 10 and 12 years somewhere there. She she stayed there. She lived there. Uh huh.. Because she was going to be there with my sister. But unfortunately, my sister had passed away and. So she stayed there. Keep the house and, you know, they live there. While we were here.

Brenique Bogle : Um. Did you? So you brought your children here with you when you first came over the years that you've been here, have you brought anyone or helped anyone to? In the immigration process?

Paulet Edwards : No. I have not personally help anyone, but, um, my relatives visit, you know, but especially one sister, they're not willing to give up their job. One of my sisters is a pharmacist. She's not willing to give up. She travels, but she's not staying. Yeah. Oh, yes, I did help my brother, my younger brother. He. He went to what's the state now? Uh, I forgot the name of the state he went to Lincoln University in umm— I forgot the name of the state. I helped him to get here and to get in. He and one of the professors there he is also from Jamaica. He, um, and his mother was living in my house downstairs. And so we formed a little what do you call it, um, group. The group kind of help... His mother, myself, helped him to get into the university. How come I can't remember the name of the state? Missouri

Brenique Bogle : So you mentioned that, um, his mother lived in your home. Did you house any immigrants? Or recently immigrated people.

Paulet Edwards : No. I've had people that were here, relatives of myself and my husband. Quite a few of them, you know we they having domestic problems. They would come here and stay for months. Weeks. But that's as far as it went. Not really housing any immigrant, but just helping people that were here and all situation having a rough time with their. Uh, meet.

Brenique Bogle : But they talk to me a little bit about. Um. The partner or partner in terms of money and sharing money?

Paulet Edwards : And oh, you mean what we call the su su? Oh, that helped a lot. Tell me what that is. The So sou. Yeah, it's like, um, people like, say, a group of 10 people. Uh, each week. You put a certain amount of money, say, 50 dollars, everybody put 50 dollars. So that would be 50 times ten. That would be five hundred dollars. So each week somebody would get five hundred dollars, and that's all the partner is. And then you, you get your five hundred dollars. In our case, we save it. You know, and that is one of the reasons that's one of the outcome, we get the house, so you put away your partner money, you know, you're saving towards getting a

house. So my husband was in the partner, I was in the partner and it was quite a lot of people in that partner. So when you get a draw, when it's your time for your draw, you get, uh, three thousand four thousand dollars and it would go around for years, you know, but each week, so you know, it's fifty-two weeks in the year and each week somebody gets a hand. So sometimes you would get more than one hand for the year. And with me and my husband, it would be two hands. We get one a year and you could also put more than one and a hand. And that helped a lot. You can see you save that way. Yeah.

Brenique Bogle : Is that a common practice?

Paulet Edwards : Yes, a common practice about us, we know that from Jamaica. Yeah, we did that in Jamaica, and um, it's a common practice. Yes, it's West Indian because there are people who are not Jamaicans that were in the partner too.

Brenique Bogle : Talk a bit about your feelings when you moved here. How did you find community, like friends, churches, did you join, you know, parent associations, things like that where you were part of those types of things?

Paulet Edwards : Well, I'm one of Jehovah's Witnesses and I started studying in Jamaica and then I came here and finished studying and got baptized. So I was into that kind of, um, you know, community with going to the hall, meeting people, having fellowship and stuff like that. And also, what's the other part of the question?

Brenique Bogle : You answered it.

Paulet Edwards : Okay.

Brenique Bogle : But do you find that you hang out with? Ok, how would you describe your friend group now and what are the things you have in common?

Paulet Edwards : Well, even see, when I went to Jamaica – when I was in Jamaica, a lot of people had migrated. After a while, you realize everybody migrate. Most people migrate, it's like me, now at this age, a lot of people still, although we're still in the United States, a lot of people migrate, going to Florida, going to warmer states, going to get a house. It was so difficult to get a house in New York, so they go to Georgia to get a house. And so, um. It's just... It's like still getting to be alone again. Thanks for... for the social media. You know we keep in touch, but it's happening all over again. People getting older and they want a warmer climate and people want to go live with the children or the children want to have their mom or come live with them, so they move. And those who don't move yet have the intention of wanting to move.Some even go

back to Jamaica. They accomplished something here, and they send money out to Jamaica to build a house, and eventually, they just go back to Jamaica to live.

Brenique Bogle : Um, in the first half of the interview, we talked a little bit about your experience as a young adult, in college. And when you decided to become a teacher. Talk about. Tell me a little bit more about your experiences, Um, once you graduated and began teaching.

