Tapestry of Human Relations Between Southern African American Migrants and Afro Caribbean Immigrants in a New York City Neighborhood Community

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in
Teachers College, Columbia University

2021

Abstract

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This ethnographic study investigates conditions in which groups often found to be at odds with each can instead form mutually productive and supportive relationships. As an Anglophone West Indian immigrant man myself, I am personally interested in how members of my group find success in the US and fit into the larger US African descendant sphere of Black people. As a clergyman, I am professionally interested in how different Black ethnic groups find ways to get along and even appreciate each others' differences, as part of a larger whole. Since much of my working life is keyed to creating conditions for a positive climate in which people can be the best of themselves, I hypothesized that in the right environment groups known to be suspicious of and stereotype each other, and even engage in outright conflict, could reach a workable resolution over time. That of Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans presented an exemplary case.

To investigate whether this positive outcome was possible in the right conditions, I selected St. Albans, Queens, 1965-present, as a site to conduct research that would help me (a) learn how Anglophone Afro Caribbean immigrants made successful places for themselves in the US and the neighborhood; (b) discover how, from their point of view, they found paths to acceptance and even mutual appreciation of African Americans of Southern migrant backgrounds; and (c) test whether particular characteristics of a neighborhood environment offer

support for mutual acceptance and appreciation, without either group having to give up what it culturally values. The study found that because of several factors St. Albans indeed promoted a context that fostered getting along, and even getting along well. These included sufficient employment and housing opportunities, similarities in income and middle class status, numerous churches that reinforced positive values, and the fact that the racial tensions characteristic of many parts of the US were not prevalent in the daily life of the neighborhood.

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Dr. Victoria J. Marsick, Professor of Adult Learning and Leadership at Teachers College Columbia University, in one of her lectures at Teachers College said, “Writing a dissertation can feel like climbing a mountain wearing blinders … and practical advice is needed to guide one up the mountain without fatal flaws and time-consuming setbacks.” Although I was the sole researcher for this study, I could not have done the research without the support of professors, colleagues, sponsors, friends, and several institutions of learning. From the genesis to the completion of the study, I had assistance in pulling it all together, which can be seen in the pages that follow. It is with a sense of gratitude that I give credit to the many rich resources of support, inspiration, constructive criticism, and guidance that helped me to the completion of this project. I owe them a debt of gratitude.

Living in Brooklyn and subsequently Mount Vernon, New York, as a graduate student of Teachers College, I became very much aware of the importance of the new immigrant Afro Caribbean in New York. My summer fieldwork in Blanchisseuse, Trinidad, West Indies piqued my interest in Black ethnic integration with other Black ethnics. In my fieldwork in Blanchisseuse, Black immigrants from the island ward Tobago immigrated to Trinidad, which was the area of Blanchisseuse where mainly Black migrants came from other towns in Trinidad. These two groups of Blacks had the same diasporic experience from Africa but a different cultural and social orientation. Trinidad Blanchisseuse has a larger population of Blacks and more opportunities in terms of institutions, education, economic opportunities, and public health facilities than the immigrant population of Tobagonians. Thus, these factors proved more important to intergroup dynamics than their shared African Diasporan heritage.

This summer fieldwork helped to foster my desire and interest in researching Afro Caribbean immigrants and southern African American migrants to New York and their relocation to St. Albans, Queens. Several institutions were supportive in providing space and resources for me to think and write. They include the Teachers College Library; Firestone Library at Princeton University, New Jersey; Long Island Historical Collection of Queens, New York; and Queensborough Central Library in Jamaica, New York (whose staff members assisted me in locating and photocopying newspaper clippings and other documents). The staff at Medgar Evers College's Caribbean Research Center deserve mention for making recommendations. Also Knights Road Medical Associates, Bensalem, Pennsylvania, provided space for study and writing.

Several people gave me boosting energy, ideas, encouragement, and tips on how to make this research coherent and the dissertation easier and less painful and demystifying. These include Professor Lambros Comitas, my first mentor, and subsequently Professor Hervé Varenne. Professor Marsick, in another one of her lectures, said, "One's sponsor has always been one's primary guide, for he or she is that voice who had helped others and who had trod that path before. Their advice is intended as a series of dots that, since connected, are meant to represent that picture of good research." Professor Comitas's guidance and advice were intended to make the research vigorous, but also to help me complete the study in a timely manner. Also, Professor Varenne, who read the manuscript and made valuable suggestions, aided me to conceptualize the data. To them I say thank you for your guidance.

I am also grateful to the other members of my committee, whose work and help will be remembered and cherished by me. The professors and individuals who have helped me on my scholastic journey are Professor Hervé Varenne, with whom I took my first class at Teachers

College; Professor George Bond, with whom I also took classes and who was instrumental in encouraging me along the way; and Professor Charles Harrington of Teachers College, who believed in me and urged me to continue my work to completion. To them I say thank you!

And there are others whose names I must mention. I am grateful to Russell Gulizia, Dana Klainberg, and Alima Alexander from the Office of Doctoral Studies (ODS). Their advice and encouragement inspired me to complete my research project. And there are Rachael Simon, Dr. Dennis Chambers, Robert J. Schwarz, and John Darlington: their help was invaluable to me.

I express many thanks to Dr. Umar, Dr. Sabahat Farooq, Dr. Daniel D. Sackett, Dr. Anton Kolomeyer, Fr. Keith Voets, Dennis Walcott, Joan King, Dr. Jessica Prince Wolfish, and Leroy Comrie. To them I express my gratitude for their encouragement to me along my research journey.

I am especially grateful to Dr. Gabriella Oldham, who has worked tirelessly in the production of the manuscript. Thank you, Dr. Oldham!

For comments and discussions with members of the Oral Defense Committee—Dr. Hervé Varanne (Sponsor), Dr. Nicholas Limerick (Chairperson and second reader), Dr. Grey Gundaker (third reader), and Dr. Melanie Brewster (external examiner)—I say thank you. Although the session was intense, the members of the committee could not have been more gracious with their feedback and constructive comments.

A special thanks to Dr. Grey Gundaker, whose perceptive insights, copious amount of detail, and astute comments have improved the manuscript significantly and have brought a greater scholarly understanding to the dissertation.

I owe a great debt to the members of my family, my daughter Lois and son Luke. They never ceased to encourage me on this journey. Their encouragement and enthusiasm were constant and supportive to me.

And there are many people who live and associate with the neighborhood community of St. Albans. There are too many to acknowledge by name. I owe a debt of gratitude for their help to make the completion of this research possible.

Last but not least, my thanks to Almighty God and to the members of the Cornwall Heights U.M. Church, whose enablement gave me strength and endurance to achieve this monumental task.

J. A. N.

Dedication

To my parents,

James and Francess Nelson,

who were my first teachers and role models.

Figure 1. *Map of the Borough of Queens*

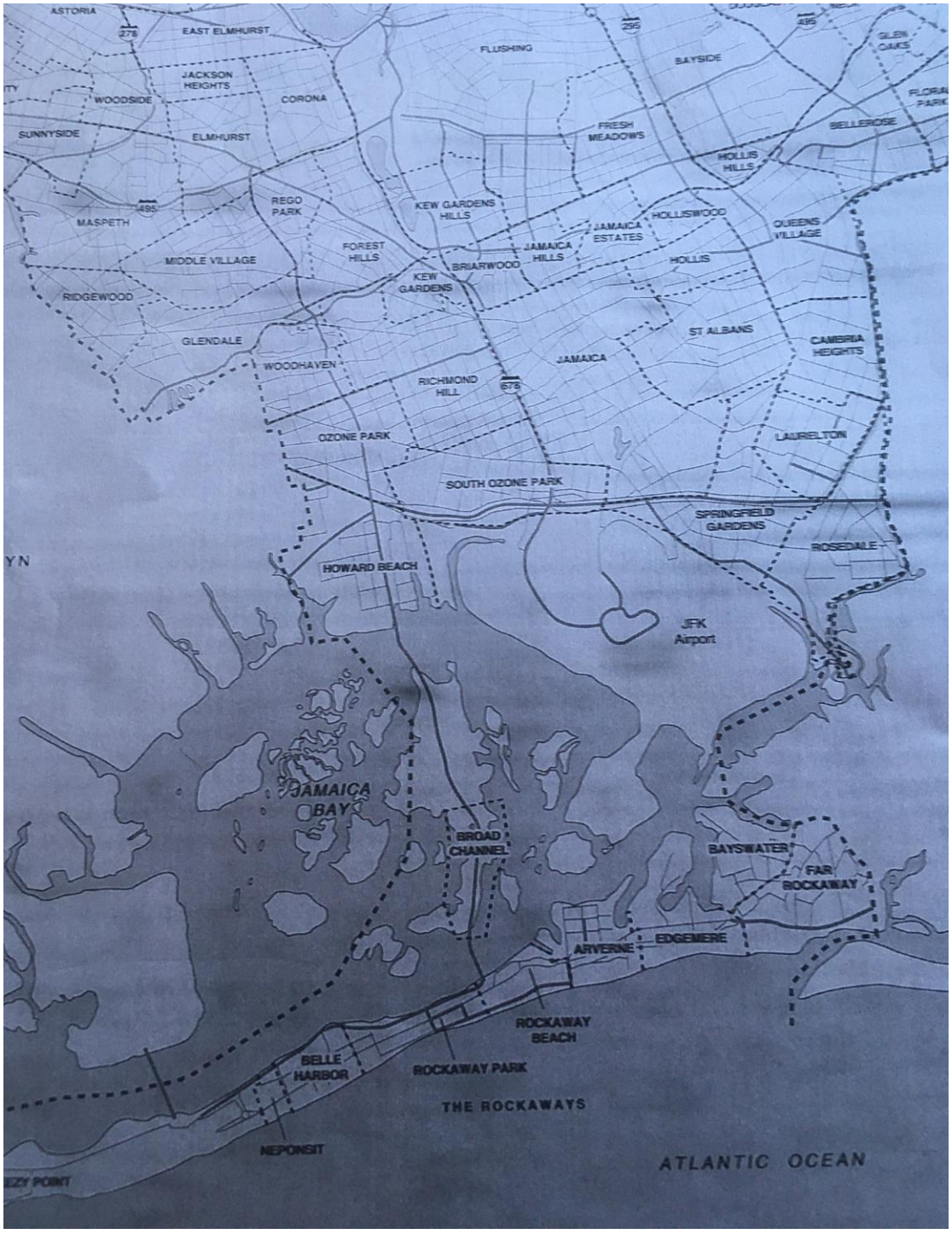
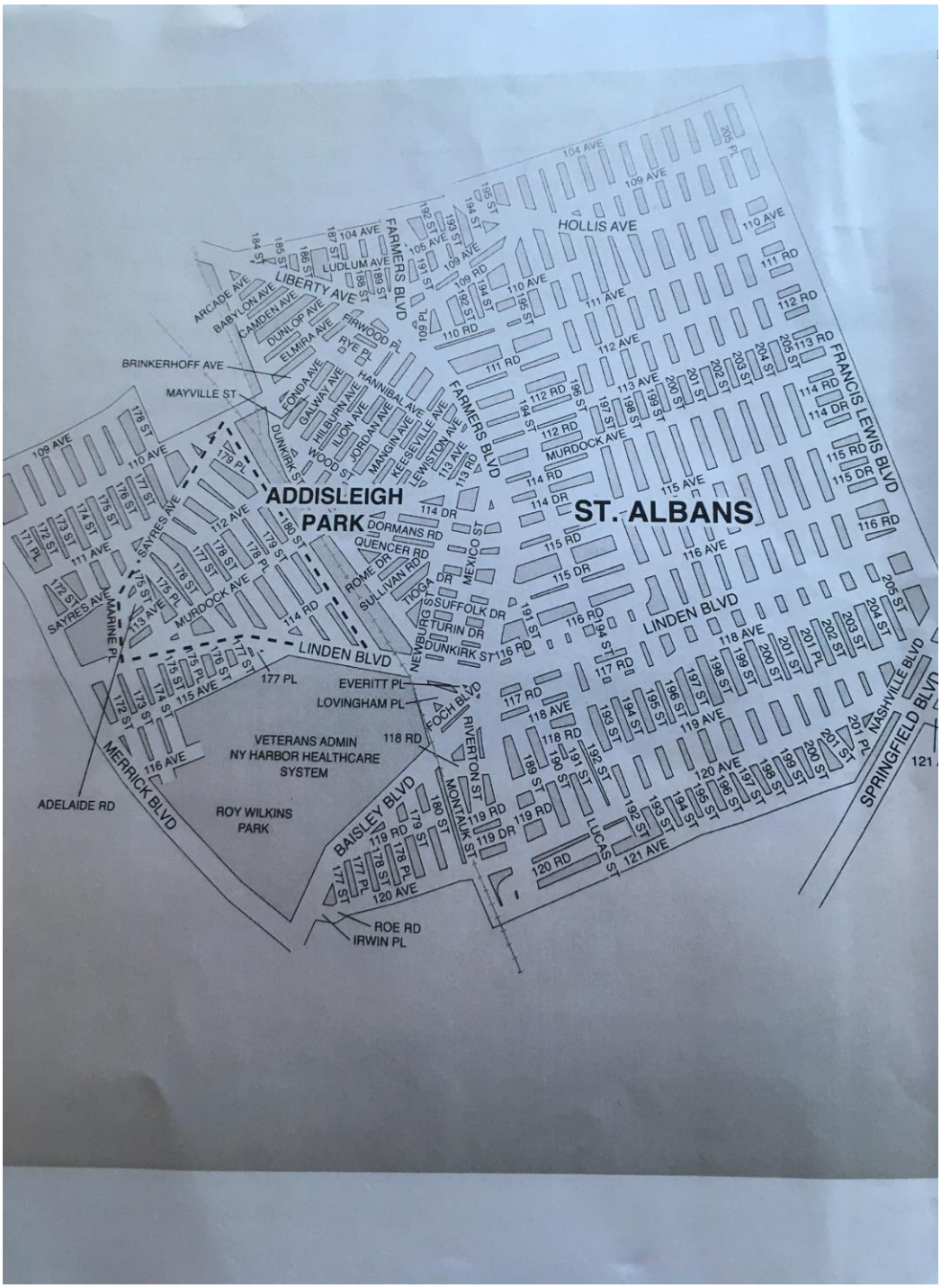


Figure 2. *Map of Study Site: St. Albans and Addisleigh Park, Queens*



Chapter 1: Introduction

The places that I call home have shifted over the years along with finding employment in academia and religion.

I was born on the twin island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies. My intellectual development in the early stages of my life is in British scholarship. After completing the London Graduate Certificate of Examination (G.C.E.) and graduating from the West Indies School of Theology in Trinidad, religion fashioned my thinking as well as other academic disciplines throughout the years.

During the times of my early development, Trinidad and Tobago had already graduated from centuries of colonialism of the British. However, colonial footprints are still present in the structures of education, government, language, culture, and customs of the people in the twin island nation.

When I first arrived in the United States, I lived in the neighborhood of the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York. The population in the area was mixed with Whites (who were in the majority), along with West Indians and Hispanics. Many Whites moved out of the area to the East Flatbush/Canarsie/Midwood sections of Brooklyn, where more single-family and two-family houses with backyards and lawns were in abundance. The majority of Whites moved out to Long Island in order to have safer streets, better schools, and higher quality of housing.

My years of intellectual development continued in the United States during the Seventies. I graduated from Eastern University and Palmer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, and achieved certification as a doctoral candidate in Religion at Drew University in New Jersey and as a certified doctoral candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York.

I appreciated the years spent in religion as one of the leaders in local church institutions. However, I wanted to be exposed to a broader range of ideas and be influenced by professors in other areas of academic disciplines. I settled on Anthropology—the study of humanity—which is concerned with defining and describing human behavior. My hope was that the systematic approach of Social and Cultural Anthropology in understanding cultural diversity throughout the world would help me overcome any culture bias I might have and to understand and appreciate the diversities of behaviors and thoughts that exist in a cultural heterogeneous world.

,What emerged from my years in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York institutions of learning, combined with my colonial and postcolonial West Indian heritage, was a strong commitment to academic reverence and public involvement, engagement in European culture which is the hallmark of West Indian intellectualism, as well as African American and West Indian social and cultural norms.

My scholastic training, both in the West Indies and in the United States, led me to a dogmatic commitment to human relations and races/ethnics, as well as other interesting topics in the social science fields. Some of the topics of interest to me are social and cultural attitudes and behaviors between ethnic groups; attitudes toward foreign nations and international relations; patterns of stratification and mobility; and religious beliefs and practices.

After graduation and ordination, I pastored four churches in the United Methodist denomination. Two of these congregations are in Pennsylvania and the other two in New York City—one in Brooklyn and the other in Harlem. The church in Brooklyn had a membership of three hundred fifty congregants, while the church in Harlem had a membership of three thousand.

The church in Brooklyn was comprised of West Indians and Southern African Americans, with West Indians in the majority. The church in Harlem also had Southern African Americans and West Indians, with Southern African Americans and their descendants in the majority.

In both church congregations, tension existed between members of the two ethnic groups. This tension resulted largely from the groups' perceptions of the other's members along with misunderstanding of each other's group culture. There was suspicion and mistrust between members of each group. However, gradually there was reduction of the tension and, ultimately, attitude change between members of each group during my tenure at both churches.

Several actions were useful to bring about attitude change: the implementation of diversified ethnic leadership in the organizational structure in both churches; cooperation between the two groups through admonition of the need to do so; and the scheduling of events and other forms of group interaction where integration took place at several levels.

It became clear to me that social and cultural aggregates in a society should not be reduced to the sum of an individual or a group perception. Understanding how groups or individual ideologies are rationalized, sustained, and reproduced, and how they relate to each other over time will continue to be of interest to me.

This type of reasoning informs my present research study, the interactions and integration between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants.

Because of my background I am also concerned with the invisibility of Afro Caribbean immigrants and how they became visible in the American society. The questions and ambitions that motivated this study come from my experiences, both personal as well as academic. I

wanted to tell the stories of people from the Caribbean who have been invisible and who now live in a new environment. I wanted to understand their experience of immigration— one that is very much part of my experience—and if and how they were able, in the neighborhood community where they lived, to change attitudes in human relations that were once hostile to them. Therefore, although I interviewed and observed members of both groups, the stories told here are largely from an Afro Caribbean perspective.

The Caribbean diaspora in the United States comprises almost eight million individuals who were either born in the Caribbean island nations or reported ancestry of a given country in the Caribbean, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2017). The entry of Afro Caribbeans into the United States has added their diverse customs, distinctive traditions, labor force resources, institutions, and professional qualifications to the pluralistic society of America. The history of Afro Caribbeans coming to the United States is similar in many ways to other groups who immigrated to America.

Two main aspects of the culture of Afro Caribbean immigrants have helped them to be successful in America. The first is that they have displayed a positive attitude toward work, employment, and the general American society. This is appreciated by employers. Their background characteristics including human capital, connection to social networks, and friends and relatives helped their entry into the labor force. Some of the Afro Caribbeans come with certain qualifications and training needed in the United States. For example, persons who have training in the health profession can secure employment because of the demand in the U.S. economy. Their native English language helped in transferring their foreign qualifications into American credentials. The working-class immigrants secured jobs at the lower level through contacts of friends and relatives.

The second aspect of Afro Caribbean culture is that the immigrants have an understanding and certain expectation of race and ethnic relations that allowed them to interact with America's race and ethnic structures in a successful way. Because Afro Caribbeans come from a society with a majority of Blacks, many of whom held high positions in their homeland, they were able to display high ambitions and expectations in their new environment in America.

Mary C. Waters (1999) in *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and Realities* noted:

> This combination of high ambitions, friendly relations with Whites on an interpersonal level and strong militance in encountering any perceived discrimination leads to some better outcomes in the labor market for West Indians than for Black Americans. (p. 7)

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1920), in "The Rise of the West Indian," wrote in the monthly journal of *The Crisis* of the possible impact Caribbean immigrants might have on Black Americans. He stated:

> It is the mass of peasants uplifted by war and migration that is today beginning to assert itself at home and abroad and their new cry of "Africa for the Africans" strikes with a startling surprise upon America's darker millions. The moment is yet inchoate and indefinite, but it is tremendously human, piteously sincere and built in the souls of hardworking, thrifty, independent people who, while long deprived of higher training, nevertheless have among them very few illiterates or criminals. It is not beyond possibility that this new Ethiopia of the Isles may yet stretch out hands of helpfulness to the 12 million black men of America. (pp. 214-215

Stereotypes of Afro Caribbean thrift and hard work and African American entitlement or laziness can easily become fodder for conflict, regardless of how members of either group actually behave. However, this study does not seek data in which Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans use their experiences to criticize Southern African American migrant culture to demonstrate that it is dysfunctional nor Southern African American migrants to be critical of Afro Caribbean culture to demonstrate any kind of superiority of their ethnic group. Instead I am interested in whether and how Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American

migrants have reached a positive outcome through integration in my study area of St. Albans. This kind of change involves changing the biased perceptions and behaviors that deny equal opportunities and integration on several levels.

There are many studies of ethnicity in America in academic journals and texts or reports of governmental research, and so on. However, now what is needed is research that gives a deeper understanding of specific factors at play in the area of social and cultural relations between ethnic groups and how we make sense of them. By using ethnographic methods that take us close to people's lives, this study seeks to enlighten the discourse and in relation to Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in the decades from 1965 to the present in New York City, one of the major places in the post-World War II period of settlement for West Indians abroad.

The study was influenced by and, at the same time, builds on the work of Daniel M. Wilner, Rosabella P. Walkley, and Steward W. Cook (1995), *Human Relations in Interracial Housing: A Study in Contact Hypothesis*. The basic contribution of this study is that it presents a picture of human relations that existed between two groups of people—Negro and White—in four housing projects.

Their work gave a detailed account of relations between Negroes and Whites, who lived close to one another as neighbors, either in the same building or in adjoining buildings. The authors analyzed their evidence in such a way as to travel the process through which interracial adjustments took place. They also recounted the impact of "integration" on the feelings and activities of Whites who were initially hostile to the other race. The findings of the study offer some answers that integration provides and works out in practice.