Paulet Edwards : Oh. I um, when I... When I started teaching, this was seventy-six, I think. . I was trained and was on my own as it were. No college affiliated. I mean, I didn't have to report to college or anything like that, so I was on my own. And I went to a school in, uh, Garden Parish St. Ann and I taught there for two years. Um, even now I dream of those kids, it was a wonderful experience. I learned a lot from the kids, although I was teaching them. I learned a lot from the kids and um, they... Those kids were motivating. They were motivated. Yeah, they wanted to do well. I was teaching the second grade and you know, when they get bigger, they start to not want to listen that much, you know? But these kids, these two, not two year old, these grade two kids were very open, willing to learn, excited to learn. And then we would have after-school what you would call it, tutoring here. But um, it was after-school. We call it private lessons. So we used to have private lessons with the kids, too. And um. I also have very blessed with some of them who are out of school now. The bigger ones they were out of school, they didn't get into high school because you have to pass certain exams to get into high school. But they were ambitious and they wanted to get ahead. But they just were going at a slower pace. Well, not even slow because it's just like a certain amount of kids would get a scholarship would get through to go to high school. But they, um, they were ambitious and they wanted to go ahead so they could come for the private lessons. You Teach them. You help them. And then they... They move on. They passed there. What you call it, the would you call it now... CXC, not CXC. I forgot the name of the exams they used to take. They did well, they did well.

Brenique Bogle And then. Tell me about building your life in Jamaica, about meeting your husband. Buying your first home. And tell me about that community.

Paulet Edwards :I met my husband. He was doing an internship at a school where I just started teaching. And we met there and like in two years, we decided to buy a house. So we borrowed money from the credit union, the Teachers' Credit Union and we're not even married yet, but we um. We pay down on a house because they were doing ah – what do you call these community?

Brenique Bogle :A housing development?

Paulet Edwards : Yeah. And so we paid down on a house there and um, we got married seventy-nine and uh we moved into that little house. Take time by little things, buy a bed, buy a dresser, and then immediately his sister came to live with us. And then after that, my sister came to live with us too. Because we just helping the younger ones, you know, to achieve something, and then not too long after that...87?... 85... 86 he came here and I was alone with the girls and my sister in law and my sister.
Brenique Bogle : When did you guys first start talking about coming to the United States?
Paulet Edwards: He first came eighty-six. His friend here influence him. Well, yeah, influence him to come to get a better future here. And so he came, I think eighty-six. And then I came eighty-nine, but it wasn't like really, really, really planned. We just decided to. You know what, my daughter bothering me too much. She just want to see her dad so I just say, you know, I just came and say, I'm not going back.
Brenique Bogle : So when you came in eighty-nine, did you think that you were going to stay?
Paulet Edwards : Oh yeah. So I just decided I'm not going back.
Brenique Bogle : Last question. Do you think that your migration process can be mirrored by individuals seeking to come to the United States today? Why or why not? Oh.
Paulet Edwards : Yes. Yes. You know why? Because, there's opportunity here, definitely, that we don't have back home in Jamaica. There's opportunity to um. Elevate yourself, you know, to get better, get a career, to learn, to do other things, even Jamaica its not... Although people, it's hard to get a house here sometimes. But um, it's so much difficult for like, say, I'm a teacher there, it's much more difficult. People are having it very difficult getting a house now. So I would really say if you want to come, you come the opportunities here. You can do better for yourself. You can um, you can do better for yourself, whether you want to stay here or just educate yourself going to college here. Um, making a better future for yourself for your family. The opportunity is here more than... More so than in Jamaica.

Appendix D (Byron)

Byron Edwards: My name is Byron Edwards. I was born on the 9th of May, 1948, in St Thomas, Jamaica WI. I went to a local primary school and from there I went to (inaudible). I was successful in my JC subject examination, which I started to work as a pre-trained teacher in Jamaica for four years from 1971 to 1974. There attended Moneague Teachers' College for three years and then that same time did my internship in [unintelligible] College. And then I went to

Kingston and teach at Cobra Garden All Age school for four or five years. Then in 1981, 82, I went to work with the a little American Life Insurance Company for another four years and then I came into the United States in 1986. From there, I worked as an ice cream dealer, and then I attended the real estate school where I got my real estate license to work as an agent. Two years after that, I got my broker's license, and then I was able to work as a broker, which had my own business. From there, I became an entrepreneur in real estate, where I bought properties, and rented them out. Buy my own home. Then I came to Jamaica to do some business that is in, you know in 2010- there were about. There I bought the property in Jamaica and then I bought some more properties in Jamaica where I had a commercial building that I fixed and rented out to people like doctors and accountants and lawyers. I also embarked on building a condominium house in St.Thomas, Jamaica.