These are some of the factors that present considerable refinement of our understanding of the processes, leading to integration and attitude change between two ethnic groups.

The main argument of this study is: If there are two groups of equal status, living in symbiosis in a community, although at first there is a culture of tension between them where they view each other with suspicion, mistrust, and misunderstanding of culture norms; if there is no social distance ordering, if there is no competition for resources, but if there is integration between groups in a number of social situations, then over time a positive change of attitude between groups will occur. This argument began as a hypothesis. I imagined that if I could find a context that actually exhibited these characteristics, I would also see, on a larger scale, a process that followed the trajectory of the two church congregations mentioned above.

As originally conceived, the hope for the study was that it could be a model for anyone or communities interested in integration and change between ethnic groups. The general plan I followed was to spend time in the area investigating the social and cultural relations between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants living in St. Albans in whatever ways presented themselves. I also selected a sample and focus group from the population as well as two persons whose life and work can be seen as representative of successful Afro Caribbean immigrants who interacted frequently with Southern African American migrants in St. Albans and got along well with them.

I began seeking out information of the relationship between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in several possible research sites through telephone calls and personal visits to neighborhood communities. I soon realized that the reports in other neighborhoods regarding the two ethnic groups varied significantly. Intergroup patterns and integration of the two ethnic groups meant something entirely different to different people. For

example, one person in one of the sites referred to the integration of ethnic groups as groups of different ethnicities just being in the neighborhood without doing any activity together. In other instances, respondents made no distinction between Afro Caribbeans and West Indians, which include both English and non-English Black and White people. One respondent said, “They all speak with the same accent as me.” Also, I found that some people made no distinction between Southern African Americans and African Americans.

After an exhaustive search for a site where the two specific groups lived in the same neighborhood, I finally settled on St. Albans, Queens. What started out as a visit to St. Albans turned out to stimulate a whirlwind of excitement as a meaningful place to pursue research as a partial fulfillment of the dissertation project.

The challenge after the selection of the research site was to seek out whether the relationships between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants of the neighborhood met the conditions for the purpose of the research. What reinforced my decision to select St. Albans for the research site resulted from a conversation with a customer in a Caribbean restaurant in St. Albans. The customer was an African American female from North Carolina. The customer said to me:

> I am an African American from North Carolina, and I met a lot of people from the Caribbean here in St. Albans. Actually, I work with people from the Caribbean, and I do have friends who are from there and we get along very well. I love Caribbean music, especially the Calypsos of the Mighty Sparrow and other Calypsonians. I also enjoy the music of Bob Marley and other Reggae artists. The food made in this Caribbean restaurant is so tasty. The dishes are well seasoned, spicy sometimes, but very enjoyable. Though American and Caribbean have different cultures, it is such a good thing that we can share our cultures, talk about them in a positive way to each other, and have a good relationship between Caribbeans and Americans, especially among the Black ethnic groups.

This encounter gave me a window into my interest in the study of intergroup relations between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans.

Another criterion for making my decision for selecting St. Albans as the research site was the composition of the Black population. At present, St Albans is made up of 94% Black, with 34% West Indians, 60% African Americans, and 6% other ethnicities, including Whites of European descent.

Easy accessibility to St. Albans and respondents was an added determining factor for research site selection. I was able to enter the setting easily, participated in activities of both groups freely, and had freedom to record my observations and data in the study.

Bernard H. Russell (1998), in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*, stated:

> Anthropologists have argued in recent years that good ethnographic field methods must provide a clear account of the field paths followed to obtain the data, out of which the local knowledge and the eventual ethnography built on it are constructed. (p. 3)

Caribbean immigrants mostly from the British colonies have been coming to New York since the turn of the 20th century, but really exploded as a population after the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act or the Immigration and Nationality Act, which opened the door to America to almost every immigrant group. The number of Caribbean immigrants almost tripled beginning from 1965 to 1995, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (2003). As these immigrants left their countries for the United States, most Caribbean immigrants went to Brooklyn, establishing a majority base in the Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant sections of the borough.

It is no coincidence that immigrants and Southern Blacks arrived in New York City at the same time. Both seemingly disparate movement streams were in part labor displacement, influenced by the growth patterns and need of industry in both regions and the expression of transportation networks making northern cities more accessible (Watkins-Owens, 1996, p. 6). The African American newcomers during the “Great Migration” from the South settled in Harlem, in the northern part of Manhattan, New York.

The Borough of Queens experienced an influx of Blacks as a major destination around the time of the World's Fair and the building of the Triborough Bridge in the 1940s. After the widespread development of northern Queens for the Fair and the opening up of access to the borough with the bridge, a significant migration of African Americans from Harlem occurred.

Around the same time, another development led to the population of southeast Queens by Blacks, some coming from Brooklyn and some from Harlem. The neighborhood of St. Albans is part of southeast Queens. Prior to World War II, W. I. Levitt and Sons built (mostly upscale) housing on and around Long Island, New York. Levitt and Sons' innovation popularized this type of planned community in the years following World War II and opened up Long Island, making available hundreds of homes for the people of Queens to move into. A significant amount of White flight began, in which many southeast Queens (especially St. Albans) families and many soldiers returning from World War II moved out to the huge suburban project. This emptying of the population of St. Albans and other areas of southeast Queens led to a lot of housing becoming suddenly available, and Blacks from Brooklyn and Harlem stepped in on the heels of the departing Whites. The real estate markets became more concerned with making sales to those with resources to buy than with ethnic preferences. The "Exclusionary Restrictive Covenants" were used to keep people of different races/ethnicities from buying in certain neighborhoods, such as the case in St. Albans. Ines M. Miyares (2004), in *From Exclusionary Covenants to Ethnic Hyperdiversity in Jackson Heights, Queens*, stated, "The developers never foresaw the stock market crash of the subsequent real estate collapse, events that rendered Exclusionary Covenants moot in the struggle for economic survival" (p. 462).

The Immigration Reform Act of 1965 transformed St. Albans from its exclusive White Protestant origin to the current state of ethnic diversity.

Setting

St. Albans is a residential middle-class neighborhood in the southeastern portion of the New York City borough of Queens. St. Albans covers an area of three miles and lies at the intersection of Linden Boulevard and Jamaica Boulevard, about two miles north of John F. Kennedy International Airport. It is southeast of Jamaica, west of Cambria Heights and Laurelton.

Early Settlement

Part of the land grant of Dutch settlers from New Netherlands Governor Peter Stuyvesant (landowner in the northern part of New Amsterdam) in 1655, the area, like much of Queens, remained farmland and forest for most of the next two centuries. By the 1800s, the plantations of four families—the Remsens, Everetts, Ludlums, and Hendricksons—formed the nucleus of this sprawling farm country in the eastern portion of Jamaica Township.

The neighborhood was established when a syndicate of developers from Manhattan laid out streets and building lots in 1892, after purchasing farmland on Linden Boulevard. A railroad station and a post office soon followed, and by 1899, the population had grown to 600.
St. Albans was named by its early residents after the town in Hertfordshire, England, which was in turn named for the first martyr of Britain.

In the early years, the population was largely middle-class Whites, but today St. Albans is home predominantly to African Americans and Afro Caribbeans. The neighborhood's ethnic composition began changing in the 1940s, when a Who's Who of Musicians moved in, particularly at the prestigious Addisleigh Park section with its elegant Tudor-style homes on expensive lots. Fats Waller (whose home at Sayers Avenue and 174th Street had a built-in Hammond organ) was reportedly the first to arrive, followed by such greats as Lena Horne, Ella

Fitzgerald, Milt Hinton, John Coltrane, and James Brown—many of whom are depicted in a colorful mural on the northern side of Linden Boulevard under the Long Island Railroad station. More recent musicians are the rappers Q Tip and LL Cool J, who wrote about his youth in southeast Queens in *I Make My Own Rules* (1997). Also St. Albans is home to celebrated pro athletes, such as football player Will Poole, Jackie Robinson, and Babe Ruth.

Addisleigh Park was developed in 1926, just off the St. Albans golf course, which was built in 1919. The golf course was sold to the government, which subsequently built the St. Albans Naval Hospital. World War II veterans were treated there and, in 1977, the Veterans Administration acquired the 100-acre property, half of which was donated to the City of New York.

Also on the site of the former golf course is the 53-acre Roy Wilkins Park, which features tennis, basketball, and handball courts as well as baseball fields and jogging paths. There is also the Black Spectrum Theatre, with a 425-seat capacity.

St. Albans is home to many church institutions such as the Episcopal Church of St. Albans the Martyr, Greater Allen AME Church, Presbyterian Church of St. Albans, the St. Albans Congregational Church, Our Lady of Light Parish, St. Pascal Babylon of Siena R.C. Church, Church of St. Catherine of Siena, Grace United Methodist Church of St. Albans, Maranatha Tabernacle, Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Refuge Church of Christ, St. Albans Seventh Day Adventist Church, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Beth Elohim, and St. Albans Assembly of God, just to name a few.

Demographics

Based on the data from the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of St. Albans was 48,593, a change of 1,453 (-3% from the 50,046 counted in 2000), covering an area of 1,778.68 acres. The neighborhood had a population density of 27.3 inhabitants per acre (17,500/sq. mile, 6,700 km^2).

The racial make-up of the neighborhood was 1% (469) White; 88.6% (43,073) African American, which includes Afro Caribbean, 0.3% (129); Native American, 0.9% (417); Asian, 0% (16), Pacific Islander, 0.5% (258) from other races; and 2.7% (1,085) from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 6.5% (3,146) of the population.

The entirety of Community Board 12, which mainly comprises Jamaica but also St. Albans and Hollis, had 234,911 inhabitants, as of New York City Health's 2018 Community Health Profile, with an average life expectancy of 80.5 years.

As of 2017, the median household income in Community Board 12 was $61,670. As of 2018, St. Albans and Jamaica are considered to be high-income relative to the rest of the city and not gentrifying.

Housing

St. Albans housing consists mostly of detached, one- and two-family homes. Linden Boulevard is the major shopping street. In 2011, *The New York Times* reported that many foreclosures were occurring and there was a high level of unemployment. At that time, many Blacks from the South were moving back to the southern United States.

Police and Crime

St. Albans and South Jamaica are patrolled by the NYPD's 113th Precinct, located at 167-02 Baisley Boulevard. The 113th Precinct ranked 55th safest out of 69 patrol areas for

per-capita crime in 2010. The precinct also has a lower crime rate than it did in the 1990s, with crimes across all categories having decreased by 86.19% between 1990 and 2018.

Fire Safety

St. Albans is served by two New York City Five Department (FDNY) fire stations: Engine Company 275/Ladder Company 133, at 11-36 Merrick Boulevard; and Engine Company 317/Ladder Company 165/Battalion 54, at 117-11 96th Street.

Health

Preteen and teenage births are more common in St. Albans and Jamaica than in other places citywide. In St. Albans and Jamaica, there were 10 preteen births (compared to 19.3 per 1,000 citywide) and 21.4 teen births per 1,000 live births (compared to 19.3 per 1000 citywide).

In 2018, 92% of residents described their health as "good," "very good," or "excellent," higher than the city's average of 78%. For every supermarket in St. Albans and Jamaica, there are 20 bodegas (a corner store). These corner stores are small businesses that stock a range of items that are used by the population such as coffee, groceries, snack goods, confectionaries, soft drinks, tobacco products, over-the-counter drugs, toiletries, newspapers, and magazines. Some convenience stores are part of gas/petrol stations so customers can purchase goods easily while filling their vehicles with fuel.

The nearest hospitals (major) are Jamaica Hospital and Queens Hospital Center, both located in Jamaica.

Post Offices and Zip Code

St. Albans is covered by the zip code 11412. The U.S. Post Office operates two post offices nearby: the Saint Albans Station at 195-04 Linden Boulevard, and the Rochdale Village Station at 16-100 Baisley Boulevard.

Parks and Recreation

There are several parks in St. Albans operated by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

St. Albans Park is bounded by Merrick Boulevard, Sayres Avenue, and Marne Place. It includes facilities for many sports such as cricket (Afro Caribbean sport), handball, tennis, as well as fitness equipment, a playground, and spray showers. The land was acquired by the city for use as a park in 1914, and it was slightly expanded in 1968.

Roy Wilkins Park is located between 115th Avenue and Merrick and Baisley Boulevard. It contains facilities for baseball, basketball, cricket, handball, swimming, tennis, and track and field as well as a recreation center, fitness equipment, playground, and spray showers. The land, formerly a naval hospital, was given to the city in 1977. It was named for the civil rights activist, Roy Wilkins.

Railroad Park, a nature area, is located on a triangular plot bounded by 129th Avenue, 176th Street, and the Long Island Railroad's Atlantic Branch. The land for this park was acquired in 1962-1963.

Daniel M. O'Connell Playground is located between Murdock Avenue, 112th Road, and 197th and 198th Street. It contains basketball and handball courts, fitness equipment, a play area, and spray showers. The playground is named for World War I veteran Daniel M. O'Connell.

Education

St. Albans and Jamaica generally have a lower rate of college-educated residents than the rest of the city, while 29% of residents, age 25 and older, have a college education and 51% are high school graduates or have some college education. By contrast, 39% of Queens residents and 43% of city residents have a higher college education. The percentage of St. Albans and Jamaica

students excelling in math rose from 36% in 2000 to 55% in 2011, and reading achievement slightly increased from 44% to 45% during the same time period.

Additionally, 74% of high school students in St Albans and Jamaica graduate on time, about the same as the citywide average of 75%.

Schools

Public

The public schools are operated by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). St. Albans contains the following public elementary schools which serve Grades PK-5 unless otherwise indicated: P.S. 15 Jackie Robinson; P.S. 36 St. Albans (Grades K-5); and P.S. 136 Roy Wilkins. The following public schools (middle) serve Grades 6-8: I.S. 59 Springfield Gardens, and I.S. 192 The Linden. Eagle Academy for Young Men 111, a combined public middle and high school, serves Grades 6-12.

Private and Charter

There are two charter schools: Riverton Street Charter School, St. Albans; and Success Academy, Springfield Gardens.

Private schools include: St. Albans Christian Academy; True Deliverance Christian School; and St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School (opened 1929, closed 2009, now the site of Riverton Street Charter School).

Library

The Queens Public Library operates the St. Albans branch at 191-05 Linden Boulevard.

Transportation

Numerous MTA bus lines run through the neighborhood community, including Q4, Q5, Q42, Q83, Q84, and Q85, all of which connect to the New York City subway and the Long Island Railroad at Jamaica Center and Jamaica, respectively.

Chapter Overview

The chapters of this study will seek to clarify one underlying issue, namely, the nature of tension between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, resulting from prejudice between them. This issue is basic to human beings, but without knowledge of the roots of its hostility, we cannot hope to control its destructiveness effectively. Although it is easy to think of race when dealing with prejudice, however, this thinking is not applicable here, seeing the two groups under study are of the same race.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

a. To examine one segment of the Afro Caribbean immigrant group from a sociocultural anthropological perspective and their social and cultural life contextually in St. Albans.
b. To record the nature of immigration and relocation and to describe their selected structural arrangements, which reflect the process of their acculturation, thereby placing them in the broader perspective of attachments and relations with Southern African American migrants in St Albans.
c. To do so within the conceptual framework of "integration," looking at institutions, events, recreation, and other forms of human interactions in areas of convergence with Southern African American migrants.

d. To indicate what the findings have discovered on human relations between both immigrant and migrant groups.

The ferment of investigation and theories in this area of studies in one sense will cause this account to be soon dated. New information will supersede the old formulation if various theories are to be improved. Yet there is one feature of this study that can be of lasting value, that is, the organization of the study. I have tried to offer a framework into which future developments may readily fit.

Chapter 1 deals with the introduction of the study and the description of the research site with its past and present history. It stated the issue to be addressed, the purpose and rationale of the study, and how the history of the Caribbean islands created the repertoire of cultures and identities people bring to New York.

In Chapter 2, I situate this study in Applied Anthropology and review relevant . literature from the writings of a variety of authors addressing human relations on the basis of intergroup contact, integration, and attitude change. Some of the studies were community studies, which dealt with human relations focusing on understanding the possible behaviors and attitude outcomes of social contact between persons of different races, religions, and national origins. Some studies reported very little improvement in attitudes; on the other hand, some reported significant improvement in attitudes observed. Contacts related to favorable attitudes occurred in schools, at work, in recreation, as neighbors, and as friends.

Other literature on human relations reviewed showed how Whites may have improved the circumstances of Blacks.

Literature on Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans is reviewed. The literature shows how immigrants from the Caribbean have affected African Americans, focusing

on the social, cultural, economic, political, and religious experiences of Black Caribbeans and African Americans.

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and research strategies. The elements of this research design reflect the process by which I came to know and record the data. The observations produced by how the study was designed are fundamental to the proper assessment of the empirical evidence. The design involves a plan or strategy for all phases of the research (such as all requirements for data collection and its analysis), including the production of the final product of an ethnography. A good understanding of the problem and the research site helped me plan for any contingencies as well.

Also, the plan gave me guidance for linking the theory to methods of data collection and analysis, with the hope of yielding a valid and defensible result. In addition, the design helped to promote an effective conduct of the research.

Chapter 4 discusses Whites' attitudes toward West Indians. It shows and provides evidence of how Whites prefer foreign Blacks to American Blacks, especially in the workplace. Immigrants are perceived as hard-working, friendly, upward-striving selves by Whites. Another aspect of the relationship between Whites and West Indians is the "comfort factor." The relative warmth Whites feel toward West Indians as opposed to African Americans goes beyond shared immigrant histories. Whites sense the lack of opposition in West Indians to their Whiteness and have reported having a greater and friendlier experience with foreign Blacks than with native Blacks.

Chapter 5 deals with the individual voices of two neighborhood community individuals, whose subjective and objective identification and representation of immigrants and migrants reflect "life lived" in St. Albans. The chapter reveals the methods they developed to present their

self-identities to others. Their lives and work speak for the population of St. Albans and demonstrate typical attitudes toward work and employment, interethnic integration, cooperation, and militance about racial discrimination with a belief that race/ethnic barriers will not affect them personally and that the United States is a land of opportunity for all.

Chapter 6 discusses the "research sample" and the "focus group" of participants of the sample. The focus group was composed of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants. The greatest strength of the sample and focus group is that they provide the methods and tools to understand the cultural base needs, values, perceptions, beliefs, knowledge, modes, and reasons for the behavior of Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans in St. Albans.

Chapter 7 describes life in St. Albans lived by Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African Americans and their descendants. The chapter discusses the social and cultural context of St. Albans and the range of activities and events by which the people of St. Albans interact and experience an integrated neighborhood community. The Whites moved out and more Blacks moved in to where there were single-family houses with backyards and lawns.

Chapter 8 deals with my experiences as a roomer with house tenants, and integration. The chapter gives an account of room-rental tenants of working-class Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants living in a tenant household. Though tenants were of different cultures living in close proximity, tenants became friends, exchanged food recipes, and engaged in discussions of news of home and the nation or community. This experience showed how room-rental tenants can be key factors in experiencing integration in St. Albans.

Chapter 9 discusses identity and shows that national identities are not fixed and that the national identities of Afro Caribbeans reflect their colonial history and multilayered identities

available to them from that location. Most of the immigrants include specific national origin identity or racial identity as Black and a regional identity as West Indian.

Chapter 10 concludes the research by first listing the research findings. The findings of the study touched on the issues raised by the original framing of the questions. I describe here that the crux of the study about the experiences of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their children revolves around integration and how conditions in America have shaped their identities and culture.

The chapter also gives a brief summary of the study and shows the results of integration between Black immigrants and migrants and its future in St. Albans. I reflect on the impact of the study on the research and make some suggestions for future studies which have the potential of broadening the results of the research study.

Limitations

The present study and the researcher's reports were written with the hope that the facts and theories presented may contribute to the amelioration of group tension between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants. At the same time, it claims to be a scientific production, accurate and objective as the present stage of the researcher's knowledge allows.

Whereas the outcome of attitude change between immigrants and migrants and the concept of integration through which attitude change occurs is clear, I am less clear about the desirability of long-range policies in dealing with the social and cultural practices of the two groups. This integration of the two groups only will preserve their way of life or they will gradually lose their group identity through migration and intermarriage and thus enter into a melting pot. Those who favor assimilation point out that when groups completely fuse, there is

no longer any visibility or psychological basis for prejudice and tension, and to them, unity means conformity. On the other hand, those who favor cultural pluralism regard assimilation as a great loss when ethnic groups discard their distinctive and exotic ways. The cuisine of the Afro Caribbeans, and the Caribbean rhythm in their music of Soca, Calypso, and Reggae when preserved, are of interest and value to St. Albans residents, and by extension to the whole nation of America. By their preservation, they prevent more standardization of a dominant culture. Yet there is an advantage to becoming one large group of Black Americans against which there is prejudice, but which can scarcely be said to have a distinctive culture. What, then, is the proper value to hold in this controversy?

While we cannot presume to settle this issue, we can point to some guidelines for those who wish to assimilate. There should be no barriers placed in their way for those who wish to maintain ethnic integrity. Their efforts should be met with tolerance and appreciation.

Another limitation is that there are Afro Caribbeans who do not speak English. Some speak French as well as Spanish. Hence, the study findings are not generalizable to those groups of Afro Caribbeans.

Furthermore, the study does not reflect how group attitudes are reflected in the integrative process. Were there mixed pictures of integrative intergroup relationships or were there only cooperative attitudes between the groups? The real-life integrative process between immigrant and migrant groups needs further exploration.

The data collection process had its limitation in that time it did not allow me to research all aspects of the St. Albans neighborhood community. Some interview sessions were only a one-shot deal. There were planned follow-ups and/or additional questions for the full completion of

the process. The views and experiences of persons who were not Afro Caribbeans could have been a welcome perspective to the data.

However, despite the manifest limitations of the research and its data, the information collected is enough to give a glimpse to the multifaceted reality of a society that experienced a change of attitude toward Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants who were living in the St. Albans neighborhood community.

Relevance of the Study to the Research Problem

There are several reasons for examining the interrelationships between the two immigrant and migrant groups of Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans for this research study. One of the major reasons was that the outcomes of the research can be of central importance to the area of human relations.

As seen in sociological studies, people who live near each other with different cultural mores, folkways, ethos, and backgrounds are likely to have some problems with communication and understanding. Conflicts may be due in some measure to these various cultural differences. Wilner et al. (1955) confirmed this conclusion in their study of *Human Relations: Contact Hypothesis.* Human relations, with their varying approaches that are good, can be described as positive bonding with others, showing unity, love, respect, honor, and tolerance for others. It accepts all people the way they are and shows appreciation and acknowledgment for them. It is to this end that I believe in the relevance of this study, which is able to give some guidance.

Afro Caribbeans

Afro Caribbeans are now very much part of America's political and social life. They occupy positions in numbers and importance that go beyond tokenism or ethnic representation. These Afro Caribbean immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean have had a long history of

political mobilization in the United States, chiefly in New York City. Because of the use of the English language and its relationship with the larger African community, Afro Caribbeans have benefited in their social life and in the economic and political opportunities that have opened up to them.

A distinct but interrelated Afro Caribbean ethnic group has immigrated to the United States in large numbers since 1965: Anglophone Afro Caribbeans. Afro Caribbeans come from largely African descendants from former British colonies of the Caribbean Basin, including the mainland CARICOM (Caribbean Community and Common Market) nations.

The member nations of Guyana, Belize, and Suriname are part of CARICOM. Each of these nations is culturally distinct, but in the United States, their immigrants, especially those from the Anglophone Caribbean who by far comprise the bulk of the Afro Caribbean population, tend to form a single ethnic community. They live in neighborhoods with other members of their ethnic group. They tend to have employment patterns that are similar, and most often identify themselves as a common group, one nation only divided by water. Prior to immigrating to the United States, Afro Caribbeans share several features in common: history, language, educational system, political traditions, social and cultural customs, and religious persuasion.

Afro Caribbeans and their descendants as early as the 1930s emerged as a major force in Black Democratic Party politics in New York City. As the African American vote switched from Republican to Democratic during the "New Deal," Afro Caribbean Democrats came to positions of power both in the party organization and particularly after 1945 in elected offices as well. These included Hulan Jack, the first Black Borough President of Manhattan elected in 1954; Raymond Jones, the first Black to head "Tammany Hall," the Manhattan County Democratic organization; Bertram Baker, the first Black from Brooklyn to serve in New York State

Assembly; and Shirley Chisholm, born in Brooklyn whose parents were from the Caribbean. Chisholm spent part of her childhood years in Barbados with her grandmother. She was an American politician, educator, and author. In 1968, she became the first Black woman elected to the U.S. Congress. In 1972, she became the first Black candidate for a major party nomination for President of the United States and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. In 2015, Chisholm was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Early Afro Caribbeans had roots in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the 1970s. They drew largely from and spoke for African American constituencies.

The new generation of Afro Caribbeans draws its support to a large degree from the post-1965 immigrants. Prominent among them are Jamaican-born Una Clarke, elected to New York City Council in 1992. Her fellow Jamaican, Noah Nick Peddy, was elected to the New York Legislature in 1993, and Belize-born Lloyd Henry joined Una Clarke on the City Council in 1993. Afro Caribbeans, because of their residential concentration of new immigrant groups in New York City, produced a number of electoral districts with Caribbean majorities. They became the new immigrant group with the greatest political representation in the City of New York.

Outside the metropolitan area, Afro Caribbeans and their descendants who became politicians generally represent African American constituencies. Prominent among them are Los Angeles Congressman Mervyn Dymall, who was born in Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies, and served in the California State Assembly and the California State Senate as the 41st Lieutenant Governor of California and the U.S. House of Representatives. Although he was never elected to public office in the nation, Colin Luther Powell, an American politician and retired four-star

general in the U.S. Army, also served as National Advisor and Commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command and as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The United States was mesmerized in 1995 by Powell's phenomenal high-profile appointment. His parents were from Jamaica, West Indies. General Colin Powell was chairman of the National Campaign to encourage volunteers to help children. There were speculations about his candidacy for President of the United States in the year 2000. This is the first time in the political history of American that an Afro Caribbean seriously considered the nation's highest office, with strong support coming from quarters often conservative on ethnicity.

Other Afro Caribbeans who have risen to prominence are Black Power leaders such as Stokely Carmichael, who was born in Trinidad and Tobago and was a prominent organizer in the Civil Rights movement in the United States. He became a major voting rights activist in Mississippi and Alabama. Also prominent were Malcolm X, whose mother was from Grenada, West Indies, and the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakan, whose parents immigrated from Barbados, West Indies.

In recent years, Afro Caribbeans have come to play a prominent role in the sociocultural life of the United States. Several noteworthy literary figures have emerged. These include St. Lucian-born Nobel Prize-winning poet and playwright Derek Walcott; Grenadian-born Nobel Prize-winning poet Audre Lorde; novelist Michael Thewell, born in Jamaica; and Paul Marshal, born in Brooklyn of Barbadian parents.

In another sphere of the arts, the love and popularity of music from the Caribbean, there is the Jamaican Reggae and dancehall Trinidad and Tobago Calypso and Soca, which have created opportunities for Caribbean and Caribbean American entertainers. This music has influenced American popular music, jazz, and the musical theater. On stage and screen, Afro

Caribbean actors, including Sidney Poitier, Brock Peters, and Harry Belafonte, have probably given most Americans their clearest positive image of Afro Caribbean immigrants.

The depiction of Caribbean Americans has often been stereotypical and contradictory on many occasions. A key aspect of this stereotype is that Rastafarians, though only a small portion of the population (mostly Jamaicans and Trinidadian and Tobagonians), are often presented as typifying Afro Caribbean immigrants. Other portraits draw upon media reports from the late 1980s regarding the growth of Jamaica "posses," which were believed to be making inroads into the distribution of illegal drugs, which comes with other forms of crime. Examples of films promoting such portrayals include *Predator II* (1990), *New Jack City* (1991), *Only the Strong* (1993), and *Marked for Death* (1990).

On the other hand, Afro Caribbeans are also likely to be presented as objects of ridicule, a theme that seems to draw on their status as immigrants from relatively underdeveloped countries placed within the context of a developed society.

These major developments of Afro Caribbeans for the most part should not be dismissed as incidentals or instances of deviating from the standard norms, but on the contrary, what they demonstrate is that being Afro Caribbean is no longer a major obstacle to representation and participation in integrative and interactive public life on a national level and, to a smaller measure, the neighborhood community life when it is political or sociocultural.

Afro Caribbeans have now become part of America's moral community and sociocultural life. They are no longer looked on as invisible immigrants. This is due in large part to the racial identity of most Afro Caribbean immigrants and to the fact that Afro Caribbeans still encounter racial discrimination and still coalesce with African Americans around such racially charged

issues as police brutality, media representation of Blacks, and the election of Black candidates to higher office.

Purpose of the Study

The study contributes to the literature addressing the needs of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants living in symbiosis in St. Albans, Queens, New York.

The study was derived from a one-year ethnographic study of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrant groups. The two ethnic groups were descendants of the African diaspora, but subsequently these descendants had different cultural orientations from the British Caribbean and the Southern United States. Existing between these two ethnic groups was a culture of tension in which they viewed each group with suspicion, mistrust, and misunderstanding.

The study sought to describe and document the central phenomenon of the study for Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans from various points of view of the young, middle-age, and old, of men, women, long term residents, and newcomers of both ethnic groups.

The research sought to identify key cultural concepts as behaviors, communication, interactions, integration, and those areas that have improved the climate of relationships between the culture-sharing groups. It was hoped that through the process, change of attitudes toward each group will occur.

The focus on Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in a culture of tension reflects the fact that tension between groups constitutes a separate and important aspect of human relations to be studied.

Rationale

The wave of West Indians to the United States, especially after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, has affected ethnic relations between West Indian immigrants and African Americans in the United States.

Mary C. Waters (1999), in *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and Realities,* stated:

> The immigrant tales of blatant housing and job discrimination directly points to needed vigilance in protecting all blacks in the United States from unequal treatment in the private sector. The more difficult problem is dealing with the everyday subtle forms of prejudice and discrimination that also plagued foreignborn and the American blacks. (p. 338)

African Americans believe that immigrants who come to the United States are prone to take the jobs that they should fill and, as a result, they are critical of them. West Indians are often praised for their British quality and have brought some benefits to them by White Americans. To African American, it seems that immigrants are being more purposeful in excluding them by speaking in their dialect.

West Indians have made the case that they are different from African Americans, and some believe that they have merited inclusion in American society because of their strong work ethic, values of education, and lack of pathological behavior. The mutual stereotyping, tension, and taunting make it hard for individuals, even those who may not be resentful, to interact with people from the other group.

My personal experience of this issue became obvious when I lived and worked for many years in Brooklyn and Harlem in New York City. I have witnessed co-workers, people in the workplace, and community residents who were both African Americans and West Indians make derogatory remarks about each other.

I never stopped feeling the burden of cultural difference between the descendants of the African diaspora. The more the insensitive comments weighed on me, the greater was my desire to seek out and examine among Afro Caribbeans and African Americans if the integration of the two ethnic groups of different cultures can be a meaningful experience.

My interest and rationale for the study were to explore if behavioral change can be experienced by Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, and if there are occasions when the perception of basic humanity, individuality, and ethnic diversity are experienced through social and cultural integration.

This study is positioned in the larger literature. Very little has been written about the future of the tension between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans. These groups of people have been marginalized and kept silent by others. My hope is that the result of this study will add to or fill a gap in the literature, heighten awareness, and create various forms of dialogue that will lead to a better understanding of relations between the two ethnic groups, and, through these insights, lead to improvement of practice.

Research Question

To what extent are social and cultural relationships between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in the St. Albans neighborhood community influenced by integration, and how does it impact the distribution of attitude change among their members in intergroup, social, and cultural relationships?

Procedural Subquestions

1. What is the social situation to be studied?
2. What is recorded about this social situation?
3. What is observed about this situation?

4. How do ordinary men and women and their descendants live and experience, articulate and feel, life in St. Albans?
5. What specific focused observations can be made?
6. What cultural domains emerged from studying the situation?
7. What patterns emerged from the study?
8. How does one write ethnography?

There is a problem with the way Afro Caribbean immigrants to the United States and African American migrants from the southeastern and south-central states of America, aged 25-65, view the struggles of intergroup social relations in New York City. Despite efforts of political elected officials, civil rights movements in the past, and persons of Caribbean heritage serving in major roles in the U.S. federal government to foster equality, cohesion, and cooperation between the ethnic groups, many African Americans and Afro Caribbeans are unaware of the ways in which they can coexist in harmony and cooperation with each other.

A culture of tension exists between the two ethnic groups where members of each group view each other with suspicion and mistrust, and with stereotyped lenses.

The problem has negatively impacted members of each group to a high degree. An ethnic equality policy discourse like Affirmative Action is closely tied to the advancement of minorities, which for all of its faults and declining political support, still remains one of the most successful policy initiatives in the fight against ethnic discrimination.

The problem explains where this group tension is coming from and why. The answer reflects barely those who dominate the media and public discourse, but a possible course of this problem is largely traditionally economic, with some aspects of activism, and perceptions of social expectations of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans as well.

Not all Afro Caribbeans adjusted successfully to American conditions, but many Afro Caribbeans and West Indians were enough in prospering to engender an American Negro stereotype of them as Black Jews—aggressive, efficient, acquisitive, calculating, and clannish—an image extraordinarily similar to the Creole stereotype of Portuguese, Chinese, and Syrian minorities in the Caribbean. Lowenthal (1972), in *West Indian Societies*, stated:

> Black Americans' opprobrium against West Indians is now less open but the same underlying attitudes remain reinforced by a renewed flood of migrants since 1965. In Harlem, Brooklyn, in Queens and the Bronx, West Indians are considered pushy, boastful, tight with money, given to social snobbery and vainglorious about their Island backgrounds. American Black resentment stems in part from West Indian dealings with White Americans, emphasizing their differences from Black Americans and the European character of their background. (p. 227)

Another author who wrote about the problem of intergroup perceptions of each other was John Jasper Spurling (1962) who, in his work on social relationships between American Negroes and West Indian Negroes in a Long Island community, referred to the tension created by the two ethnic groups as gross-group stereotypes. He stated:

> During the researcher's interviews and talks with the people of the two groups (American Negroes and West Indian negroes) it was learned that some people have deep-rooted feelings and attitudes toward each other as groups. Some of these expressed feelings as revealed through various talks can be briefly stated as follows:
>
> Stereotypic conceptions of American Negroes toward West Indian Negroes:
>
> 1. Loud
> 2. Fond of showy clothes of bright gypsy colors
> 3. Over-crowded living arrangements. West Indian families attempt to bring every relative in a single household.
> 4. West Indians are tight with money.
> 5. West Indians like showy cars.
> 6. West Indians have a strong belief in magic and witchcraft.
> 7. West Indians have a false kind of proudness.
> 8. West Indians send a great deal of money to the West Indies to relatives who live poorly.
> 9. West Indians try to imitate White British and often refer to themselves not as Negroes, but as British descendants.

Stereotypic conceptions of West Indian Negroes toward African American Negroes:

1. The American Negro does not want us here.
2. The American Negro is an ex-slave who has not come very far.
3. American Negroes try to make their homes little castles.
4. American Negroes do not take advantage of their citizen rights.
5. The Southern Negro does not vote.
6. The American Negro lives in fear.
7. American Negroes are anti-West Indians.
8. American Negroes are lazy and do not want to get their hands dirty.

Spurling further quoted Arnold Rose (1951), author of *The Roots of Prejudice: The Jewish Digest*, by saying:

> Behavioral scientists agree that the ignorance which supports prejudice has a great range. It might take the form of false information about people's physical characteristics, cultural practices or beliefs. It may take the form of myths or superhuman powers or weaknesses. (pp. 61-62)

I share the common concern over the ongoing tendencies and practices between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans. I see these actions portrayed by them as demoralizing and a state of misunderstanding with the tendency to please the in-group. However, though a conversion from certain beliefs and ideology does not happen overnight, I hope to find emerging among Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in the St. Albans neighborhood community an intergenerational transfer of social and cultural capital and what is required to restore sanity to intergroup relations and the kind of actions that would promote integration, attitude change, and trust between the two groups.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to conduct this research, I need to situate this project in Applied Anthropology, the subfield to which it contributes. I also engage two quite different kinds of background information: theoretical and contextual. First, the body of theory most pertinent to my study debates how best to talk about the ways members of groups relate to each other and change in relation to each other, becoming more similar, dissimilar even to the point of polarization, or retaining their cultural identities yet continuing to interact over time. Below I review some theories of contact that pertain to race relations, especially in the United States. Second, given my focus on Afro Caribbeans, I also needed an overview of their history, culture(s), and the similarities and differences of various groups clustered under this rubric.

Applied Anthropology

Today, applied anthropologists are concerned primarily with processes of social change and cultural change, particularly as they refer to improvements in such fields as educational systems, social welfare programs, community developments, and the like. Thus, my project of better understanding conditions that assist groups get past older patterns of mistrust and conflict fits well in this field.

Many authors in applied anthropology (utilizing theoretical concepts, factual knowledge and research, methodologies in programs meant to ameliorate social, economic, and technological problems) have approached the topic from a variety of points of view. Some have described and analyzed cases of technical and social change in which anthropologists have specialized in human relations. This approach was used in such foundational books as Spier's

Human Problems in Technological Change (1952), Benjamin Paul's *Health Culture and Community* (1955), and Barnes's *Anthropology in Administration* (1956). Others have concentrated on social and economic change as they have been studied by anthropologists working on problems of development and modernization. Some of their work can be seen in recent volumes such as Erasmus's *Man Take Control* (1961), Foster's *Traditional Cultures and the Impact of Technological Change* (1962), Goodenough's *Cooperation in Change* (1963), and Arensburg and Niehoff's *Technical Cooperation and Cultural Reality* (1968). Still others have illustrated problems and methods by concentrating on specific fields, such as Spindler's *Education and Culture* (1963), Batten's *The Human Factor in Community Work* (1965), and Read's *Culture, Health, and Disease* (1966).

As I have already stated, this study of human relations does not pretend to deal with the science of human relations as a whole but approaches the topic from a point of view heretofore little explored by scholars in Caribbean and African American studies with various approaches: the basic relationship between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in a neighborhood community.

Intergroup Contact

A fundamental issue of intergroup contact and race/ethnic relations concern the effect of contact. There are authors who believe that increased contact between groups of different values and origins will only lead to heightened conflict. Others hold the view that increased contact between some groups will decrease prejudice and fear and may lead to greater intergroup harmony. Social science evidence supports neither extreme.

Increased interaction, whether of individual or group, intensifies or magnifies the processes already on the way. Hence, more intergroup contact can result in either greater

prejudice and rejection or greater respect or acceptance, depending on the situation in which it occurs. The basic task, then, is to specify the situational conditions in which contact leads to distrust and those under which it leads to trust.

Gordon Allport (1954), in *The Nature of Prejudice*, which is his review of the relevant research, concluded that there are four characteristics of the contact situation that are of the utmost significance. To obtain beneficial effects, the situation must include positive contact. Some of the criteria are as follows:

- **Equal status.** Both groups must engage equally in the relationship. Members of the group must have similar background, qualities, and characteristics. Differences in academic backgrounds, wealth, skill, or experiences should be minimized if these qualities will influence perceptions of prestige and rank in the group.
- **Common goals.** Both groups must work on a problem/task and share this as a common goal, sometimes called a superordinate goal, that can be attained if the members of two or more groups are working together by pooling their efforts and resources.
- **Intergroup cooperation.** Both groups must work together for their common goals that they are pursuing.
- **Support of authorities, laws, or customs.** Both groups must acknowledge some authority that supports the contact and interactions between the groups. The contact should encourage friendly, helpful, egalitarian attitudes and condemn ingroup-outgroup comparisons.
- **Personal interaction.** The contact situation needs to involve informal, personal interaction with outgroup members. Members of the conflicting groups need to

mingle with one another. Without this criterion, they will learn very little about each other and cross-group friendships do not occur.

Allport (1954) derived his hypothesis from early field research. An Alabama study revealed negative effects when all four conditions were violated (Sims & Patrick, 1936, "Attitudes toward the Negro of Northern and Southern College Students"). White college students from the North increased on average in anti-Black prejudice with each year spent in the South.

Other studies investigated optimal conditions. After desegregation of the Merchant Marine in 1948, independence developed on ships and in the maritime union. The more voyages the White seamen took with Blacks under these conditions, the more positive their racial attitudes became (Brophy, 1946). Similarly, White police in Philadelphia who had worked with Black colleagues had fewer objections to Black police joining their district teaming with a Black partner, and taking orders from qualified Black officers (Kephart, 1957).

Studies of public housing provided robust evidence. Deutsch and Collins (1951), in *Interracial Housing: A Psychological Evaluation of a Social Experiment*, compared racially desegregated housing projects in New York City with similar but segregated projects in Newark, New Jersey. Sharp differences emerged. Desegregated White housewives held their Black neighbors in higher esteem and favored interracial housing more (75% to 25%). When asked to name Black faults, they listed such personal issues as feelings of inferiority. Segregated White women voiced stereotypes such as "rowdy" and "dangerous."

Later public housing research extended these findings (Wilner et al., 1955). Favorable racial attitudes among White tenants, who just had casual meetings with Black neighbors, were experienced. Contact and perceived social climate tended to reinforce each other when their

influence operated in the same direction and canceled each other out when their influence worked in the opposite direction (Wilner et al., 1955).

Research with African Americans also revealed positive feelings between ethnic groups. Ernest Works (1961) found that both Black wives and husbands in a desegregated housing project felt more positively about their White neighbors than those in segregated projects. With longitudinal data, Christopher Smith (1994) found contact meeting Allport's conditions decreased prejudice among both Black and White neighbors, though there were group differences in contact effects. In a national probability study, an interracial sample of friendships proved to be a strong predictor of Black racial attitudes (Ellison & Powers, 1994; Powers & Ellison, 1995).

The varied investigations broadened the application of the hypothesis. They also raised the question: Why does intergroup contact usually have positive effects even when the situation does not attain all of Alport's conditions?

To sum it all up, Thomas Pettigrew (1968) suggested that:

> Intergroup contact can result in either conflict or harmony depending upon the situation under which it occurs. When the contact situation involves a combination of equal status, common goals, no competition along group lines, and the support of authorities, law or customs, improved intergroup relations are likely to result. When these conditions are not met, one of the two negative group stereotypes often emerge. (p. 279)

Social and Cultural Acculturation and Pluralism

Acculturation studies constitute a large corpus of literature, but little systematic generalization on these data has been made. The main line of development of acculturation studies continued to be descriptive. Studies seem to aim at determining what kinds of cultural elements changed readily and the kinds that were resistant to change. The circumstances of acculturation in the parts of the world where they were carried out were important for most studies.

The term *acculturation* is widely accepted among American anthropologists as referring to those changes set in motion by the coming together of societies with different cultural traditions. It is also referred to as "cultural contact" by anthropologists. Acculturation comprehends those phenomena that result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or of both groups (Redfield et al., 1936).

The processes of determination, selection, and integration were identified as, respectively, those resulting in the presentation of traits by a donor group in a contact situation.

Social pluralism is accepted as a valid assumption about the nature of American society and certainly that of New York City. For many Americans, the educational system that evolved in the United States is believed to be one of the chief institutional instrumentalities through which our society acculturated the immigrant groups of the 19th and 20th century (Cremin, 1961). The school as well as other institutions like the church and associations have been instrumental in the process of acculturation in St. Albans.

Cultural pluralism is a term used when smaller groups within a larger society maintain their unique cultural identity, and their values and practices are accepted by the wider dominant culture, provided they are consistent with the laws and values of the wider society. As a sociological term, the definition and description of cultural pluralism have evolved over time.

In a pluralistic culture, groups not only co-exist side by side, but also consider qualities of other groups as traits worth having in the dominant culture. Pluralistic societies place strong expectations of integration on members rather than expectations of assimilation.