Brenique Bogle: Well, tell me more about when you first came to the U.S. how did you get a visa to come here?

Byron Edwards: Well, I applied for a visa in Jamaica, which I got a visiting visa. And from there, I worked myself up, came back to Jamaica and continued my work as an insurance agent and then I went back into America in 1986, where there I obtained my Green Card and then after I obtained my citizenship in the USA.

Brenique Bogle: Why did you choose Queens?

Brenique Bogle: Why did I choose it? Generally, when people go to the United States and anywhere they go first because – it was some friends who had been sponsoring me there and I was living with them. And so I become attached to Queens and then I stay there. And then in 1991 there I bought a home for myself there, and then my children came up from Jamaica and we all lived at the house that was being bought since 1991. I still have that home, no intention of selling it. So that's how it went.

Brenique Bogle: Talk about when you first got off the plane. So what did you do when you first arrived?

Byron Edwards: Well, when I first arrived, as I said, my friend was an ice cream dealer and he was the one who employ me to work with him in the company and work with him for about two years. And then I was able to purchase my own truck and he gave me help and teach me the business. So I become a ice cream dealer for Mr. Softee Ice Cream since then. And then I was able to buy my own truck and route, and then I was able to employ other people to work alongside me. Right. I was able to buy two other trucks. So I become an entrepreneur in the ice cream industry. But, you know, the ice cream industry is in the summer. And so I seek other

work to be done. As a result, the fact that I was self-employed, I continue with my self-employment wherein I started to work as a real estate agent. That was in 1997, as an agent. And then I become a broker about four years after. And then I bought my own house in 1991. And then I started to buy other buildings. Fact of the matter, I bought a building in Brooklyn in 2000. It was 2011 I bought that building and then I fix it up. 11 years after I was able to sold it and buy an office when I became a broker, I was able to open an office here in Queens, Guy Brewer Boulevard, about half a mile from JFK Airport. And there I work to employ other agents for about three or four years. We really state they are real estate industry went down and as a result I was forced to sell the building for lack of work in there because we weren't getting any employment because the real estate industry went down. But I was forced to leave that and then embark on – to continue.

Brenique Bogle: What motivated you to leave Jamaica and come to the US?

Byron Edwards: Well at the time the money in Jamaica wasn't that good as a teacher. The money wasn't... the salary we were getting wasn't as plentiful as I thought it would have been as a teacher, because they weren't getting the money in Jamaica we were getting about $5,000 a year, $5,000 a year in that time. And then I left and did the real estate company. And you know what? In the real estate company, I was getting there like 30,000, $36,000 a year. But then what happened, the insurance get flat also. So I had to leave it and seek employment in the world because by then I have kids, four children and a wife to be taken care of. So I left and went to the United States in 1984, and then my friend invited me back in 1985. And then I see how lucrative the ice cream business was, you could make a lot of money, but it's only for six months after that. Six months, you know, I used to do, you know, drive the gypsy cabs right there. Again, you make a reasonable amount of money because you've got self-employment there. All you need is to have a car, get it in the proper way, and then you could go there and make whatever money you want. Right. That was my survival. And as I said, within that time, I was in the real estate industry where you make money until when the real estate industry went down also.

Now, you know, [my friend] tell me if I'm going to Jamaica, do a little investment, which I came here and started the investment here in terms of buying properties, picks them up around them. And that's what I'm doing, building a home for myself and family. But I'm not permanently living in Jamaica. I go to and from Jamaica and I spent six months in Jamaica and go back to the United States, spend another three months in the United States and come back to Jamaica. In Jamaica, I also started in real estate business in Jamaica. I'm a real estate dealer in Jamaica and a property manager where I also employ agents to work alongside me here. And I also be a

manager for people's property where they gave me a certain amount of salary each year to run the business for themselves. Right. That's what I do right now. And then I'm building an apartment. Not finished yet. We are. I'm going to be rented out a portion of it and I'm going to be living in a portion of it. And then I was able to buy other properties also. So it is not bad income-wise. You are able to sit back and think and know be an entrepreneur... be an entrepreneur, meaning that I don't work for anybody. I have people working for me at times.