Assimilation is the process in which a minority group or culture comes to resemble a dominant group or assume the values, behaviors, and beliefs of another group. The existence of

such institutions and practices is possible if the cultural communities are accepted by the larger society in a pluralistic culture and sometimes require the protection of the law. Often some new minority cultures before their acceptance have to remove some aspects of their culture which are incompatible with the laws and values of the dominant culture.

Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans live in a somewhat cultural pluralism, in which each group maintains something of their unique historical cultures (language, food, religion, recreation, music, etc.) while integrating with each other and the norms of society. Both groups share a common workplace, the same neighborhood community, special interest clubs and institutions, political parties, and other areas of convergence, where there is integration between the two groups.

However, by the time of the second generation of Afro Caribbeans, assimilation with the dominant group of African Americans took place among them. The second generation Afro Caribbeans tended to lose some and, in most cases, all of their groupness because of their living in American society. Over time, Afro Caribbean immigrants adopt many of the qualities of African Americans. Afro Caribbean immigrants coming from former British colonies in the Caribbean have the advantage because of their language to function in American society. In terms of "structural integration," both immigrants and migrant groups are integrated into the institutions in the neighborhood community of St. Albans. There is also race/ethnic assimilation where marriage partners are between the two immigrant and migrant groups.

Social and cultural pluralism are not the only characteristics of St. Albans, but they are important aspects of the neighborhood community. St Albans has been receiving a steady stream of settlers over its history, bringing a variety of characteristics, habits, and customs into its neighborhood community. The result has been and still seems to be a pluralistic neighborhood

community, and over time, it may have a dominant culture as an assimilated melting pot of people with an evolving identity.

The study was an attempt to examine the social and cultural insights into how integration between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants impacted attitude change.

The focus of the study is on individuals from the English-speaking Caribbean nations, and generalization is confined to this grouping. However, they are part of a larger segment of an Caribbean immigrant group, and the study provides an exploratory framework for understanding the patterns of integration that took place between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

Social Integration

Social integration was first studied by Park and Burgess in 1921 through the concept of assimilation. They defined it as a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups, and by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life.

While some scholars offered an assimilation theory, arguing that immigrants would be assimilated into the host society, over successive generations, others have developed a multiculturalism theory, arguing and anticipating that immigrants could maintain their ethnic identities through the integration process to share the host society with a diversified cultural heritage.

Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. Social integration, together with economic integration and identity integration, are three main dimensions of a newcomer's experiences in

the society that is receiving that individual. Bringing together various ethnic groups, regardless of language, caste, and creed, among others, without losing one's identity gives access to all areas of community life and eliminates segregation.

Successful integration requires meaningful interaction between immigrants and the receiving society, which means that integration must be a two-way process. Such a process will change not only the migrants' perspective and way of life, but also effect structural change in the receiving society.

One of the ways that integration can fail is resistance to change on the part of the receiving society. While it is crucial that immigrants take an active part in the integration process, this is only possible when existing structures are not so rigid as to render agency futile. Successful integration requires meaningful integration between immigrants and the receiving society, which means that integration must be conceived of as a two-way street. Such a process will not only impact the immigrant perspective and way of life, but also effect structural changes in the receiving society. In a pluralistic neighborhood community or any democracy, such changes will not be perceived as a threat to stability, but as a part of the flexibility and openness of a society which is constantly developing and striving for greater equality and more opportunity for all people.

The role of social integration is crucial in the process of integration. It is through social contacts and the climate created by the possibility of such contacts that people develop a sense of belonging in a particular social space. This is the reason that a culture of tension between groups can be a major obstacle to any integration effort, as it can produce a context of insecurity, isolation, and social distancing. The opposite to this negative state is one in which integration

between groups of people and institutions is constructive and based on respect for difference. This kind of integrative approach can lead to a more cohesive society.

The concept of integration suggests an emphasis on unity that appears to entail a narrative view of social cohesion. However, social cohesion does not mean merging into a homogeneous entity populated by individuals devoid of differences and governed by a set of homogeneous norms. On the contrary, social cohesion can be achieved in a pluralistic society through the interaction of different communities that have reached across the aisle to build bonds through the recognition of difference, acceptance, and interdependence.

Immigrants and other groups in the receiving society must be treated as equals for cohesion to take place. Hence, cohesion through integration must be guided by the principle of equality. It is the task of proponents of integration to ensure through their policies that immigrants and migrants in the host society obtain equal rights, so that they become equal and full partners and participants in the development of a cohesive society. Such rights can create a sense of security for them as individuals and also as members of their minority groups.

Integration between the immigrant and migrant groups depends on these groups engaging in the processes of negotiating each other's rights, being open to flexibility and renegotiation, human rights standards, and pluralistic principles, regardless of ethnic, religious, or cultural background.

The approach to integration guided by the principles of reciprocity, equality, diversity, and cohesion is compatible with a multicultural understanding of the functioning of a modern democracy.

St. Albans has a number of minority organizations in its neighborhood community. Some of these organizations are composed of both immigrant and migrant groups; as well, there are

organizations among immigrants that are linked to the specific national or ethnic origin to which they are attached. Some of these immigrant organizations were founded to help fellow immigrants of the same origin navigate administrative structures, cater to cultural and religious needs, and continue to focus on the countries of origin. These ethnic organizations have played and continue to play a vital role in helping to reverse the effects of social, economic, and political exclusion among Afro Caribbean immigrants.

Some of the lessons that can be learned from integration processes in St. Albans are as follows:

- Integration between the immigrant and migrant groups under study must be a two-way process that requires adaptation by immigrants but also by migrants in the receiving society.
- Integration policies need to be targeted at the whole of society and not just immigrants and migrants.
- In practice, policies and actions must address any institutional barriers to integration including those that create a culture of tension between immigrants and migrant groups.

Early literature examining African American relations with immigrants demonstrated the former to be either accepting or ambivalent about their new neighbors (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993; Harewood, 1987). However, an increasing number of sociologists have suggested that the proliferation of immigrant groups in both traditional and new destinations have manifested in tension along political, economic, and social dimensions (Jones-Correa, 2005, 2008; Jones-Correa & de Graauw, 2013; Winders, 2013).

An examination of related community studies conducted in the United States during the 20th century offers a historical perspective to the St. Albans study. These studies during the last fifty years were done by anthropologists, sociologists, and other behavioral scientists. There is a range of variation among them with concentrations on different aspects of the community composition in findings, as well as conducted at different times. These variations inspired Maurice Stein (1960), an American sociologist, to suggest that some sociologists seem to have been better ethnographers than theorists.

During the 1920s and 1945, three American communities were studied by renowned sociologists Robert Park, Robert Lynd, and Lloyd Warner et al. These community studies were: *The City*, *The Middletown Studies*, and *The Social Life of the Modern Community.*

The findings and conclusions from these studies were widely published. Some of the concepts used in these studies were urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization. These concepts have helped to shape contemporary community life in many ways.

Lynd and Lynd (1937) in *Middletown in Transition* initially studied the area of community life in Middletown: getting a living, enjoying and engaging in religious activities, making a home, training the young, using leisure, and engaging in community practices. These aspects of the study provided a picture of the structural features of Middletown as well as the functional features present in the study areas among Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants.

Two of the social scientists interested in the concept of urbanization have come from the University of Chicago. They are Robert Park and Louis Wirth, who were interested in city life, minority group behavior, and mass media. These social scientists were recognized as two of the leading urban sociologists of their time.

Community studies influence the historical processes and they do describe the effects of these processes on the everyday lives of people. Park and Wirth (1925) further stated that the concept of urbanization connotes the proportion of a population living in urban places and the changes in social organization that result from such population concentration. Park pointed out that the theory of the city is a mosaic of minor communities. Every American city has its own slums and ghettos, its immigrant colonies.

These are the natural areas of the city.

Wirth (1938), in his book *Urbanism as a Way of Life*, argued for urbanism as the prevailing way of life in modern society, and that the very size and density of the modern city have changed modern people and their relationships … homogeneous groups in a mosaic of social worlds in a city. The mosaic of minority groups and immigrant alien or exotic cultures does relate to the urban neighborhood community in St. Albans.

Lloyd Warner and his associates (1941) concluded that urban society has a larger number of classes than does rural society, and there is a greater distance between the top of the social scale and the bottom in the city than in the country. Their work dealt with a significant aspect of life in a modern city as it has been recorded and analyzed. The chosen town was an old New England community which described its cultural life, emphasizing the way in which the people have been divided into superior and inferior classes. Its general purpose was acquiring a better understanding of human behavior. Warner and his associates argued that for those of us who are attempting to understand the human relationships of a worker in a plant, the worker's activities, and his attitudes in a plant where he works in that community, these can be better understood by knowing the place the worker occupies within the immediate or larger context of the factory. The researchers found that an investigation of the social relations of the workers needed to be

extended to the whole of their lives rather than only one part. Warner said, "I wanted to know not only what these people were like as total personalities in the larger society but also to understand the same detail of the larger community itself with its multiple activities and complex relations" (p. 1).

In all cities, there is social stratification, although the cities are not identical. Hence, Sorokin (1959) contended that:

> No two societies are the same in terms of movement allowed and discouraged and the speed of social mobility can change. It depends on how developed the society is. The shift can happen due to various interactions. Mobility provides benefits of better standards of living and greater rewards. People compete and cooperate with each other in society to move up the social mobility ladder. (p. 11)

The study of Warner and associates relates to this present study. There are more Southern African American migrants than Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans. Through integration with Southern African American migrants, Afro Caribbean immigrants have benefitted. Some have climbed up on the social ladder. Major changes among children have taken place, especially in American schools.

Another community study I reviewed was that by Herbert Gans (1962), *The Urban Villagers*. The study is a social psychological study of the impact of relocation on the mental health of the West Enders. The study addressed the question of what urban renewal would do to low-income areas whose status as slums was open to doubt.

In *Urban Villagers*, Gans (1962), a city planner and sociologist, presented us with a real neighborhood where individuals knew each other, had face-to-face relations, and felt comfortable attachments in their surroundings. The neighborhood was the West End of Boston, an Italian American community in that area. The study presented Gans's two special interests. It is a study of an ethnic community as well as a critique of the West End renewal program. In fact, the West End no longer exists. It has been developed, making way for a high-rent housing

development. How the community lived and how it met its death are the object of the author's investigation. Gans was not content to merely describe what he saw and heard, but structured and integrated his vast collection of data into a community study.

While Gans's account described an ethnic community, his discussion of the West Enders' lives was a departure from the standard literature on America's ethnic experience. Gans dealt with one group of the Italian American working class and the routine gatherings of the group itself.

Although the subject matter of Gans's study dealt with a whole community of people impelled by psychological, cultural, and social forces, the study did not fit into the pattern of integration and change between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans.

Two studies that dealt with human relations in interracial housing of Whites and Negroes in America were written by Daniel M. Wilner, Rosabelle P. Walkley, and Stuart W. Cook, as well as M. Deutsch and Mary E. Collins.

The study of Wilner et al. (1955) focused on the understanding underlying the possible behavioral and attitudinal outcomes of social contact between persons from different racial, religious, and national groups. The study presented a picture of relations that existed between Negro and White persons who lived close to one another as neighbors, either in the same building or in adjoining buildings. The authors analyzed their evidence in such a way to trace the process through which interracial adjustments took place. They also recounted the impact of integration on the feelings and activities of White women who were initially hostile to the other race.

"Near" and "far" proximity within each initial attitude grouping who expressed various degrees of esteem for Negroes in the project was noted. Whatever the initial attitude, respondents living near Negroes in the project were more likely to hold them in high esteem and less likely to hold them in low esteem than those living far away. Moreover, in all of the projects among White respondents who reported prior attitudes unfavorable, those who lived near Negroes in the project were more likely than those who lived far away to report that their attitudes and activities changed for the better.

The findings in the study were that when White residents became less hostile and suspicious or derogatory of Negroes, this change in attitude was perceived by their Negro neighbors, and friendship between the races became more likely. Similarly, to the extent that Negro residents felt less suspicion and hostility toward Whites, the Negro also changed in an objective sense, and the possibility of them becoming friends with their White neighbors increased. These processes set up the conditions for further movement toward harmonious and cordial relations.

The second finding was that White women living near Negroes were more likely than those further away to perceive the opinions of other White women in the project as favorable to interracial contact. Some White women and other respondents saw that biracial living was a beneficial experience for children. As one respondent said, "Children can be brought up to consider all are equal." Another commented, "It teaches your children to get along with all kinds."

The other study which dealt with a public housing project is Deutsch and Collins's (1951) investigation of the relationship of "occupancy patterns," including Negro-White proximity, the incidence of contact between the two races, and their attitudes to each other. Four low-rent

public housing projects were studied in which each constituted Negroes not less than 40 percent of the total population. Two of the projects were integrated occupancy patterns, in which the majority of White tenants lived next door to Negro families in the same apartment buildings. Two of the projects were segregated areas, where the Negro and White sections were separated from each other.

The authors found differences in the two areas. White residents in the integrated projects were more likely than those in the area's segregated projects to hold Negroes in the projects in high esteem, less likely to hold unfavorable stereotypes of Negroes, and less unlikely to avoid contact with Negroes in the projects. They were more likely to accept the biracial character of the projects and to recommend an integrated occupancy pattern for future projects. They reported that they had undergone favorable attitude change as a consequence of living in the projects. They were more favorable in their appraisal of Negroes in general as well as of specific Negroes living in the projects.

The study dealt with stable and self-contained situations in which Negroes and Whites have approximately equal status, where there were a few factors in the objective situation making for competition between members of two groups and numerous factors making for cooperation and where there are reasons for one group to view the other's presence as a threat.

This study is in keeping with the study of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans. The cumulative evidence of these studies seems to provide rather substantial evidence that equal status contact between members of initially antagonistic ethnic groups under circumstances not masked by competition for limited goods or by strong social disapproval of intergroup friendliness tends to result in favorable attitude change.

There are other studies of ethnic lives as determined by race, culture, and creed, for example:

a. *Whites and Negroes: An American Dilemma,* whereby Gunnar Myrdal (1944) detailed what he saw as obstacles to full participation in American society that American Blacks faced in the 1940s. The author was positive about the future of race relations in America, taking the view that democracy will triumph over racism. Myrdal believed that the vicious cycle in which Whites oppressed Blacks and then pointed to poor performance was unfair. The way out of that, he argued, was to cure Whites of the prejudice, which he believed existed or improved the circumstances of Blacks, which would disprove Whites' preconceived notions, which Myrdal called the principle of cumulation.

b. Another study is *Immigrants and Old Immigrants: The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* by Floran Zneniecki and William I. Thomas (1919). This is a study of Polish immigrants and their families. The authors intended to explore the relations between individual and society, focusing on groups and neighborhoods and community ties which they believed were key to social change. They argued that the Polish community was shaped less by government policies and more by its own culture and social ties.

These authors stressed the importance of the group and attributed social disorganization to cases where individuals became isolated from the group. They started by analyzing the Polish countryside and reasons for immigration and, in conclusion, discussed the transformation of said immigrants, showing that the Poles were becoming not American but Polish American, a new

ethnic group as their culture was changing to fit the American context, but at the same time retaining some unique characteristics.

These studies relate to the present study in St. Albans in that the authors indicated the social and cultural differences between the groups as well as reflected the extent and quality of interrelations. These are empirical studies of human relations, grounded in empirical data. They are centered on the effects of the contact experience and on attitudes. In most cases, Whites are in the majority in numbers as in the United States, and according to Tuch (1996), "Whites' attitudes are decisive which contributes to the making of social policies" (p. 5).

More recent scholarship that has examined the significance and related aspects of the relationship between West Indian immigrants and Southern African American migrants has been conducted during the last thirty years by sociologists, anthropologists, as well as other behavioral scientists. The range and variation found between these studies are great. Some researchers chose to study different aspects of intergroup relations; some focused on the comparative aspects, while others focused on the economic and political, comparing achievements in appearance, perceptions, and community formation.

One of the most comprehensive studies I reviewed was on Southern African American migrants and Black immigrants from the Caribbean, by Irma Watkins-Owens (1996), entitled *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community, 1900-1930*. The study gave a historical account of early 20th century immigrants from the Caribbean and Southern African American migrants in New York City. The author analyzed the emergence of the Harlem African American community during the first three decades of the 20th century by looking at the relationship between West Indians and U.S.-born Southerners. For Watkins-Owens, the community created in early 20th century Harlem was not just on race but also on ethnicity. The

importance of West Indian immigration to Harlem in helping to build a community based on racial and ethnic terms was the main focus of *Blood Relations*.

Blood Relations is foremost a study of how social, cultural, political, and economic institutions were created in Harlem by both native and foreign Blacks. Through the institutions, the author traced the legacy of competition and solidarity that shaped relations between Harlem's Black immigrants and migrants. For West Indian immigrants, these institutions served as a mechanism that facilitated their integration into a society with quite different cultural and historical notions of race relations.

This work relates to my study in that both studies challenge several longstanding myths regarding the relationship between Caribbean Blacks and African Americans. However, Watkins-Owens' work lacks a clear definition of ethnicity. The work included the presence of East Indians, Chinese, Spanish, and Middle Eastern people in the West Indies among the West Indian immigrants to Harlem. West Indian immigrants constitute a coherent whole without any significant internal division.

Among the writers on West Indian immigration to the United States with an economic performance is Ransford Palmer's works, *In Search of a Better Life* (1990) and *Pilgrims from the Sun: West Indian Migration to America* (1995). Much of this work in this area focused on comparing West Indian immigrants' economic performance with that of African Americans. Some older authors tended to hold the view that these immigrants "outperform" African Americans because of their cultural attributes. Key examples of this view are Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan (1970) in *Beyond the Melting Pot*; Daniel Forsythe (1976) in *Black Immigrants and the American Ethos: Theories and Observations in Caribbean to the United States*; Thomas Sowell's *Ethnic America: A History* (1981) and *Markets and Minorities* (1993); and Oscar

Glatz's (1978) *Native Sons and Immigrants: Some Beliefs and Values of American-born and West Indian Blacks at Brooklyn College.*

Other writers who have stressed the issue of the economy have recently viewed structural factors (i.e., racial discrimination in the economy) as being relatively more important. Furthermore, they see less clear-cut evidence that West Indians outperform African Americans. Two early works that belong to this camp are Lennox Raphael's (1964) "West Indians and Afro Americans," and Roy C. Bryce-LePorte's (1972) "Black Immigrants: The Experience of Invisibility and Inequality." Added to these studies is Suzanne Model's (2008) *West Indian Immigrants: Black Success Story?*

As for writers on political aspects and racial formation, one Afro Caribbean author is Reuel A. Roger (2006) in *Afro Caribbeans: Political Incorporation*. The others are among West Indians such as Milton Vickerman (1998), *Cross Currents: West Indian Immigrants and Race*; Mary Waters (1999), *Black Like Me: West Indian Immigrants Confront American Race Relations*; and Philip Kasinitz (1992) *Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race*.

Waters et al. (2014) examined how recent immigration to the United States has affected African Americans. Although the social separation between native and foreign-born populations is rarely holistic (Griffith, 2008), over time their distancing strategies may exhibit African Americans' social integration (Seers & Savalei, 2006). A related strand of research has suggested, however, that higher levels of immigration in new destinations can positively impact African social integration at least at the neighborhood level, such as in North Carolina. What used to be predominantly Black neighborhoods can now be composed of both Black and Hispanic minorities (Cravey, 2003; Deaton, 2003; Mohl, 2003).

History and Legacies of Afro Caribbeans

There are certain images that the people of North America have in their minds about the island nations of the Caribbean. Some people see the island nations as paradise with year-round warm weather, blue sea waters, white sandy beaches, drinking rum and Coca Cola. Other people see the island nations as third world nations, filled with narrow roads, tin-roof houses, and shanty towns, places where there are scarce resources for survival and people who are desperately trying to come to the United States for a better way of life.

Many of these perceptions are reflective of media images of the Caribbean region, which have their origins in either news reports of the poverty and harsh conditions or in travel agency advertisements to vacationers in search of a different environment. Many Americans are familiar with some of the island nations more than with others but are not knowledgeable about their complex world and their histories of conflict among world powers who fought against each other to gain ownership.

Many Americans know about Trinidad and Tobago for its carnival celebrations, Calypso and soca music, and their artists. Other Americans know about Jamaica, Barbados, and Aruba as exotic vacation spots. Some may not have known of the smaller islands as the Grenadines and Montserrat and scores of others that are not as developed like the larger islands.

Popular definitions of the Caribbean include the Bahamas and Bermuda as Caribbean Islands, but often exclude Suriname and Guyana because these are countries in South America. However other historians have included those South American countries as West Indian because their history and social structure are similar to those of the islands and generally do not include the Bahamas and Bermuda. Sydney Mintz (1974) included the countries of Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, and Belize (p. 21).

The Caribbean Islands

The Caribbean Islands stretch from the tip of Florida of the United States to the coast of South America. Sydney Mintz (1974), in *Caribbean Transformations*, defined the Caribbean as including:

> more than 50 inhabited islands stretching from Trinidad, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Margarita, and others of the coast of Venezuela in the South, to Jamaica, Cuba, Hispaniola (Haiti and Dominican Republic) and Puerto Rico—The Greater Antilles—in the North. The Caribbean includes all these islands that stretch in an arc nearly 2,000 miles long, between Trinidad and Western Cuba, and encompassing a few outlying islands, such as Providencia and San Idres to the South. Because of their historical identification with islands and their similar histories and British and Dutch rule, the mainland countries of Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, and Belize are often considered as belonging to the Caribbean region. (p. 21)

This was the area that Mintz said was:

> the first phase of western colonization outside Europe itself, the site of the first important overseas capitalist experiments and the starting place for tropical estate agriculture, the plantation system and the large-scale New World enslavement of African peoples. (p. 22)

The northernmost islands called the Greater Antilles are the largest ones, including Cuba, Hispaniola (the island that is half Dominican Republic and half Haiti), Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. The smaller ones are more eastern islands and are called the Lesser Antilles, which include Saint Kitts (Saint Christopher), Nevis, Antigua, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Saint Vincent, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago (twin island nations).

Caribbean History

In the five centuries since Christopher Columbus arrived on the island of Hispaniola in 1492, the islands have been controlled by European powers, with many of them trading hands among a number of different world powers at different times. The Spanish, French, Dutch, Danish, English, and later the United States all colonized and controlled various islands. These islands relinquished control back and forth over time in that the specific European heritage of particular islands is sometimes difficult to detail. The British finally prevailed in 1803, as in the

case of Tobago, until independence in 1962. Trinidad is combined with Tobago and was owned by the British from 1797 to independence in 1962.

Only Barbados was held by the British throughout its history. Jamaica was controlled and colonized by Spain from its European discovery in 1494 until it was ceded to England in 1670. Jamaica gained independence from Britain in 1962.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Caribbean region contained as a whole 323 million people. Of these, 61% lived in Spanish-speaking societies such as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Another 20% lived in the French-speaking societies, 17% lived in the societies where English is the original language, and 2% lived in the Dutch-speaking area.

The study examined Afro Caribbean immigrants who have come from the island nations defined as constituting the West Indies. These are the current English-speaking islands as countries of Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, and Belize. The Afro Caribbean immigrants I spoke to primarily came from these societies and their people today.

These immigrants increased in large numbers in New York City. As Philip Kasinitz (1987) pointed out, the number of immigrants grew notably after 1965. He stated:

> In the ten years following the Hart-Cellar Act reforms, West Indian migration exceeded that of the seventy years and the numbers continue to grow after that. By the early 1980s, five thousand legal immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean and another six thousand to ten thousand from Haiti were arriving in the U.S. each year, approximately half settled in New York City. (p. 46)

Recent History Caribbean Neo-Colonial Relationship

Many of the Caribbean Islands achieved independence in the middle of the twentieth century. The United States established a neo-colonial relationship that has altered the island societies. They were altered through the penetration of the media, migration, American military intervention, American aid society, tourists, and drug industries that left their mark on Caribbean life and fostered relationships.

Caribbeans seeking a better life see the United States as a desirable place because of its proximity, its growing economic and political power, and the possibilities it offers for education and upward mobility, especially during the twentieth century and beyond.

At the time of the passing of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965 (which transformed American immigration law by removing racial quotas and submitting a visa preference), the Caribbean islands were winning their independence from Great Britain and were poised to take advantage of the available slots. This immigration of West Indians to the United States has been, for the most part, a one-way stream, although there were some permanent return migration and circular migration. Remittances were sent back for economic survival in their home country by immigrants working abroad.

These remittances were also of a social nature. Peggy Levitt (1996), in *Social Remittances: A Conceptual Tool for Understanding Migration and Development*, stated:

> Social remittances are ideas, behaviors, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities. They are the under-studied low level counterpart of macro-level, global cultural flows. They are the North-South equivalent of the social and cultural resources brought by immigrants which ease their transition from immigrants to ethnics. (pp. 2-3)

New York has become the Caribbean "crossroads" of the world. It contains the largest concentration and the most diverse comingling of its people. With a Caribbean population of two million (this figure includes Puerto Ricans), New York forms the largest Caribbean city in the world.

Constance Sutton (1987), in *The Caribbeanization of New York City and the Emergence of Transnational Sociocultural System*, pointed out:

> It is in New York that the different islanders "cross roads," learning about one another in their various encounters at work, in the streets, in schools and communities, at public affairs and through the media. It is here that they have begun to build social bridges and alliances as they confront similar problems in their neighborhoods, the schools their children attend, their places of work and the city at large. (p. 19)

The Caribbean immigrants to New York saw that it was more practical for them to seek "integration" and reject assimilation. Rachael Buff (2001), in *Immigration and the Political Economy of Home: West Indian Brooklyn and American Indian Minneapolis, 1945-1992*, pointed out:

> It is important here to distinguish between assimilation which denotes the gradual melting of different cultural groups into Americans, and acculturation, which signals the ongoing process of cultural adaptation and change. Many scholars have written about the ways Indians used Christian and federal institutions (churches, schools) to further their survival in an increasingly EuroAmerican context and simultaneously to preserve native cultures. (p. 26)

The Caribbean immigrants insist upon what they believe are their rights— political, economic, and civic. They also believe that as opportunities present themselves in America, they have the right to these opportunities. While resisting assimilation, they also seek to retain homeland attachments and cultural identities.

New Yorkers came to recognize Wet Indians in their midst through certain unfortunate incidents of racial violence in New York City. Mary C. Waters (1999) in *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*, pointed out:

> One of the ways in which New Yorkers came to recognize West Indian immigrants in their midst was through their tragic involvement in some of the worst incidents of racial violence in New York in the 1960s' and 90's including the Howard Beach killing, the Korean grocery store boycott in Flatbush and the Crown Heights riots.
>
> In 1987 the Queens neighborhood of Howard Beach became notorious overnight when 23 year old Michael Griffith, who had immigrated from Trinidad, was chased to his death by a White mob. In 1990 a much publicized boycott of a Korean grocery store in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn came about because a black customer claimed she had been treated disrespectfully and then attacked by the Korean grocery store owner. The woman, 46 year old Joselaine Felissaint, was a Haitian immigrant. In August 1991 in the Crown Heights neighborhood, a 7 year old child, Garvin Cato, who had immigrated earlier that year from Guyana with his family, was struck and killed by a car driven by a Hasidic Jew who was part of a motorcade escorting the leader of the Lubavitch Hasidic sect. A crowd of people gathered, many of whom believed that the black boy had been ignored by the first emergency vehicle owned by a Jewish ambulance service that responded to the incident. The crowd became enraged and, as the evening went on, demonstrations and riots and looting began. (p. 2)

In all of these cases, the national press reported the race angle. In each of these incidents, immigrants from the Caribbean were involved and were reported to the local press, which published a detailed account of all that happened and especially people's response.

The Crown Heights section in Brooklyn is an unusual neighborhood. The demographic change was astounding: in 1960, the neighborhood was 70% White, but by in 1970, it was 70% Black.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the aim and conduct of the research. H. Russell Bernard (1998), in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*, pointed out:

> Epistemology discusses the general problems of how we can know something and what knowledge is, whereas methodology is more specific discussion of the goals and procedures of inquiry in a particular discipline. Methodology includes discussion of method—how we shall proceed—and of the principles of theory construction—what are the goals of inquiry? What shall the knowledge that we want to produce on our subject matter be like?... A methodology framework then is a particular school of thought that makes some claims and sets up prescriptions on how to conduct research in a discipline. (p. 40)

The questions that lie at the heart of the study are: How are Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants integrated through the cultural and social process? Put more precisely, how does ethnicity, social, and cultural differentiation affect the integration process for Blacks who are foreign and American? In the language of the social sciences, social integration is the key dependent variable under scrutiny. The focus, then, is directed less on the outcome and more on the process of social integration itself.

More pivotal to the study are the identities, interests, ideological agendas, institutions, ethnic favoritism, and strategies that inform and animate the process for Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants. The aim was to provide a critical account of how Afro Caribbean immigrants' and Southern African American migrants' social integration has unfolded in St. Albans. The study explored how these two ethnic groups related to the integration process, conceived their social and cultural interests, viewed themselves in relation to each other, and made sense of the social and cultural world around them.

I decided for the research study to focus exclusively on immigrants from the English-speaking Caribbean to eliminate the potential of the effect of foreign language in the interviewing process. Interviewing Blacks from the English-speaking Caribbean made it easier to make more direct contact with African Americans than I could if the Black Caribbeans were speaking Dutch or French from that region. By concentrating on English-speaking Caribbean immigrants, I was able to isolate the effects of the integration process between the two groups.

I began fieldwork by first taking a tour of the neighborhood community of St. Albans so as to see and make observations of what are the significant structures that are there and to make the connection to what people are saying about what is there in the neighborhood community. While touring, I made notes and wrote down information about my observations of the structures and where people of the neighborhood "meet regularly." This helped me to see the layout of the places where Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans experience integration.

I then began hanging around various places where people of the neighborhood community interacted, listening, observing, and writing down what I thought to be important and relevant information to the study. Some of the people who were willing to converse with me about the research became my informants. One informant questioned me about my research topic. The informant said, "Why did you select this topic for your research project? You could have made it a little easier on yourself by selecting a topic that is less controversial. You seem to be a person who is a glutton for punishment."

I walked through the streets of St. Albans as often as I could. I traveled on public transportation of trains, buses, and taxicabs that provided services to the neighborhood community. I made casual inquiries as I followed people around and watched what they did.

I began to be more targeted in my approach by making appointments to speak to the leaders of institutions as well as leaders in the neighborhood community. My thinking was that these leaders would be better prepared than the rank and file of Black immigrants and migrants to address questions on the integration of the two groups under study. I thought that their answers would provide helpful clues for framing questions for respondents in the sample.

I also enlisted the help of community organizations and institutions to help identify leaders. Some of the staff of Queens Central Library were very helpful in identifying the names of prominent leaders in the neighborhood community. I initially contacted them by telephone calls to explain the project and to elicit their participation. There were also follow-ups to these calls.

Almost all the leaders expressed interest in the project. The leaders agreed to sit down with me for interviews.

After identifying a number of informants, I began conducting ethnographic interviews. I anticipated that the interviews would last for two hours. To accommodate the busy schedules of the participants, I conducted all interviews at a place of the informant's choosing, which turned out to be in offices, homes, or restaurants, and some in their place of employment. The focus group was held in a conference room of the St. Albans Episcopal Church. Most of the participants interviewed waived the provision of anonymity and, in fact, insisted on the use of their given names, with which they were identified in the data.

My approach to the interviews (as well as the focus group) was to first introduce myself as a student researcher, explain the project and its purpose with the necessary authorization, and at the end of the interview (as well as contact with any group), ask for volunteers and help in identifying others.

I used questionnaires that were structured as well as unstructured and open-ended. The questions asked were mainly about identity, social behavior reflections with other ethnic groups, and other categories. Interviewees were given adequate time to respond and even expand on their answers. In some cases, time constraints forced me to skip or modify some questions. In some cases, interviewees deviated from the questionnaires when responding to some questions. However, the most relevant questions of the interview schedule were addressed. One of the questions that I almost always sought to ask Afro Caribbeans pertained to their connections to their home country once they settled in the United States. I wanted to know, as immigrants, how well they have adjusted in their new situation and dwelling. Mary C. Waters (1999) pointed out that immigrants "use their home country and culture as a frame of reference…. In effect they say to themselves … I am from a place where I am valued" (p. 142).

I interviewed and recorded representatives of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans. I wanted to know how individual life experiences can be representative and reflective of the population of St. Albans.

Another approach I used in the research was participant observation for gathering the data. Herbert Gans (1962) referred to participant observation with all its faults as "the best empirical sociological method available" (p. 415). Gans further stated:

> Field work studies what people do, think and believe and in their own groups, whereas survey data comes from what people say they do, think and believe. Field also obtains more valid attitude data than survey research, for it can distinguish attitudes people volunteer to each other in their daily lives, including those they feel intensely about, from opinions they express in, or make up for, special occasions and people. (pp. 415-416)

As a participant observer, I recorded information at all events of what people said and did in the course of their activities. I observed ritual ceremonies of individuals such as funerals, weddings, infant baptisms, and confirmations. I attended sports events and other recreation

activities such as cricket matches, basketball games, and baseball games. I visited community gardens, attended Family Day gatherings, and musical concerts. I visited educational institutions such as community schools (public and private), elementary school, high school, and a college on the border of St. Albans, which students of the neighborhood community attend. I also visited the police department and fire department, the local libraries, the Veterans Administration Hospital, and the post office. Other places I visited were local businesses such as restaurants, hair salons, barber shops, real estate agencies, commercial banks, commercial stores of various kinds, health facilities, and funeral homes. I attended church picnics and other church-sponsored events and services. I also went to annual community events such as Memorial Day, Labor Day in Brooklyn, political rallies, and programs sponsored by the Queens Central Library, which the people of St. Albans attended.

There were times when I was invited informally and visited friends and their neighbors whom I met along the research journey. One of my friends invited me to attend a dance sponsored by a neighborhood community fundraising group. I was also invited to attend block association meetings and street events, where a street in that block was used for activities sponsored by the people of the block.

With its emphasis on social and cultural integration, the study was concerned with those Afro Caribbeans who were civically active and pursuing some form of social integration with Southern African Americans. Active immigrants are often highly self conscious about their experiences in this country, and this makes for good interview subjects (Jones-Correa, 1998; Kasinitz, 1992).

In my interaction and interview sessions with participants, this type of observation of participants was borne out and yielded a treasure trove of information from interviewees.

On one occasion, I attended a church worship service in the neighborhood community. The congregation was made of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants for the most part. At one point of the service, the male voice choir was about to render a selection. The choir director invited "all men" in attendance to be part of the choir rendition of a familiar hymn of the church congregation. The choir director announced: "Today I would like 'all men' in the church to come up and be part of the choice for this selection." I came as an observer and did not think that I was included in this request; hence, I stayed in my seat. One of the church ushers came to me and said, "Sir, the choice director is asking for 'all men' in the church to take part in the male choir selection." After a little hesitation, I finally became a participant. After this serendipitous experience, I could not shed the observer role entirely because I knew that I would write this participant experience down later.

The study was not without its methodological problems. Often during the study, I wondered whether the research sample conclusions were representative or could be readily generalized to a larger population, or whether a sample of the thirty respondents was enough to draw bold inferences from the interviews to the population in the aggregate. However, respondents of the sample focus group belonged to the same or overlapping networks because many informants were recruited through "snowball method" for contracting referrals. The snowball method for contacting the same informants was specially used to contact informants who were difficult to reach. Not only did this method make it easier to reach these potential informants, but it also helped me not to do extensive canvassing personally of the entire neighborhood community seeking informants. This technique yielded a sample of respondents who were far more socially and culturally active and economically better off than the larger immigrant and migrant population.

I also encountered a problem at the initial stage of the research. As a male researcher, potential female respondents were reluctant to speak to me on a one-to-one basis, compounded by the fact of sharing their "personal information." One potential informant said to me: "I don't feel comfortable sharing my name and my personal information with someone that I don't really know. I understand what you are about, but that's me." Other informants changed their minds after giving consent initially, while there were others who did not remember the commitments they had made for an interview. However, I looked at all of these instances not as negatives but as part of the research process.

To overcome any potential methodological weakness, I sought out other types of relevant archival materials like newspaper clippings. Many of these clippings are archived at the Queens Central Library. This method has its limitations, but it gives some leverage to draw some form conclusions and broaden inferences.

The fieldwork period came to a close. I reflected often on my being in the research site for twelve months, visiting institutions, attending events, living in the neighborhood community, making new friends, and taking part in certain community activities. I became a familiar face in the neighborhood community of St. Albans. Some people who were acquainted with the research process asked me from time to time, "How is that research paper doing?" Others said to me, "You must finish that dissertation regardless of its difficulties that it may present." Another person said, "It doesn't make sense to start and not finish. We don't play those games."

These expressions of interest and care motivated me to complete the study. Now I was faced with a new problem of having more data than I could ever hope to transcribe, analyze, and write up.

I returned home with notebooks, journals, and tape recordings filled with data to be transcribed and formatted in reporting form. While sorting field notes in the months that followed and reviewing my write-up, I soon discovered that there were more important lines of inquiry I should have followed. I then conducted further research to fill the gaps and then, upon completion, to start the task of analyzing, synthesizing, writing, and rewriting the data in reporting form.

At the end of this field experience, there was a feeling of accomplishment and that the research project helped me to understand I have learned to do some ethnography better simply by attempting to do it.

Method

I begin this section with an etymological reflection on the term under discussion. There is a good reason for using the definition for the etymology of the word for it is a historical and reflective instrument.

The word *method* is the Greek *hodos*, "way, path, road" (*Webster's Dictionary,* 1959). *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* tells us that "Method is following some systematic course (Latin—cursus from *currere*, "to run") of action" (p. 1548).

Anthropologists in recent years have argued that good ethnography in field methods must provide a clear account of the field paths followed to obtain the data, out of which the local acknowledge and the eventual ethnography built on it are constructed (Sanjek, 1990, pp. 399-400). Methods implies a systematization of procedure usually leading to the goal of greater clarity in the explanation of the human, social, and cultural affairs of those studies (Sartre, 1963), including the presence of goals as immanent in this project. Method is also a kind of practice that is open to reflective analysis, as any other practice must take into account the

relation between formal procedure, which is characteristic of any methodology and the facts of much of life as it is lived.

From the qualitative researcher to inductively develop ideas in this study, from certain particulars to abstractions, the research relies on views of the participants, and these views are discussed within the context in which they occur—hence, the need for a method of inquiry for the data.

In this action of the research design, I tried to inform the reader of the intent of the qualitative research to mention a special design to be used, carefully reflecting on the role the research plays in the study drawing from a list of data sources; using specific protocols for recording data; analyzing the information through the steps of analysis; utilizing a purposeful sampling strategy and identification of individual voices; and mentioning approaches to document the accuracy or validity of the data collected.

This method section addresses the important components of the research as follows:

a. Observing the layout of the research site and identifying where activities and events take place.
b. Explaining how the research was started.
c. Engaging in participant observation and data collection.
d. Following data collection, data transcription, analysis, and write-up.

Up-close information was gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context. The key instruments used in collecting the data were through examining the documents, observing behavior through participant observation and observations, interviewing participants, and viewing audiovisual information rather than relying on a single data source. I audiotaped the interviews and kept a journal during the study.

I reflected on my role in the study and shared my personal background, culture, and experience with the hope of shaping the interpretation, such as the meaning they attached to the data. This aspect of the method is more than advancing bias and values in the study, but how my background actually may shape the direction of the study. The specific design was to learn about the culture-sharing behavior of the two groups of immigrants and migrants in St. Albans.

I completed the fieldwork after I provided a complete description of the study to participants and obtained informed consent. The Institutional Review Board of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, approved the recruitment, consent, and data collection procedure.

A total of 85 interviews were conducted with persons 18 and over, including Afro Caribbean immigrants, Southern African American migrants, and White Euro Americans.

For the purpose of the study, Afro Caribbeans were defined as persons who trace their heritage to a country in the Caribbean, who now reside in the United States, and are racially classified as “Black” and are English-speaking but may also speak another language.

The data collection was conducted from 2018 to 2019. The response rate for individuals was 90% for Afro Caribbeans and African Americans and 100% for Whites. This response rate is excellent, considering participants were living in an urban area where it is difficult and expensive to collect interviews.

Whites who were interviewed were not administered the full interview and were asked questions only related to White favoritism toward West Indians. The majority of questions asked of other respondents centered around relationships between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants.

The research sample of the study was composed of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants who lived in the carved-out section of Addisleigh Park in St. Albans. The sample served as a representation of the total population in St. Albans. This was important in order to generalize to the whole population.

The sampling technique used in the study was snowball sampling. Each person interviewed led me to the next person or persons based on the designated set of criteria. The result was the continuous accrual of related research respondents. The technique allowed me to build a sample of individuals with one or more characteristics within this unknown number of individuals.

In both ethnic groups of Afro Caribbean and Southern African American interviewees, it was necessary for individual respondents to identify their race as "Black." These self-identifications as Black were included in the sample and the list of interviewees if they answered affirmatively when asked if they were of Afro Caribbean descent and they said they were from a country included in the list of Caribbean area countries, presented by the interviewer, and indicated that their parents or grandparents were born in the Caribbean area countries.

Internal verification of the data was seen in the data collected through multiple sources, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. Informants served as a check through the analysis process. An ongoing dialogue regarding how to view information about informants' reality and meaning ensured the true value of the data. Repeated observations of the research site occurred over a period of four months at a time. An informant was involved in all phases of the study and served as a checkpoint on interpretations and conclusions. I articulated and clarified my bias at the onset of the study.

For external verification, the strategy utilized in the study to ensure external validity was provided by the rich and thick description of the study so that anyone of interest in human relations in a neighborhood would have a framework for comparison. Other forms of verification were the focus of the study, the role of the researcher, informants' participation and the basis of their selection, and the context of the data acquisition. The data collection and analysis helped to strengthen reliability and provide an accurate picture of the methods used in the study.

Data Analysis

I approached field research and data analysis with these assumptions:

It was assumed that the statements made by respondents to the interviewer in the study were sufficiently accurate and truthful to reflect real trends in social-cultural relationships and integration between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans.

It was assumed that life in St. Albans among the immigrants and migrants under study would not make factors like country of origin, length of residence, socioeconomic differentials, and so on irrelevant to the patterns of integration.

It was assumed that the cultural forms of each group of immigrants and migrants under study could be thought of as a function of, or a response to, shared assumptions of members of each group.

It was assumed that the interpersonal relations, roles, and status of migrants and immigrants under study were conditioned by the cultural forms of each group.

It was assumed that the attitude change between the two groups of immigrants and migrants were due to acculturation that was the result of two or more different groups coming into significant degrees of contact predictive of change in all members of the groups.

It was assumed that attitude change would not be thought of as acculturation under forced draft, but under democratic processes which expose people to new ways of relationship.

Specifically, in analyzing the data, I will attempt to describe and define the conditions and relations that Afro Caribbeans and African Americans experience. It is believed that these conditions and experiences influence both the pattern regularities and the scope of integration.