Brenique Bogle: Okay. So bringing it back to when you first came to the US, how did you even get money to get a cab?

Byron Edwards: From when I was working with my friend on the ice cream truck.

He would give me a little stipend some time and I live at his home, so I was able to save my money and I was able to save my money, you know, and I were able to buy the gypsy cab. I tell you what, I didn't pay a lot of money for it, for the gypsy cab. That time like in the eighties, the money was cheap, small amount of money I paid for the little cab. Fact of the matter I paid $75 for the car. And then I went out I started to work. I started to work in a gypsy cab. Yes mon!

Brenique Bogle: When you came to the US, did you feel that there were differences from Jamaica? Like, did you feel that you were alienated because you were from a different country?

Byron Edwards: I didn't feel alienated because I have my friends there. And they were the ones who encouraged you to be there. Encouraged you – even sometimes feel despondent but they would cheer, you know, just do this, man and do that and then eventually you did it. And by doing it, you get yourself acclimatized to whatever is. I'm in the United States and you see more and more that you are able to be successful. America mean hard work and you put your shoulder to the wheel. And one of the thing that I did, I tried to educate myself even more in the United States, went to a lot of schools, you know, do this, do that. I went to. I went to Queens College and then I become a phlebotomist. Phlebotomists are people who draw blood, right. And I could work in the lab, but I didn't like the phlebotomist based on the danger of being a phlebotomist; hepatitis B and hepatitis C at the time was raging. And then, you know, the blood, I didn't like that. So I left that right and I started – I'm also an insurance appraiser where when somebody's building had been burned, I could go out there and asses it and, you know, send them – send those things back to the insurance company and see to it that people are being paid for the damages that fire have left, you know, I did that also at the same time, I bought property, rented them out. And, you know, it was tough for management. And since I decided to, you know, do something different in Jamaica, being in Jamaica, I don't think I would be able to manage Jamaican properties and manage property in the United States. So I choose that I would do most

of my thing in Jamaica. I still have my real estate office in the United States, which is not as profitable as it should have been. But I still have my license in the United States. My broker license in the United States. I'm also a notary republic in the United States and I still pay my dues. And when I'm in the United States to do services for the people in the United States as a notary republic.

Brenique Bogle: So, when you came to the United States in 86, did you feel like you were or did you think that you were giving up anything to come to the US? And do you feel that you gained anything?

Byron Edwards: I didn't feel as if I'm giving up anything because I was able to support my family better in Jamaica and I was able to support myself better. So I didn't feel I have given up anything. And the fact that I, you know, wanted my family to be here with me, to be in the United States, with me so that they too could see what it's like and make a decision whether they want to live there or not. Right. Which, of course, it did happen in 1989.

Brenique Bogle: So when you to buy your house, what sort of like saving mechanisms did you use? Did you ever join a partner or SuSu?

Byron Edwards: Yes, I joined a SuSu in America that is what it was being called and I saved my money and I tried to accumulate credits for purchases. Fact of the matter, a friend of mine was saying to me, in order for me to have a good credit, you have to show the history of how you pay back money. So I joined a Susu. I joined a SUSU Where I could accumulate a certain amount of money. And then I joined the bank and I was able to borrow some money from the bank in order to fix up my ice cream truck. At the time when I fixed that truck – fact of the matter- I paid only $5,000 for that truck, and by doing it for about four/five years, I was able to buy another truck for $130,000. You know, it's credited, you know, and all those things helped to build my credit up. And so in buying the [truck], I was able to buy a house because I had good credit. The history of my credit was good. So I was able to have a very good credit and we were able to buy the house.

Brenique Bogle: So do you feel that SuSu helped you build your credit?

Byron Edwards: Well, my credit was built not from the SuSu, was there to give me that income that I [needed] to pay the down payment on the house. But what helped me to build the credit was I borrowed $5,000 from the bank and it so happened that I was told to open the account so that the money comes from my account each month to the bank. So I don't miss any payment. And that's what I did because of doing that it was able to boost my credit rating because there and then each month the money was taken at a specific time at all times and go to my account.