Hannibal Gerald Duncan (1933) in *Immigration and Assimilation*, pointed out that immigrant groups rarely become assimilated, while some groups who are immigrants to a country tend to choose some point to assimilate, on the other hand, and tend to isolate themselves. Duncan pointed out:

> Even the second generation among immigrants cannot be fully assimilated. Assimilation is fundamentally a culture process which implies the acceptance of the ideas, attitudes, customs, and traditions of the new group. It is rarely, however a complete process, a people assimilated only on points. On different points the person will isolate, accommodate and assimilate himself. On what point the person will isolate, accommodate and assimilate himself depends on many factors, but mainly on his own nature, his cultural background and conditions which he experiences in America. Some people are unable to surrender their deep-seated loyalties and accept the attributes of America. Others become assimilated into their American group, but realizing they are to return to their native country, also develop their associations with their own people. (p. 480)

On the other hand, when individuals withdraw from the group, as in the case of intermarriage, they enact the aggregate of the ethnic group, and when such a situation exists, integration is hastened. In *The Ordeal of Integration: Progress and Resentment in America's Racial Crisis*, Orlando Patterson (1998, explained:

> Afro-Americans (Afro-Caribbean) men and women then have every reason to outmarry: it will enrich the repertoire of child reading practices among them; it will vastly expand their weak social ties and other social capital; it will help to solve the internal crisis of gender and marital relations among them; and it will complete the process of total integration as they become to other Americans not only full members of the political and more community; but also people "we" marry. When that happens the goal of integration will have been fully achieved. (p. 198)

Given the fact that there are certain factors that are basic to the integration process and its patterns among Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans in St. Albans, I will identify those categories in which they accommodated, self-identified, and integrated in St. Albans. The major areas of inquiry are:

a. **White Favoritism toward West Indians.** Afro Caribbean immigrants are made to feel welcome to America, mainly because their social patterns are seen as hard-working, upward-striving, friendly, and focused on their culture that is dedicated to hard work and a high value to education.
b. **Individual Voices.** Individuals who live in St. Albans are seen as representatives of the Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans.
c. **A Focus Group.** This group is composed of the informants from the research sample of the total population of At. Albans.
d. **Life Lived in St. Albans.** This chapter outlines a cross-section of neighborhood institutions, events, and activities where Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans meet in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.
e. **Roomers, House Tenants, and Integration.** This chapter documents a tenant household community of roomers. Roomers commonly used in this context are individuals who rent rooms to live. They are not living in isolation but are part of a community.
f. **Ethnic Identity.** This chapter examines and documents the persistence or non-persistence of the cultural norms of Afro Caribbean immigrant groups.

The factors that give identity to an ethnic group are also explored.

With all of the foregoing considerations, we will now examine the pattern of regularities of integration of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in the St. Albans neighborhood community.

Chapter 4: White Favoritism

When one considers Afro Caribbeans in New York, one factor that needs to be considered is the exclusive colonization of some of the islands in the Caribbean by the British for more than three hundred years, which has made an indelible mark on the culture in those island nations. The institutions of the church, education, and politics are all British orientation. Above all, a rigid class system was established.

Culturally, the only aspect that Afro Caribbeans have in common with their Southern African Americans counterpart is the color of their skin. However, this researcher acknowledges that these two ethnic groups, though they are both part of the African diaspora, have been reared in two different culture areas and reflect different attitudes.

Another factor to be considered is that the British orientation of Afro Caribbean immigrants to New York has also worked positively for them.

White Favoritism toward West Indians is an important relationship to explore for this study. White Favoritism as part of a culture of human relationships, which is governed by certain principles. Hervé Varenne (2008), in *Culture,Education Anthropology*, stated, "Anthropology … if it has to have any punch, must be the activity that fosters the sense that the world we all experience is a cultural world constructed in a contingent history that has made something totally concrete" (p. 355).

This chapter examines White Favoritism toward West Indians and seeks to answer the question: Does White Favoritism actually favor West Indians over African Americans and hence bring them into an advantage over African Americans? In this chapter, this question and others

raised by contemporaries are explored in the context of St. Albans development as a neighborhood community, where Whites, West Indians, and African Americans reside.

Whites and West Indians

The popular and social scientific assumptions about immigration, acculturation, and identity in the United States have been shaped by the historical experiences of European immigrants from the 1880-1920 period (the period of large-scale European immigration to the United States) and their descendants.

The descendants of these European groups not only acculturated—that is, adopted versions of the language, behavioral patterns, and values of the host society, but they also assimilated—that is, they gained admission to non-immigrant, non-ethnic social institutions and categories. A part of this process of assimilation, these descendants of immigrants gained access to the privileged ethnic/racial category "White." The fact that these European immigrant groups came to America made the process of immigration to America over time seem natural and universal to many Americans rather than only a function of specific historical circumstances.

The social ethnic/racial category of White became more inclusive over time for it included also the descendants of the early 20th century Jewish immigrants (Brodkin, 1998). It has not broadened to include African-descent immigrants who are particularly susceptible to U.S. racialization (Lopez, 2004).

West Indians to New York are from the island and mainland territories of English- and Spanish-speaking Caribbean and, in recent times, the island of Haiti. These West Indian immigrants to New York preserved strong familial and cultural links to their homeland. These links have not been severed by time, but they continue to be reinforced by the United States and the Caribbean as a "social field."

West Indians in St. Albans, who formally relocated from Brooklyn, established themselves and promoted their distinctiveness by their continuation of cultural norms in food, music, newspaper availability from the Caribbean that provided the medium for Caribbean news, forged associations, and organizations which made their experience significant.

People of European descent have historically been considered prestigious in the Caribbean by West Indians. They associate Whites with a higher social class and physical beauty. They are often thought of by West Indians as people with many economic and education resources.

Many West Indians are considered by Whites to be ambitious, as people who seek to develop new skills, are willing to learn new trades and professions, and are hardworking and, in many cases, focused on shedding traditional agrarian customs for those required by urban life in America.

West Indians tend to maintain multiple relationships and also solidarity with the immigrant community. They tend to maintain the community's values and experience economic stability or some form of upward mobility. Immigrants of higher education and social class and their descendants tend to use education as a means of social mobility, approximating the notion of upward mobility over time. Educational institutions provide opportunities to intermingle and provide universalistic attitudes.

White Perceptions of West Indians

White Favoritism toward West Indians is a joint performance of White perception and action toward them, as well as West Indians' actions and their character. In "Joint Action on the Wild Side of Manhattan: The Power of the Cultural Center on an Educative Alternative," Rizzo-Tolk and Varenne (1982) pointed out: "The insight that social action is always a locally

performed matter, a matter of joint performance by individuals who can be demonstrated to be accurately sensitive to the conditions that they set for one another by their own construction" (p. 223).

One rationale for the investigation of White Favoritism to West Indians is that there are perceptible differences in the behavior of West Indians and African Americans. White Americans imagine that West Indians are superior to African Americans. Several reasons for this perception are:

> a. West Indians trigger associations with Britain, a nation that White Americans greatly adore. b. In dealing with Whites, West Indians project themselves as "good Blacks." c. White American employers hype and promote West Indians frequently than their native Blacks because of their positive image. d. Understanding this study, one can assess the claim that West Indian advantage provides some clues as to how much of the situation of American Negroes in general can be attributed to color prejudice by Whites and how much to cultural patterns among black. (Sowell, 1981, p. 218)

Thomas Sowell (1975b), in *Essays and Data on American Ethnic Groups*, pointed out:

> West Indian Negroes in the US have long had higher incomes, more education, higher occupational status, proportionately for business ownership than African American Negroes. Both fertility rates and crime rates are lower than those of native Blacks. (p. 6)

Sowell's writing caused a great impact because, to many Americans, his findings were news to them, as were his interpretations. He noted that "Jews, Japanese and West Indians exemplify such traits as work, thrift, and education. West Indians are less intimidated by Whites, less angry at Whites, and more comfortable with Whites" (Sowell, 1975b, p. 59).

In another of his writings, Sowell (1975a) stated:

> Afro-Caribbeans are a group of great importance, not only in terms of their positive achievements and their current roles but perhaps even more as a means of gauging the socioeconomic effect of being black, as compared to the effect of the many cultural and institutional factors historically associated with the evolution of African American. Afro-Caribbeans in the United States have long had a distinctive style, set of values, and educational achievements very different from those of African Americans. (p. 97)

One of the scholars who first advanced this proposition of White Favoritism is Roy Bryce-Laporte (1972), in *Black Immigrants: The Experience of Invisibility and Inequality*). On one hand, Bryce-Laporte proposed White landlords, shopkeepers, and employers view West Indians as superior to African Americans. On the other hand, he believed that immigrants stress their exoticism and deliberately set themselves apart from native Blacks, presumably in the hopes of benefitting from the distinction (pp. 25-56).

White Favoritism toward West Indians becomes possible when there is some interaction and evaluation among Whites and Blacks. The early experiences of West Indians in New York underscore the possibility of Favoritism by Whites, even though there was evidence of dignitary affronts in empowerments in the workplace. Malcolm Gladwell (1996) noted that:

> West Indians sought and received jobs in garment factories. These garment factories were typically segregated. Moreover, segregation was deeply institutionalized, as evidenced by the existence of separate unions for black and white garment workers. Yet West Indians sought and received jobs, in fact, arose with signs proclaiming that "no blacks need apply," despite being recognizable persons from African descent. Workplace signs saying "no blacks need apply" constitute a dignitary affront. The employment equivalent of a racially restrictive convenient, the experience of West Indian New Yorkers in the 1920s indicate that White discrimination was rife with signalling (for example, no blacks need apply, this property may not be sold to Negroes). West Indians were still working in ethnically racially exclusive factories and living theoretically in racially exclusive neighborhoods. (pp. 74-78)

Another experience of West Indians' preferential treatment was pointed out by Seren Sensi (2018), in *The New Black Face*. He saw that there is a quiet hostility within the Black Diaspora. He stated:

> It is most apparent when discussing media representation. It tested when veteran American actor Samuel L. Jackson wondered what a black Black American—what I call the descendants of American chattel slavery (D.A.C.S.)— might have brought to the American charged racism of "Get out."… It arose again with the casting of British actor Daniel Ezra as the lead in C.W.'s newest teen drama. A football show entitled ironically "All American," and based on the life of real life D.A.C.S. football player, Spencer Paysinger. (p. 1)

Sensi also noted that:

> Questions of appropriateness of the regularity arise with which non-American Blacks are considered the "go to" in American media for D.A.C.S. roles, as well as other aspects of the American infrastructure, such as jobs and education. (p. 1)

West Indians are an ethnic group and how they define themselves was observed by Sensi (2018) as something that is not trivial, even though it seems like it. He stated:

> In the past twenty years the number of West Indians in America has exploded. There are now half a million in the New York area alone, and despite their recent arrivals, they make substantially more money than American Blacks. They live in better neighborhoods, their families are stronger. In New York, in fact, West Indians fare about as well as Chinese and Korean immigrants. (p. 2)

Large ethnographic literature argued that most British West Indians maintain that they receive better treatment from Whites than do African Americans. An African American told Mary C. Waters (1999), in *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*:

> We [Americans] have this attitude that, like, this guy's gonna take my job, my boss I'm gonna give him the job for less, and in some cases this is true. I've heard a guy I've worked for, he said if it was up to him, he wouldn't hire any Americans, and he'd hire foreigners. These were his words, and he was the boss…. But I think it is a misperception. (p. 131)

On another occasion, a Belizean woman told Faye Arnold (1984), in *West Indians and London's Hierarchy of Discrimination*:

> When I worked in the garment district…. Jewish people that I worked for told me that they preferred to hire me rather than an American Black, and I said, "What's the difference," and they told me you are different, you stay here long and you will see. (p. 52)

Milton Vickerman (1999), in *Crosscurrents: West Indian Immigrants and Race*, was told by a Jamaican immigrant:

> I see where West Indians have a chance of getting a job over the Black American because … these employers—mostly the Whites—see where we…are better workers. If … both of us should go in for a job, one as an American and the other a West Indian … the West Indian would have a better chance over the American. (p. 143)

Christine Alfred, an African American who is living in St. Albans, said to me,

> Some West Indians are treated better than us by Whites and this is so because these West Indians are not from here. When I went for a job at the V.A. Hospitals here in St. Albans, the Whites who hired me were surprisingly considerate.

Some Explanations for White Favoritism

Mary C. Waters (1999) speculated that West Indians view Whites with less rancor. A teacher from Trinidad explained, "I am not American and I do not see myself as having been deprived by the Whites in America. To the contrary, I am here. I was accepted. I was acknowledged for what I knew and I am in a position now, where I am earning a good living" (p. 144).

The White Favoritism hypothesis is used to explain West Indian advantage over African Americans, with these explanations offered for the difference.

In *West Indian Immigrants: A Black Success Story?,* Suzanne Model (2008) stated:

> West Indian immigrants with the same skills, family responsibilities and residential location as African Americans do better in the labor market than African Americans…. As pointed out…three types of explanations have been offered: those that emphasized culture, those that have emphasized selectivity, and those that emphasize White Favoritism. (p. 49)

The possibility of White Favoritism for West Indians after they have interacted is credited to the fact that Whites feel more comfortable with West Indians than with African Americans. Mary C. Waters is credited for this observation as the "comfort factor." Suzanne Model (2008) explained that:

> Mary C. Waters' view of socialization in an all-black society enhances not only West Indians' willingness to confront racism but also that racism can be overcome. This belief in turn has a healthy effect on West Indian-White relations. Because West Indians believe that they can overcome racism through their own efforts, they are less intimidated by Whites, less angry at Whites. Waters labeled this as the "comfort factor," a phrase she borrowed from the journalist Jack Miles who used it to distinguish his relationship with his African American classmates.
>
> To Waters, the phrase means that the relationship between West Indians and Whites is cordial and pleasant; it is not marred by anger on the black side or guilt on the white.

> As a result, white gatekeepers treat West Indians more favorably than they do treat African Americans. (pp. 55-56)

Informants Jessica Winslow and April Green, both residents of St. Albans, are from the American South. They have observed that Whites are more relaxed with West Indians than African Americans. West Indians are not so angry, they do not feel necessarily that the American society owes them anything, and they have less of a chip on their shoulders.

John Hames, an Afro Caribbean from Trinidad, when asked if he had any interactive experience with Whites who are living in St. Albans, said:

> A week ago I went into a convenience store on Linden Boulevard here in St. Albans. The owner of the store is White. He is one of the Whites who did not close his business and relocate when the neighborhood was changing. He repairs shoes and other items as belt buckles, and it is the only store that provides these kinds of services in the neighborhood.
>
> On my first visit to the store, the owner spoke very sparingly to me. He was very business-like in his dealings with me. However, on subsequent visits to the store, I observed that the owner was more friendly and accommodating. I shared my observation with a friend who said that he believes that the main reason for the change of attitude toward me by the owner of the store on your subsequent visits is because the owner felt more comfortable with you.

Many Caribbean immigrants believe that a lot of opportunities for self improvement exist in the United States. Samuel Johnson, an Afro Caribbean from Barbados, said, “My relatives and I came to America because we believe that unlimited opportunities for success are in this country.” Caribbean immigrants believe that the color of their skin does not and will not prevent them from taking advantage of the opportunities that America provides. They believe that White racism still exists on many levels and in many areas in the United States. However, it can be overcome with determination and hard work (Waters, 1997, p. 19).

On the other hand, Model (2008) pointed out that:

> Ogbu notes that African Americans experience racism as a constant irritant in their lives, an irritant that has nothing to do with them personally and everything to do with

> them collectively. Believing that racism cannot be overcome with determination and hard work, some African Americans relate to Whites in an oppositional manner. (p. 65)

What results from this belief and attitude of African Americans toward Whites is that Whites experience a greater level of comfort in their interactions with West Indians over African Americans.

Another explanation for White Favoritism toward West Indians is that it is assumed by many that it is rooted in other factors than behavioral differences. There is a legacy in American culture of an ideology that attaches a positive value to people and practices linked to Great Britain, which is being taught that most things British are superior.

Fay Arnold (1984), in *West Indians and London's Hierarchy of Discrimination*, described the New York West Indian community in the following terms:

> They were English subjects and self-identified as a distinctive Black English culture group…. The Black Immigrant English ethnocentrism speech patterns, cultural mannerisms, religious preferences (Anglican and Protestant), dress and general lifestyle whitened (that is, garnered advantage and opportunities typically denied blacks). (p. 56)

Arnold further contrasted the position of West Indians in New York and London and found that no advantage accrued for emigrating from a British colony or former colony to London. Arnold stated:

> Despite the intensity of their Anglophilia and their regard for their mother country, they are not perceived a Black Englishmen by most Whites. However, West Indians are ranked more favorably in the US primarily because Whites associate West Indians with the British background that is respected, since the founding of the US as a nation. In Britain being British, being a colonial or ex-colonial signifies conquest and dishonor. (p. 57)

In *Colonial Subjects*, Ramon Grosfogel (2003) postulated yet another view. He placed colonial racialized subjects at the bottom of the race/ethnic hierarchy, which is multi-tiered. He stated:

> The various groups that fit this distinction vary across destinations in the United States. In the United States they are African Americans, Americans, Puerto Ricans and

> other oppressed groups that have incorporated into the United States Empire. Colonial immigrants rank high on the ladder. There are immigrants who have come from regions colonized by a power other than the one in which they have settled, but in their homeland have suffered from low economic and political position. British West Indians are colonial racialized subjects if they settled in Britain but are colonial immigrants if they settled in the United States. (p. 148)

Yet another view is that of White Favoritism. In the United States, some anthropologists have espoused through ethnography the perception that Whites prefer West Indians to African Americans. Nancy Foner (1985), in "Race and Color: Jamaican Migrants in London and New York City," interviewed with Jamaicans in New York. When they were asked whether Jamaicans in New York were treated the same as White people, 40% of Foner's respondents elaborated on their perception that White Americans treated Jamaicans and other West Indians better than they treated African Americans. This preference might not be obvious since Whites rarely can distinguish West Indians on sight. But once something is said by a Jamaican and there is the recognition that the The United States is not the Jamaican's country of origin, so the Jamaican is treated better.

A Belizean-born Los Angeles teacher told Fay Arnold (1996):

> West Indians are treated the best. I have to be truthful. I have spoken to a few people working with White people and they feel that foreign Blacks are treated a little more considerate than American. (p. 16)

Percy C. Hintzen (2001), in *West Indians in the West: Self-representation in an Immigrant Community*, was told by a West Indian from the Bay Area:

> Once Whites understand that you are foreign, that acknowledgment leads itself toward you. As a matter of fact, to be viewed differently. If as a West Indian you adopt the American accent and American cultural norms, you definitely be viewed as a black American. (p. 154)

Dissenting Views

Ralph Singleton, an African American activist, shared his views with me on White Favoritism. He believed that Whites favoring one Black ethnic group over another ethnic group is so wrong. He stated:

> The recognition of our differences by way of ethnicity and nationality should be recognized, but it should not be to the point where foreign Blacks appear to be in collusion with an oppressive system actively working against their siblings of the African diaspora and benefitting all the while off our struggle.

Singleton further stated:

> This American system of White Favoritism favors their own and other nonWhite persons over us. They also prefer non-American Blacks to us, with these foreign Black people in America actively contributing to the said oppression by utilizing the system to get ahead.
>
> White colonizers and their descendants spew their rhetoric about the U.S. that it is a land of opportunity and a nation of immigrants. However, it effectively erases the genocide against the people who were here first—the indigenous population of North America and he oppression of slavery by the hands of the said colonizers. This saying by White colonizers and their descendants also gives non-American Black immigrants a free pass to these issues, who also argue against the claim that non-American Black immigrants come to this country seeking a better life regardless of the fact that Whites preferred them over us and may have stepped over Black Americans to get ahead. I don't have any problem with anyone trying to come here, regardless where they come from, but it is my belief all peoples should be treated equally, for all lives matter.

In *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Malcolm X and Alex Haley (1966) wrote about why the White man hated the Negro. Their statements about their observation of the White/Black relationship was: "Do you know why the White man really hates you? It is because every time he sees your face, he sees a mirror of his crime and his guilty conscience can't bear to face it" (p. 204).

Jack Miles (1992), in "Black vs. Brown," argued that in dealing with immigrants and Black Americans, Whites prefer to deal with immigrants rather than American Blacks. In speaking in Los Angeles about race relations, Miles noted "that for Angelos, Latinos even when

they are foreign, they seem native and safe, while Blacks who are native seem foreign and dangerous" (p. 52). Miles described this as the comfort factor and asserted that Whites are more comfortable with Black immigrants as well.

Anthony Spikes, an African American resident in St. Albans, said:

> The way I see it, White people always believe and act as though they always have to be at the head of everything. They believe that whatever is done by them, especially in the workplace, or the way they treat certain groups of people and treat other groups differently, is the way things ought to be. They believe that that's the way things have always been, and they have to be at the head, running things for anything or any organization to succeed.

Some African American respondents believe that West Indian immigrants are naïve about White people and the ways they respond to Black people in general. They are not fully aware of how American Blacks have been treated by White people, especially in the southern states of America. "West Indians would come over here, they are immigrants, they may not have had a good life where they came from, in their country, so they are striving to better themselves. I could understand this to a point but not at the point where native Blacks are not getting their equal share." However, given enough time in the United States, they would come to realize that they share the same interests as Black Americans and that their status as Black ethnics from the West Indies is no guarantee against experiencing racism.

Black Americans are more likely to see racism operating in subtle forms in certain ambiguous situations than West Indians do. Mary C. Waters (1996) explained, "They are more likely to develop a 'sixth sense' about Whites, to have radar that scans Whites for the inappropriate behavior that their past experience tells them will happen" (p. 181).

However, the Whites I interviewed, although they hold some reservations about certain Blacks, also hold an egalitarian belief system which makes them eager to deal with people in general who they can trust and relate to as "individuals," without the weight of the past historical

wrongs thrown in their faces. They firmly believe that this generation of Whites and their descendants should not be held accountable for what their parents and foreparents did back then. These are different times now. The world of peoples is more progressive in their thinking, and we all should move on.

Whites in a Black Majority Population

Caribbean immigrants, unlike native-born African Americans, historically have not faced virulent competition from a hostile White majority, and based on their experiences in their homeland, see White Favoritism toward West Indians as a welcome outcome.

In *Questioning Whiteness*, Michiru Ito (2019), a lecturer of decolonized history, Caribbean studies, British imperialism, and postcolonial experiences at Otsuma Women's University in Tokyo, Japan, who lived in Jamaica, Trinidad, and Guyana for more than a decade, examined White identity in the Caribbean and stated:

> Undoubtedly in the modern, 21st century, not many people wish to voice the opinion that a certain race is superior to others because the argument is unscientifically baseless, and therefore unsophisticated. Nevertheless, what I tried to do was not to judge but to face the unforgettable realities—White supremacy, White privilege, and social inequality have continued from the colonial days. However, White Barbadian interviewees voiced little opposition to interracial relationships, marriages, and having children of mixed marriages. (p. 29)

Thomas Sowell (1975b), in his argument on West Indian advantage as a historical legacy of Caribbean slave culture, stated:

> But the West Indies were a hardship post, without a large and settled population. There the Overseers tend to be bachelors, and with White women scarce, there were far more commingling on the races. The resulting large group of colored people soon formed a kind of proto-middle class, performing various kinds of skilled and sophisticated tasks that there were not enough Whites around to do as there were in the American South. (p. 2)

One White American and his family visiting the islands of Jamaica and Barbados stated:

> We really had an amazing time in the Caribbean. The islands are breathtakingly beautiful. The waters are crystal clear, but most of all the "people" are very nice and

> friendly. When we go back to the Caribbean, we'll visit the other islands to get a taste of their offerings.

Peter Simons, an Afro Caribbean immigrant from Barbados, saw himself as a Barbadian American. When he was asked what race relations are like in Barbados, he replied:

> What we have in Barbados is not a race hierarchy, but something like a class structure. When we think about class, we are referring to one's parents as well as the school attended. Any person who has money can live anywhere in the country, whether they are White or Black.

This custom in Barbados attempts to foster an image of multiracial harmony.

Certain factors encouraged the co-mingling of Whites and Blacks in the Caribbean. One of these factors is tourism. It has a prevalence in Barbados as well as other Caribbean islands, bringing very rich Whites into contact with native Blacks. Native Blacks welcome White foreigners to the Caribbean, for they value the revenue that they bring as well as they believe that tourism is good for the advertisement of their country.

Some of the Afro Caribbean immigrants I interviewed described the interaction of Whites with Blacks in the Caribbean in a positive manner. Alexander Grady, an Afro Caribbean immigrant from Trinidad, explained:

> When I arrived in New York, I was surprised at the tension among the races here. This is so different from back home. Back home, Whites and Blacks get along. You have Black people working for White people, as well as there are Black bosses in companies that White people work for. If one has money, they can live anywhere, whether they are Black, White or whatever.

Another factor that exhibited the co-mingling of Whites with Blacks in the Caribbean is the three-day carnival celebrations, which are scheduled annually. This is a time when people from various countries of the world attend and celebrate jointly with the local people. The most prominent celebration is in Trinidad. It is a time when local culture and customs of the Caribbean are on full display and appreciated by attendees and participants.

When Whites look at West Indians, very often they do not see the sad history of American race relations between Whites and Blacks. As a result, Whites are more at ease with West Indians, and certain expectations are triggered.

West Indians have a low expectation of interpersonal relations that have turned sour between Whites and Blacks, and as a result, this has helped them to have a better interpersonal interaction with Whites than with native African Americans.

Conclusion

Coming from a society where Blacks are in the majority and have held high positions, and as Model (2008) pointed out, a policy analyst who has studied West Indians concluded that they are imbued with personality traits of ambition, diligence, and self-sacrifice (p. 163). This has helped to lead Blacks from the Caribbean to have high ambition, while at the same time, they are friendly and open with Whites, which, in an interpersonal way, helped to lead them to an outcome more favorable for them than for African Americans.

Interpretation

White Favoritism to West Indians is meaningful to them in many ways. The relative warmth of Whites' feeling toward West Indians goes beyond shared immigration histories. Whites' sense of a lack of opposition in West Indians to their Whiteness leads to reports of having a friendlier experience with foreign Blacks than with African Americans.

Hubert Watson, an Afro Caribbean immigrant from Guyana, described his experience when seeking work in an adult care institution. He stated:

> At a hiring agency for an adult facility, I went applying for a job in counseling. I have a Master's degree in Counseling. However, I had a strange experience at the interview for the job. Midway through the interview session when the interviewer realized that I am from Guyana, he threw his hands up in the air and said, "Why didn't you tell me that you are from Guyana? I know a number of people from that country, and I have hired many people from Guyana. You will be hired." Some ethnographic literature

on West Indians argued that most British West Indians maintained that they receive better treatment from Whites than they do African Americans.

From the responses of Afro Caribbeans I interviewed, it appears that their coming to the United States provided them with a foreign status, which made their responses to discrimination and prejudice resemble those of other non-White immigrants to the United States than to those of African Americans. This leads Whites to have a different response to West Indians than with African Americans as long as the West Indian status is seen by Whites as immigrants rather than "Black."

Although not all West Indians concur that Whites treat them more favorably than African Americans, there are far more indicators that assess White Favoritism to West Indians than challenge it. Model (2008) saw that ordinary White Americans favor West Indians over African Americans (p. 142).

West Indians usually strive for interpersonal needs that can be satisfied only through the attainment of a satisfactory relation with Whites. They have a strong desire to initiate cultural behavior in such areas as language and affection. It is very easy for them to identify common group traits. The type of interaction exhibited by West Indians is unique and consistent, and they spend much time talking about it.

West Indian Blacks have a variety of explanations for their more cordial reception by Whites. Their diligence and dependability are cited frequently among related considerations.

Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans have interacted with White Americans in their neighborhood community. Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans have admitted to me that they have taken steps when meeting and dealing with Whites to communicate to them their heritage and its meaning.

John Edwards, a White American, said to me in conversation:

> I am White and very few of us live in this community. However, I feel more comfortable speaking to you than speaking to my brother. I was speaking with my brother recently for over an hour and our conversation was very contentious. I can tell that you are from the Caribbean. I have met several people from there and I always enjoy hearing their British accent. When dealing with people from the Caribbean, I don't see the color of their skin, but I look for character, and every culture has its uniqueness and history.

A parent and stay-at-home mom from the Caribbean living in St. Albans said:

> I am involved in the school system as a volunteer. I joined the P.I.A., the parent council, and I let them know that I am from Jamaica, so our culture is different. We from the British system expect our kids to be good students, and Caribbean parents strive to do what is needed and see that they do.

Because this experience is common among West Indians, then Whites who have contact with West Indians may view them more favorably than they perceive African Americans.

Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans hold on to the notion that Whites' public view of them as favorable can work in their favor in America. They believe that once they are discerned as non-African American, it helps to "stave off anxiety, anger and depression associated with being a victim of racism" (Model, 2008, p. 153).

The Favoritism by Whites that dominated this chapter, however, affects only a small percentage of Blacks in St. Albans or, for that matter, the U.S. population, as compared to other ethnic groups. Why devote so much attention to such a small segment of the American society? An answer to this question can be found in the perception of Suzanne Model (2008), who saw that:

> Americans long hoped that an understanding of West Indian achievement would suggest a solution to the nation's gravest domestic problem in equality between Blacks and Whites. As successful Blacks, West Indians represent the exception that proves the rule. Perhaps they may point the way to solving the American dilemma. (p. 163)

Robert F. Bales's (1950) *Interaction Process Analysis: A Method for the Study of Small Groups* provides an observational method for the study of the social and emotional behavior of individuals in small groups. However, certain aspects of the process can be applied to the social

relations between Blacks and Whites. The interaction process analysis is designed for on-the-spot concurrent recording of the behavior, but it may be applied to sound recording or written transcripts of interactions.

Bales presented his method as a generic designation for other similar methods. Some of the methods were used in the study of groups, particularly by researchers in group dynamics; others use it in the study of counseling as well as small groups.

In the social evaluation dimension of one person viewing another in a group setting, Bales (1950) saw:

> This is concerned with the pleasant or unpleasant quality of feeling aroused in the evaluator. If pleasant, one of acceptance and liking, the evaluation may be called "positive." If it is unpleasant, one of rejection and disliking, it may be called "negative." (p. 467)

According to the theory of Bales (1950), then, persons judge or evaluate each other according to their significance in relation to affection, power, and contribution to group tasks. Robert Bales suggested further that "the dimension of social evaluation must be understood broadly, as correlated clusters of more concrete attitudes of persons toward others, not as single well-defined attitudes" (p. 467).

The behavioral interaction of Whites and West Indians was a necessary condition for the rise and persistence of the social interaction and favoritism of Whites toward West Indians. This is seen in the appearance and persistence in daily encounters between Whites and West Indians. It proves "positively" rather than "negatively," which means that the feelings of social acceptance, rather than feelings of antagonism and rejection, are acquired by West Indians in ways which likely are less often the case for African Americans. However, West Indians Immigrants do have their faults. Mary Waters (1999) points out that "at the same time a

significant number of the White managers described the foreign-born as being outspoken,very aware of race and are very likely to be blunt about what they want" (p 177).

Chapter 5: Individual Voices: Leroy Comrie and Desmond Halibut

Introduction—Place and Theme

Our lives are like ocean-going ships that, when propelled forward, leave ripples of water behind them. The longer we live, the more ripples we leave behind in our trail. As time progresses from birth onward, biographical life histories unfold for every one of us over different aspects of our lives. When we were born, where we have lived, where our parents were born and lived, what education we received, what jobs we held, what partners we lived with, who has helped us in our development and growth, and how we impacted the lives of others—these personal histories contain much valuable information to understand the life situation of persons today. The sequential data on ordered succession of experimental stages and states can be investigated with a tailored set of techniques of closed- and open-ended interview questions.

If a patient comes to a physician in his or her clinic and says, "Doctor, I am not feeling well," one of the procedures the physician enacts for the patient's condition is to have the patient give a medical history and kinship. This type of medical history serves to understand the nature of reality in the lives of patients and kin. Likewise, personal life histories help us to understand the nature of reality in qualitative research.

This chapter provides a gentle introduction to the life of Leroy Comrie, a New York State politician and Senator. Most aspects of his life can be imagined in a dynamic way as a series of transitions from one stage to another, reflecting both the developmental and social changes that he went through as he aged. This personal trajectory through life and its relation with the St. Albans' population, where each phase of his life and transition takes place, should be taken into

account so that we can better understand Leroy Comrie's life within the St. Albans neighborhood community. In the story of Leroy Comrie, the issues and forms of social and cultural cleavages are illustrated with clarity and completeness.

The main field of interest belongs not only to the sphere of value and belief, but also to economic, political, social, and cultural action, public service, mating, and kinship, all of which also reflect his cleavages Leroy Comrie is a distinguished local figure but that aspects of his life history echo those less prominent people as well.

The principal theme in this life history account is that of a personal adaptation within a context of cultural diversity and marked social differentiation, which is true of the Afro Caribbean immigrant and Southern African American migrant ethnic populations in the neighborhood community of St. Albans, in Queens, New York. Comrie's struggles in relation to value and belief are typical of many people in St. Albans. In one sense, an understanding of Leroy Comrie's life can contribute much to an understanding of Afro African immigrants in St. Albans, and perhaps more clearly and as far as I know, no other record of comparable detail and scope has yet to be published about St. Albans, telling about the life of an individual as key for the representation of its folk as well as their ways and conditions.

I think that Leroy Comrie would agree that the unique development of his life consists of the admonition of kinship connections and the guidance and encouragement of the religious community, which is part of its mission. Some words of explanation are worth mentioning here.

When the parents of Leroy Comrie immigrated to the United States, they were members of the Episcopalian church in Jamaica, West Indies. They grew up with a very strong Jamaican upbringing. When the parents met each other in the United States, got married, and moved to

St. Albans, they, along with their family, became members of St. Albans the Martyr Episcopal (Anglican) church on Farmers Boulevard in St. Albans.

St. Albans the Martyr Episcopal (Anglican) Church on 116-42 Farmers Boulevard has as its Mission Statement the following:

> We are an episcopal (Anglican) parish that strives to be home for all those seeking Christ where "traditional values" are encouraged and the love of God is shared with all persons of all ages and diversities.

The church was first organized as a mission on December 18, 1921, and the name St. Albans was adopted. After being on a mission for several years, in January 1927, the first Rector was assigned. The church building became fully occupied on Easter Day, 1931. The church has functioning organizations that provide services of membership care and service to the neighborhood community of St. Albans and many of its adjacent neighborhoods.

The church is made up of a variety of races, but the majority of members are African Americans and Afro Caribbeans. The Afro Caribbeans immigrated from different islands in the Caribbean, and the church has a unique feature of flags representative of each section of the Caribbean where the Afro Caribbean members came. At one point in the church's history, an Afro Caribbean priest served the congregation for 35 years. The priest-in-charge at present is Father Keith Voets.

The church offers opportunities to those who wish to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition and the scriptures. Adult education opportunities are offered regularly and often take the form of book discussions. The church sponsors pilgrimages to places of importance and spiritual significance as one way of making one's faith come alive. These pilgrimages are educational, inspirational, and fun. They are offered to both members and non-members of the congregation. Other programs also offered throughout the year have been designed to help members grow in their faith and their general outlook in life.

Some programs are housed in the church's social hall and cater to the neighborhood community. The Alcoholics Anonymous program meets in the parish hall two nights each week. The lions of St. Albans have frequent meetings in the parish hall also. Tax preparation services are available for the neighborhood community of St. Albans and adjacent neighborhoods.

The life history research of Leroy Comrie is primarily concerned with life accounts that are basically autobiographical. It does not apply to the entire range of applications of life history methods in the social and behavioral sciences and the humanities, but rather deals with an individual person living in St. Albans who is perceived by many other persons living in St. Albans and elsewhere to be a representation of their population. The purpose of the life history research is to suggest that the life history material can be treated as a document of interaction between a subject recounting his life experiences and the audience of the researcher recording the story as well as the readers of the resulting text. It should also be noted that the audience of the researcher and readers plays a vital role in the formation of the story and not a passive role in the author's consciousness only (Angrosino, 1989).

The life history account is verified against the general account and by informants in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

The focus of the narrative is not only on the end-product version of the subject's life, but also on the interactive process between the teller, the hearer, and the critical text. The research adopts the usage that is most consistent with the study of literature genres. Life history refers to the account of one person's life as told to another, the researcher (Angrosino, 1989).

In the approach of the study, I as the researcher conformed to some key assumptions and characteristics of the qualitative approach.

1. I assumed that the account given by the subject is representative of patterns forming the personality of the individuals and the character of their culture.
2. I assumed that the subject is typical of the population from which the subject was drawn.
3. I assumed that the researcher is a neutral recorder of the data collected from the selected life history subject.
4. I assumed that the research will be an emerging design with a presentation of multiple realities. The researcher is the instrument of the data collection, with a focus on the participant's views.

Methodology and Method

Watson and Watson-Franke (1985) stated, "Since interpretation is frequently what we are concerned with in approaching life history, we must know something about the context in which the text was evolved before we can begin to make any sense of it" (p. 59). Late in the course of my fieldwork, I felt I had achieved enough rapport and had learned enough about the cultures in general to sit down at length with someone who could serve as a representative of the population of St. Albans. Still relatively new to the process of life history collection and needing to leave the field very soon, it was urgent that I find someone who would fit this requirement. Many of the subjects recommended by some informants were not able to give a usable complete text. I wanted someone who met the criteria of neighborhood community representative, someone from whom I could form a body of data and be confident that the information from that person's life would serve as an individual case history in a traditional anthropological life history format—a format that would cover a subject's early life years and the environmental (social and cultural) and biological contexts of the person's life.

With reference to how I settled on the subject, I met the subject, Leroy Comrie, at the church he attends (The Episcopal Church on Farmers Boulevard) on a regular basis. Space was offered to me in the conference hall in the lower level of the church, where I conducted a group meeting pertaining to my research. Leroy Comrie was present in that group. I later met him at a political rally (Democratic) in St. Albans where he was one of the speakers. After the rally ended, I met and greeted him, after which he inquired of me how my research project was progressing. The interest that he showed in my project was important, as were the recommendations from personal staff of the Queens Central Library; from my sponsor Professor Lambros Comitas, who said that if Mr. Comrie was willing to sit down with me for an interview, then he would be a good candidate for a life history representative; Dr. Dennis Chambers, who lives in an adjacent neighborhood and knows the subject; and referrals by some other informants in the study.

Leroy Comrie was then the obvious choice for the life history interview, based on the references and his breadth of experiences as one who serves the neighborhood community of St. Albans. Moreover, I recognized his experiences spanning the Caribbean and America as well as his candidness, brilliance, values, and beliefs for what this dissertation can accomplish with him. Thus, I sought him and his approval. The following data exemplify the results of the interview that took place between Leroy Comprise and me, the researcher.

After I made the contact and gained approval for the life history interview, Mr. Comrie and I agreed that the interview would take place in his office in St. Albans. My feelings about the subject were positive. In addition, when I saw that the subject was open and willing to supply me with detailed information about his life, I looked forward to the investigation. The circumstances in which the subject related his life are as follows.

On the day of my appointment to interview the subject, I arrived one hour before the scheduled time. The time of the interview was 12 noon on February 19, 2020. By arriving before the scheduled time, I had some extra time to prepare further for the interview. After my initial introduction to the receptionist at the subject's office, I was asked to take a seat in the waiting area, and I would be called at the time of my appointment.

The Senator had not arrived at his usual time on the job. However, his secretary, Ms. Taylor Jackson, came out of the waiting area and spoke to all who were there for appointments with him. She said, "The Senator is running a little late, but be assured that he will be arriving shortly." Shortly thereafter, the Senator arrived.

As he entered, the Senator came through the waiting area and began greeting those who had appointments with him. I did not recognize him initially because he was dressed casually. However, because of his impressive stature, along with his greetings to those who had appointments and were waiting for him to arrive, I then recognized that he was the Senator. With intentional steps, he hastened to his office quarters to begin the task at hand for the day.

I began to ponder on the Senator's entrance to his workplace. I surmised that his casual attire to work was probably making a statement that he wanted to work with the average person in his constituency. However, in his quarters, the Senator changed his clothing into his professional attire (a business suit and tie) and was ready for the day's agenda.

When the time came for my appointment, I was escorted by one of his assistants to the conference room where the interview would take place. The conference room was equipped with a large table that could seat 12 to 14 people. The room was well lit and the atmosphere comfortable. One of his assistants was present in the conference room during the interview and helped me in its recording.

As the interview began with introductions and an explanation of its purpose and need, I felt a sense of urgency on the Senator's part to get to the questions. This was due partly to his time constraints as well as his eagerness to tell his story to the world. I felt a twinge of nervousness as I introduced myself. I was the only researcher at the interview. I was hopeful that I would say the right things and say nothing that could disrupt the relationship. However, as the interview moved along, the situation improved, and I began to think that my fears were groundless. At the end of the interview, I came to regard the Senator as my best informant, as someone from whom, if the time allowed, I would have gotten unlimited data. It seemed that way to me, especially when I compared him to my other informants who supplied me with far less data and did so with some reluctance. I am sure that I was moved when the Senator's facial, vocal, and physical expressions were shown to tell the truth about some of the struggles and triumphs of his life. I sensed that some of these struggles in his life were still powerful for him to share, and he showed signs of suppressing his feelings and reflections. I perceived that one of the reasons he chose to suppress his feelings while relating his life history was because he identified that his life history was an opportunity to establish his socially relevant credentials.

I have tried to arrange the life history account of Leroy Comrie in a chronological order as much as possible. Where it was necessary, I identified people by name instead of using personal pronouns or pseudonyms because this was the interviewee's preference. The subject assigned some approximate dates to his life, but he was certain about other dates.

Some informants in the study had to be courted to answer interview questions or to comment further on their answers. However, Leroy Comrie treated every question that was asked of him fully and to the best of his knowledge. His life history is a spontaneous outpouring of the subject's life by him. I did not get the indication that the subject needed any type of inducement

or persuasion to relate the account of his life. There was no prodding or digging elicited on my part, but the subject's responses were such that before some of the questions were fully asked or completed asking, I could tell by his nonverbal affirmations that he was ready to begin answering the questions.

A set of open-ended questions was formulated to elicit information about the life of the subject. These interview questions were intended to elicit the whole of life as lived in the neighborhood community.

There were no right or wrong answers intended, nor were there questions for yes or no answers. The questions were intended to obtain the most comprehensive information about the subject and the neighborhood community of St. Albans. The questions helped me to understand that the data collecting setting was advantageous for the informant as well as the researcher.

The researcher recorded verbatim the life history account. The language used was English; hence, there was no need for a translator. The researcher also transcribed the spoken data into text. No meanings were changed, and, save for some instances of repetition of statements, the text was constructed from the subject's own words, thereby retaining its original flavor.

The technique used to elicit the life history of Leroy Comrie was as follows. The investigator tape-recorded everything that enabled him to have the possibility of going back to the original data. The subject did not object to the use of a tape recorder in the interview; hence, the mode of data collection influenced the meaning of the situation from the subject and researcher standpoints. The subject gave consent to sharing the data collected over his life and wanted to share a full experience of himself.

I sought to provide a source of insight and understanding that can enable readers to determine more easily and effectively the meaning of the life history in its finished textual form, as it moved through the different contexts of becoming what it is. This knowledge helps in knowing, for example, what the subject had in mind when he related his life history and what went on in the mind of the researcher at the various stages of gathering and interpreting the data.

The process of constructing the text has complex sets of meanings. These meanings have come into being as part of a long sequence of explicit and implicit negotiations between and among the parties to the life history endeavor (Chapazano, 1977, 1980; Frank, 1979). As much as I could, I included part of the interpretive effort's goal of reconstruction in the process, if the text is to be fully understood. Hence, the researcher is included through the text. He projects an image of himself for the benefit of those to whom the research is addressed.

Some of the preconceptions the researcher had about the subject, the community cultures, and the data-collecting situation were that given the fact that large sections of the neighborhood community were immigrants, and their descendants and the subject were sons of Afro Caribbean immigrants, this can be a lever to support the rapidly forming consensus in favor of a broad distribution of attitude change and trust in the social system of St. Albans.

My faith in a relevant pluralistic America makes me worry that an ethnic law-abiding group could become victims of prejudice or anger—much like Afro Caribbean immigrants who were, and to some extent still are, stereotypes—by groups in these modern times.

I realize that none of us can live our lives without making some assumptions. Every one of us has an intellect. We have ideas and commitments that bear upon the way and what we think about everything. But if the waking moments of our thoughts and actions are polarized by our rush to judgments that are contradictory of a practice that can be intensified by partisan social

and cultural practices, then we will have less patience with the painstaking task of collecting the data so that we can be better informed rather than concocting conspiracy theories.

The self-perceived theoretical commitments of the researcher had influenced how he collected, arranged, and interpreted the data were based on Husserl's (1931) phenomenology. The original objective of Husserl's phenomenology was to study the essential activity of the conscious self, which meant the empirical nature of the phenomena—their status of givenness.