So I didn't have any late payment. So when we were buying that house was my credit was superb. Right. Very good – in the 800. Right. So I was able to get the house through the umm... what do you call? Housing- what they call that now I don't remember the name of what they call that. FHA!, I got an FHA house. I'll tell you what, I paid $145,000 for that house - $145,000. I was told only to pay it on like $10,000 on that house. And I got 100% financing and it's a two-family house. So I was able to use the payment from the rental part of it to help me with my um, my payment of my mortgages. And at that time, my mortgage was $1,500 a month. Because what happened is that my interest rate when I bought a house was 11% interest rate. Interest rate was very high. But I still get it done. And as time goes by, I refinanced the house in order to cut down on the amount the interest rate. I have done so until right now, that house is only 2%. And not only that, with the price that that house has been risen. Now, I can probably say um, the house worth approximately about $800,000. Right. That's what it's is right now. And within that time, I borrowed money from equity in my house and buy other houses. That's what I did, buy other houses, even borrow money from it to help me do what I'm doing in Jamaica to a point. So you see, it was very good.

Brenique Bogle: Why did you choose to go back to Jamaica?

Byron Edwards: When I go back to Jamaica sometime, I wonder why. But sometimes you come to Jamaica and you see all the people live and see the kind of opportunities that you have in the United States and then you come back to Jamaica to see if you could instill some of what you learned there. You know. And the real estate industry has been just recognized in Jamaica. And that is one of the thing why I came back and to teach other people how you can make money from real estate, how you can get a house to buy something. Fact of the matter, I am a real estate instructor in the United States. Right. So as a result, I was able to teach people, even people working in the young industry, like managers and so on. I was able to give them guideline of how to really formulate the industry. I have even bought books in the United States and taken to them to use in Jamaica in their training and so on.

Brenique Bogle: So do you feel like you're giving back?

Byron Edwards: To me, it is a matter of give back. I'm also a Justice of Peace in Jamaica, just like a notary republic in the United States. I signed documents people and you know, go to courses and only able to you know very informative to people. You have a restorative justice. If I want, I can be a les magistrate in Jamaica. You know, where I would go to the courts also and try cases like these small cases. But for right now, I'm not doing that. I just, for instance, in the community I will sign papers. People will come to me for advice and so on and I will give it to

them. And then I did my real estate. I'm doing my real estate in Jamaica right now. I'm seeking new ways how can I help the small man out there to find a piece of land. Right? For instance, I'm about open a foundation in Jamaica wherein something like the Habitat for Humanity in the United States. Having a different name, here, where I can help people to buy a piece of property and to start a lickle ting pon it for yourself, which is a big thing to people in Jamaica – a big big thing! So that is what I'm embarking on. The foundation is just in it's baby stage, you know, just trying to get off the ground. It's difficult to get a foundation in Jamaica in terms of, you know, the government. But I'm trying – hoping that I will be successful in it so that I can give back even more to the people. Fact of the matter, the president – the vice president of the association where I am living down in South Heaven, we have challenges. And I'm trying to impart knowledge to them so that we can get things going, you know, on the right and proper way. Find an agency that can help us to do this and help us to get grants to people. You have the art program in Jamaica, we are training the kids. I am involved in the youth clubs where I work alongside the art program where they do training for kids who leave school in the tourist industry, electrical, boat, electrical and carpentry and all those things cabinet making – learn trades and then they get from level one to level three. Get in your level three, you know, that means say you're able to go out there and do things for yourself and so on. They do electrical and they do plumbing, they do tiling, a lot of things in the construction area. So, you know that, again, that make me feel good that I'm doing something for the kids that can make them into somebody in the future.

Brenique Bogle: Do you feel that the relationships with your community and your family and friends, do you feel like it's changed since the fact that you moved to the US and then moved back?

Byron Edwards: What you must realize is that most of my companions, they also have left. So, yes, it is a bit difficult for me to reach out to some of these people. Our thinking, are different, our moral standards are different because I'm much older than they are. I'm 73 going 74 this year, you know. You know, they believe that I am too disciplined. I'm too – I'm too tough on them where discipline is concerned. But I am somebody who is not – I don't take shortcuts and I believe in discipline. I do not think that in discipline, people have far to go in life. And as a teacher that has been instilled in me and the fact that being a teacher and we are builders in community was the only thing that was charged to us when we were leaving college is that you are leaders of your community so you have to take those initiatives to go out there and build your community not only in the school but in their whole community because they need it. They need to be taught how to get themselves together, hold their citizens' association, how to seek out

opportunity from the government and, you know, and even from the private sector. So these are things that I am trying to do and I'm being well received. People want me to do this for them. People want to do that for them. But, you know, it's some kind of difficult anyhow sometimes. But you still try to force yourself. When anything you realize people are expecting you because you are invited to do a lot of things. You know like functions and when you go to the function you are being called upon to say something as a justice in the community, people come to you. Them have dem domestic problem, the mouth, all kind of problems they might have. And they believe that you are going to have them. Yes, some of them you might be able to help, but some of them, you can't so you send them to the appropriate authority that will give them the help that is needed. Right. Some get through, some don't. Right. So, you know, I feel pretty good that I'm here helping to a point.

Brenique Bogle: So last question. Do you think that your migration process can be mirrored today by individuals seeking to move from Jamaica to the US?

Byron Edwards: Yes, I yeah, I would say there are opportunities in the U.S.; Number one, the education opportunity, it doesn't matter how old you are, you can find a school to go and there is something there for you to do. Number two, you are always able to get a job. You are always able to get a job and a good job. Number three, you are able to go back to school. As I said, it doesn't matter how old you are. And to achieve whatever goal academically, educationally that you want to pursue, there is no limit. Life in Jamaica, people believe that when you return to your schools, they have to go try to make two ends meet in order to help your kids or so on. The job situation in Jamaica is not like in the United States. The employment rate in [the United States] is much better than in Jamaica. The salary in America is much better than what it is in Jamaica, the availability of jobs, the availability of foods that all dem ting, and even the United States government have program that you can also benefit from. You know, that is not in Jamaica. Even if it's in Jamaica, it's minimal... very minimal. And in Jamaica... Then the political affiliation have a lot to do, especially the party in power at the time, you know, because they depend on the work from the governmental right. And in Jamaica right now, I think climate change have a very bad effect on the and the economy in Jamaica climate change, we don't have the kind of climate change we had when we were growing up. We don't have the kind of rainfall. You don't find [00:33:41] the people dem go out there and work as I used to. Most of these old-time things have been dying out because um, other things come in that they want to embark on – and fact of the matter, in my community, we used to have a lot of pimentos, we used to have grapefruit, provisions like avocado pear, Otaheite Apple, we used to have a lot of limes and it's

not there anymore. So I see – chocolate we used to have. It is a devastating effect! Right now, you know, they're trying to push things that can be done to help with what is really going on, especially in the agricultural sector. First time we used to have bananas where we export, we don't have it anymore. We used to have pimento that we export, we don't have it anymore. We used to have bananas. We don't have the rainfall as we used to. Used to have sugarcane. A lot of the sugar cane factories have been closed. Some of the bauxite companies have been closed. So people have to embark on other things. The fact of the matter, you have more higglers in Jamaica more than anything else in Jamaica. You have never seen so much higglers. Everybody selling something, even on the street, they sell food on the street, every other little house you go somebody could have something – out at the gate selling something and they sell! I don't know. Even when you go to funeral, you see people have truck and carts parked up selling something, selling soup, selling cigarettes, selling food, selling drinks! Yes mon. So you know, in other words, they have the name that people in Jamaica have to really tek dem han up and tun fashion because you have to do something to survive. Even the animals, you don't have as much animal in Jamaica, like the pigs and the cows, and the goats. My community that I live in you used to see bananas, people milk the cows, milk the goats and sell it. It's not there anymore! You hardly find cows because the other day you have the cow – the disease – the cow disease in Jamaica and in other parts of United States, they have a lot of that. Since then, the beef industry has just coming back because people was afraid of eating beef. So you know what happen? People just let go the cows them and go to stray because they weren't selling you know, all these things, you have to encounter it. Right now, even the thing that is happening in Ukraine with Russia has affected Jamaica. You do not have things like you used to have it. The light bill raise, the telephone bill raise,the gas at the gas station raise, the food raise. For instance, to get the feed for the animals raised. So the feed raised then eventually the meat is gonna raise. The people have to pay more to go to the market so even that the food in the market gonna raise and some of them they are scarcity in the food. So if you know they are a scarcity in the food, then you know seh the price has tripled. You know. So, you know, people don't grow food again like first time in Jamaica. So as a result, there is a hardship on people. Most things have to be imported, especially the meat kind... have to be imported and they have to pay big money for them. So you know but I think on a whole I'm glad that I'm back and I can give advice to people sometimes. Some who get advice have gone out there and, you know, be successful that they come back to thank you, some don't, but it doesn't matter. You continue to do the things that you think can be beneficial to the youth. Because they are the future for any community and they are the ones who build the

community. And so even to build new whole country on a whole, whether Jamaica, America or whatever or whatever. So they come first. They should be taken care of to the best of our ability, the older head[s].