Husserl's phenomenology is that human beings live naturally and spontaneously in routine pursuit of daily affairs. The life world, the starting point, is given in the experience of the consciousness for a human being who lives and acts in a world that he perceives and interprets (Wagner, 1970, p. 5). He deals with the world in an active yet natural way through an intentional mode. Consciousness is consciousness of something. The phenomena that constitute experience are therefore in their ultimate nature intended, the product of the activity of conscious self (Husserl, 1931, pp. 119-120).

The focus on reality as a subjective conscious act is a view consistent with our belief that the life history must be approached as a subjective product, and it is no more a mere assemblage of empirical realities outside of the individual.

The life world can be thought of as the total sphere of experience of the individual, one bounded by ideas, objects, persons, and events that continuously orient his pursuit of the basic, everyday objectives of living.

In anthropological life history, what we bear witness to is the subjectivity of the individual engaged in the orientation of the life world. The individual subjectivity is in fact a subjective life world since it consists of him talking about himself and his actions within the

framework of meaning, the context of his culture. As in the natural attitude, the subject of life history lives in the world spontaneously as though it was objectively real.

The very fabric of life history conjures up a life world of predictable experiences. As the individual relates his growing up and matching in various domains of kinship, these networks of social experiences seem almost preordained, seamless, and their naturalness for us is highlighted when one becomes aware of an occasional breakdown in the account.

All individuals to a certain extent relate their lives, engage in a self-reflective turn, and in certain ways people adopt a phenomenological attitude toward their emersion in the life world as they assess their lives for themselves and/or for another who records it.

When I was relating his life history, the subject, Leroy Comrie, engaged in limited self-reflection about the meeting of his own thinking. He had a phenomenological attitude. Thus, phenomenology not only tells us something important about subjectivity in the life world, but it also comments on the active, dynamic and, hence, changing relationship between the subject and his cultural world.

The Life and Work of Leroy Comrie

I was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, August 10, 1958. My parents are from Jamaica, West Indies. They came to the United States separately. They met in Connecticut, got married, and moved to Jersey City and later to Queens, New York.

I grew up here in Queens. My parents and family moved to Liberty Park right off Liberty Avenue, which runs through St. Albans. My parents stayed in Queens Village until they moved to Florida in the early 1980s.

My dad and my mother were both raised in Jamaica, West Indies. When my dad immigrated to America, he worked in a variety of jobs until he finally found a job with the phone

company as an interior maintenance person. My mother immigrated to America as a skilled hairdresser from Jamaica, West Indies. When they came to America, they were undocumented immigrants. But my father was able to obtain green cards for himself and my mother while working at his job. My mother, with a friend, as hairdressers set up her salon in the basement of our house. My mother worked at her trade until she and her husband moved to Florida in retirement.

I lived all of my early life with my parents. I left home only when I went to college and began working.

My parents had only one other child, my brother, but we always had other family members staying at our house. Our family was an extended family. We also housed people who were not members of our family at our house. We always had guests that came from Jamaica, West Indies, staying with us. Sometimes they stayed over an extended period of time until they found alternative residence. So we always had company at our house. For about seven years, I had an uncle of mine living at our home. He stayed with us even when I went to college. During and after college, I was still in touch with him.

* * *

Concerning stories I've heard while I was living at home, I have plenty of them. Some of them I cannot remember, but I remember the stories told to me by my father and mother. My parents like to tell stories about their childhood years, stories that they have heard when they were children. Both of my parents had difficult childhood years. They lived in impoverished communities while they lived in Jamaica, West Indies.

My parents told me stories about my grandfather on my father's side. My grandfather was a police officer in Jamaica, West Indies. He never really took care of himself. My mother

never really liked to talk about him. My father liked to tell stories about while he was working on a farm in Jamaica, West Indies. He spoke about his experiences in milking cows and herding goats. He told stories about his cousins whom he met after school. These cousins were also attached to the farm, and some of their experiences were hilarious. Those were some of the stories my parents talked about. He [my father] also talked about what he needed to do to go to school. He said that he had to walk many miles in order to get to school, and on some occasions he was unable to get to school. He was not able to finish high school because parents had to pay school fees for attendance to high school by students. If the parents did not have the money, their children could not attend. My father said that his parents did not have the money; hence, he was not able to attend high school even though he wanted to attend.

* * *

I always worked at a job outside of my parents' house when I was living with my parents. Some of the jobs that I worked at were: I delivered newspapers in the neighborhood community; I worked at Macy's Department Store in Queens; I worked repairing bicycles at a repair shop as well as working in a factory in Long Island City. As soon as I was able to work, I began working in a summer youth employment program. So as soon as I was able to receive my working papers, I found something to do.

* * *

I attended the local schools in the St. Albans area. Some of the schools I attended were P.S. 116 and I.S. 8, where I did very well in my studies. I was in the advanced classes when I went to Jamaica High School. I later attended the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, and upon graduation, I came back here to St. Albans. My dad developed a major illness on the job, which resulted in his experiencing Parkinson's Disease.

* * *

I don't really know very much about my grandparents, both on my father's and mother's side. My grandmother was a homemaker, and she and her husband lived in a one-bedroom house in Jamaica. My grandfather on my father's side, I met him only once, and he was already in hospice and was not really focused when I met him. I never had the chance to have any quality grandparent time with either of my grandparents on both my mother's and father's side.

* * *

My parents, being from Jamaica, West Indies, where the Episcopal church flourished and is considered to be one of the major religious denominations on the island, belonged to that church. They were Episcopalian when they came to America; hence, their family grew up Episcopalian. When my parents moved to St. Albans, the family became members of the Church of St. Albans the Martyr, the Episcopal Church in St. Albans. My parents made sure that my brother and I went to church every Sunday, even when they were not present at church. While attending the Episcopal Church as a member, I became an altar boy—a boy who serves along with the priest during the Mass. My parents wanted my brother and I to develop friends and good relations with members of the congregation.

As a result of my consistent attendance and rapport with members of the Episcopal congregation, through their encouragement, motivation, and support, I was inspired to become an elected official of New York State. I gave much of the credit to the members of the Episcopal Church in St. Albans because many people in that congregation were into helping people in many respects of self-development. We have a small Episcopal Church here, as compared to other churches in St. Albans, but in this church there is a cadre of people who were warm and open to us young people and who gave us an opportunity to grow as young people. The people of

the Episcopal Church encouraged us to do things necessary to be successful. By watching and seeing their commitment to us, and ensuring that all the young people in the church aspired to be successful in whatever they chose to do, that gave me the desire to choose a line of work that would give back to the people of the community where I live.

My religion is very meaningful to me, in the sense that I firmly believe in God. He is in control of all of us, as the one having a higher power than any one of us. I don't know how much of that knowledge and experience I received from the Episcopal Church.

My involvement in the Episcopal Church was more emotional and social than spiritual because the Episcopal Church frankly is not the first place one goes for in-depth spirituality. I learned that from digging myself deeper into the knowledge of spirituality, for me to know my connection to God. However, my connection to my church is more of a people connection. It's about connecting with people who cared about our upbringing and who cared about us. The people of the church encouraged us to start a youth group in the church, but they insisted that we should be in our homes at a reasonable time. Many people at the church were role models to us and they were consistent in their efforts.

These members of the church were part of the "Altar Guild" in the church. Some of them were Sunday School teachers who formed an Acolyte Guild, who were consistent. They came to church every Sunday. They showed by example that they cared about all the young people of the church. So I was drawn to that and I wound up going to church every Sunday. On many occasions, I went to church without my parents accompanying me and my brother. I saw that there was an opportunity for my growth and social learning.

My parents coming from Jamaica, West Indies did not possess the skills that I found among the members of the church. So I took advantage of what members of the church offered to

me. My parents were very strict with us—my brother and I. They wanted us to be home by nine o'clock every night we went out. We had to help with chores at home. Our rooms must always be neat and the whole nine yards. We understood that our parents were not trying to be difficult or cruel, but they were trying to survive and needed what was best for both of us to be successful. So they placed us in the church so that we could be in an environment where we could grow.

* * *

I met my spouse, Marcia, when she worked in an office that was near to my office. In fact, the office where she worked had the same address where my former office was located. Marcia's boss, with whom I was flirting originally, did not want to have anything to do with me. Marcia told me that she was working in that job full-time, and since I was in the hunting stage (laughed), I definitely sought her out. We went on a couple of dates. Our first date was at a local event in my District. It was a community based dinner dance, sponsored by an elected official in the District. I got to know Marcia a little better while we were at that event, and we hit it off from there. I told Marcia that at this point of my life, I was not looking for a girlfriend anymore. I was looking for a wife. I told her where I was heading, and it is now thirty years since July 2020 since we've been married, and we are going to celebrate our thirtieth wedding anniversary. I am blessed to have found someone as Marcia. She is one who understands politics, understands that she came to a family that has always been engaged in political discussions. Actually, she came to work at an office where the elected official at that time was heavily engaged in politics. Marcia understands my schedule as a politician and knows that I am not going to be at home or available every night.

Marcia Moxam was born and raised in Jamaica, West Indies, and embodied the story of Caribbean immigrants coming to Queens, New York. She came to the United States to study broadcasting after graduating from high school in Jamaica. Like many other Afro Caribbeans coming to New York for the first time, she lived in Brooklyn for a while before moving to Queens. After moving to Queens, she settled down in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

After Marcia and I got married, two children were born to the union, a son, Benjamin, and a daughter, Liana. The girl came first. She will be twenty-six next month.

The son will be twenty-three in May 2020.

* * *

I have friends from my early life in kindergarten and elementary school. We were tight all the way through my years in college. With some of my friends, we were at each other's weddings as best men. With one of my friends, we both lost our parents at the same time. This friend had been very close to me. On the other hand, I have a cadre of other friends, friends whom I have known before I got elected to public office. There are friends of mine now who are elected officials, friends during my work in the community, friends even from when I was in high school, and they are still close to me. To me, friendship is always evolving. I met a friend yesterday who wanted to share information about another friend of his. Even though I wanted to talk about something else, the friend wanted to talk about his friend. It becomes natural for that friend wanting to introduce me to his friend, so friendships are constantly evolving. There is a small cadre of friends that I can go to their homes and relax, not having to put on airs or even talking politics.

I have friends who are African Americans. Oh yeah, my best friend is African American. His parents were born in the U.S. I have another good friend who is from the Caribbean. I have another good friend who is Haitian American. I have known him since I was six years of age. I have friends who are specifically from the island of Jamaica. I also have friends who are Hispanic. I have friends who are from almost every race. I appreciate my friends. We socialize together. However, they do not interfere with my political life, but they support and encourage me in my work. They are not involved in my day-to-day life.

Concerning the question about Afro Caribbean and African American relationships in St. Albans, acting as a public official and public servant, I see both groups in the same pot. You talk to both groups in the community. As far as I can see, both groups want the same things in life. They both want to make sure that members of both groups have a great quality of life and have a good education as well. They both want to come home to a safe environment where people are respected and have the ability to do the things that would make them successful.

* * *

I don't have any hobbies like skating or bike riding. I need, though, to develop one. What I do frequently is that after work, many times I would go home and look at the news and shows on television. My wife and I have a custom of looking at certain movies. Sometimes we would go with friends for meals at our favorite restaurants, where we have good conversations and enjoy each other's company. These are some of the things we do, especially having the opportunity to celebrate with some of my friends. Though it can take away a little time from my work and from people whom I love and appreciate, I would love to travel. My family and I have the desire to travel in the next year or so to see different parts of the world. I will be sixty-two

this year, and I feel very strongly that it is about time that my family and I see parts of the world that we have not seen before.

At one time in my life, I loved to go dancing, but I have not danced recently. My wife is not the greatest dancer, so I feel that if we attend an event where there is dancing, my hunch is that many people at the event would not want me to lead when I began to dance. So I don't get to dance as much as I would like to. I do enjoy dancing, though. I used to be a DJ when I was attending college. I was pressed into having to work as a DJ after classes. So dancing was one of the things that I loved to do and to contribute to.

* * *

I identify my biggest talent as my ability to listen to others. One has to listen to what is being said to understand what is being said. One should be able to listen to what other people are saying, even though what they are saying is about something that you really don't want to hear. When I was very young, I had to listen to those persons who were authority figures in my life. If I didn't listen with respect, I would not have heard what those people were trying to say to me. I've learned at an early age that I should always listen to anyone who has something to say to me, which can keep me informed. In my work, there are people with whom I come in contact, willing to share some type of information.

Some people share their information in different ways. Some of the ways some people communicate this information can be a little confusing, but after hearing them out, often I come to a greater understanding of what those persons are trying to convey to me. It is my practice that when I am listening to anyone who is sharing information to me, I listen with an open mind and an open heart. I think that is my talent and, to me, that is a great gift. Along with understanding and knowing what is being said, one has to have compassion and be willing to treat everyone the

same way one would love to be treated. That quality of being is something that I have learned early in my life. Who I encounter or where you encounter them, I must always try to treat that person or persons the same way I would love to be treated, and treat them with respect.

* * *

My parents' family arrived in St. Albans in 1961. One of the greatest advantages of living in St. Albans is that there is a quality of life in this community that is family oriented. There is a larger percentage of home ownership here. There is a prevailing understanding among the people living here that all people need to be respected and working at their jobs. St. Albans has one of the largest Black home ownerships in the country. Minorities have their own homes. There are people living here in this community who hold blue-collar and professional jobs. The people living here have a lot of pride in the community and in themselves. Here, because people are treated with respect and dignity, it has and continues to attract newcomers. Here in this community, one can find blocks that are very quiet to live on. They can find homes that are easy to maintain and a community that is making sure that there are strong representations at different levels that are interested in the welfare of the community.

In this community, it is blessed with those facilities that help to make life livable here. There is access to Manhattan in New York City as well as other parts of Long Island. There are superhighways, trains, and buses coming through St. Albans to Manhattan. Adjacent to St. Albans is a major international airport that gives people access to the entire world. We have here a history of people who have influenced this entire nation through their talent of music. A lot of people travel from all over the state and some parts of our nation to experience the culture here in St. Albans. The ethnic groups interact with each other to make the community inviting.

We are building upon what we have here in St. Albans. For example, we are developing additional cultural centers. We have the Black Spectrum Theater that has been around for thirty years. We have a Jamaican Art Center. We have more restaurants coming to the area that cater to Afro Caribbeans, African Americans, and other ethnic groups. We have entertainment options for all peoples. St. Albans is a family destination where people come to take roots. People do not come to Queens to pass through. They come to take roots.

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At this point, as a matter of fact, as far back as my early life, as much as I remember, I tried to do the right things. I don't think that I am a role model more than anyone else. I just wanted to do the right thing by people. Remember I shared earlier that I know to have respect for people in authority around me who tried to encourage me. I got involved in government and politics to make sure that there is a path for this community to be respected by different leaders in and around the city and state of New York, and to encourage people not to be afraid of government and be willing to participate and engage in the governmental process. There is no secret to it other than hard work, determination, and being able to accept rejection, and even accept the folks who are rejecting you, with the hope that they will know to do better the next time around.

It is possible that a "no" could be turned into a "yes," even though one cannot guess what it's going to be. I have tried to live a life that is transparent and open, so that people can try to emulate me. I think that my role as a role model is to continue to encourage other people to find their passion, to find what motivates them, and to encourage them toward finding a way forward and help them to get there.

* * *

I think that the way integration of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans works in this community is mainly through cross-social and cultural interactions. One of the ways that it works is by making sure that when there is an event given by people of either group celebrating their cultures, everyone in the community should celebrate with that culture. Within my district, whether it's Indo Caribbean, Afro Caribbean, or African American, whatever cultural program they want to do, I make sure that these groups have the freedom to have their programs highlighted and promoted in the community as well. We all have to respect each other's culture, make sure that people of the cultures understand each other's culture, and give the ethnic groups opportunities to highlight and celebrate their cultures as well.

My office here in the community has been very active in co-sponsoring events and forums where people of both ethnic groups of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans come together in discussion. This to me is important because it has helped to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the cultures.

* * *

Perceived tensions between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in St. Albans have been minimal at best. My observation in the interaction of these two groups is that there is a real desire of members of both ethnic groups to work together. I never had a major incident between these two groups here in my District or St. Albans, for that matter. There was never an issue or division between the cultural groups here because it's my belief that everyone wants to have the same things. Both groups want their elected officials to be honest, to be open to everyone. They want their churches to be open to everyone. I don't have any entity in St. Albans that deals with only one group of Afro Caribbeans or African Americans. Here in St. Albans, there is a great mixture of each of these ethnic groups in the community. I don't have members of either group

despising or stereotyping other members other than somebody making an off-color joke or an uninformed statement. Other than that, people realize nine out of ten times that that person making an uninformed statement is an idiot. There is no problem in St. Albans between the Afro Caribbeans and the African Americans, or for that matter, any of the other ethnic groups. There is more assimilation in St. Albans among the ethnic groups than any other place that I have seen. I have been to Florida, Atlanta, the Carolinas, and I can tell you that collision between cultures here in St. Albans is almost invisible. I am saying that wrong. There is no visible discernment that I can identity as a separation of cultures here in St. Albans. Very often one can witness African Americans dining in Afro Caribbean restaurants as well as Afro Caribbeans dining in African American restaurants. Both group members go to churches, institutions, events where there is much of the intermixing of cultural groups.

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The cultural event held during the summer in St. Albans called "Groovin' in the Park" is sponsored by an entrepreneur who has his business in the community of St. Albans. This is a celebration held in Elkins Park in St. Albans. During this concert celebration, the entire community of St. Albans comes out to attend. Although it is sponsored by an Afro Caribbean and there are musical artists from the Caribbean on stage, it is not a Caribbean thing. There are St. Albanites here in "Groovin' in the Park." Even Jewish Muslims attend. This is an event where everyone in St. Albans attends.

There are not only Jamaican artists. We have other artists who are considered "Pop Artists." You have people from every ethnicity out there at this event.

As far as Labor Day parade in Brooklyn is concerned, it is a cultural event that draws people from every culture in attendance. The event is sponsored principally by Afro Caribbeans,

although there are African Americans involved in the planning of the yearly event. It is a time of cultural celebration which has displays of some aspects of American culture as well. Politicians of Afro Caribbean and African American and Euro American descendants seize this opportunity for publicity. Afro Caribbeans and African Americans see this event as a celebration of culture and do attend.

Cultural celebrations sponsored by ethnic groups are a common practice not only here in St. Albans but also throughout New York City. There are Jewish parades, Guyanese Day parades that I have attended, St. Patrick's Day parades, and many others. People celebrate their cultures, and we should celebrate these cultural events together because we are all working toward a common purpose.

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Folks in St. Albans are trying to be successful, trying to have a positive quiet lifestyle, where they can raise their children and enjoy their lives. There is no raising of flags or being culturally insular here. There is none of that.

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Apart from me being a member of the St. Albans Episcopal Church, I am a member of different fraternities. I am also a Mason, but I have not been active in these organizations. Being a public servant as an elected official is a time-consuming occupation which allows very little time to go to meetings of these organizations. My job is very demanding of my time. Being active in the St. Albans community as an elected official helps the organization of the Masons to realize that I am active in the community. Both the Mason membership and being active as a public servant are very meaningful to me because they both focus on service and development of

linkages in the community. The Masons are a historic group. They are of service to men, and that is very important to me.

Upon retirement from my present occupation, I want to go back to the Episcopal Church and be active in its mission. I want to pass on to others what my predecessors in the church did for me, the opportunities to be the person I am today. They encouraged and nurtured me in the things that were necessary for growth and development.

* * *

I think that the future of St. Albans is strong. I am happy to see young people coming back and buying homes here in St. Albans. That is very encouraging, and I am working with other elected officials to enhance this as well. I see more and more people who are selling their homes, are selling their home to people who are of their background. In terms of ethnicity in St. Albans, I think the future is strong. There is a solid interconnection between the ethnic groups of Afro Caribbean and African Americans and some Asian cultures, too.

I am happy to be able to participate in this interview process, and I hope that the information provided by me will be helpful in making it work for your dissertation.

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Analysis

The analysis of the life history text encompasses a theoretical framework of ethnomethodology as well as the empirical basis of essential features of the model such as the culture, situation, personality, and identity components of the subject.

The phenomenology of life history itself shows that the narrative of life history itself consists of the claims of a man who wishes to be taken for a certain kind of person. He projects himself as a leader, one who is self-reliant, responsible, and a public servant of the people of

St. Albans and District 14 of Queensborough. Although he does not make these claims about himself, nor have I seen him projecting himself as such a person, there are members of the neighborhood community of St. Albans who have made some similar claims.

While I was speaking to a member of the neighborhood community of St. Albans, he said:

> Leroy Comrie is a living example of what this community stands for. He has proven to us what it means to be a leader among us. For me, the true test of a leader is when he does not know how things would work out, when there is an issue in the community, when he is frightened as those who look up to him, and when he cannot find it in himself to muster up the courage to go on, he finds it in his supporters. He finds that courage in us.

Another informant stated that Leroy Comrie has proven that race or creed have nothing to do with a man attaining one of the highest offices that the State of New York has to offer. He is our New York State Senator. He is a good husband, a good citizen, a splendid politician, and a loyal member and representative of this community.

Still another informant said:

> There are good people here in this community. We can count on many people African American or West Indian, but our present [state] Senator Leroy Comrie has a stellar record, one that we all can be very proud of. I would not hesitate to vote for him as a leader and representative of this community. When it comes to the needs of this community, whether facing a challenge, getting funding for a special project, or organizing events where the community comes together, Senator Leroy Comrie is the man to have them done. I will always vote for him.

In the recorded text of Leroy Comrie's account, he recollected his life subjectively and retrospectively, recreating a personal relationship with this environment of church, kind, friendships, and neighborhood community that corresponds to his self desires, which are to be taken as having certain orientations, interests, skills, and accomplishments. His rendition at the genesis of the interview reflects an image of himself. The events of his life were very compelling

as he reflected on the meaning they held for him. Spradley (1969), in his book, *Guests Never Leave Alone*, called these events social or psychological reality.

By looking at the way Leroy Comrie lived his experiences rather than evaluating him through constructs of social or theoretical relevance, here we see a man who acts and thinks largely in the form of a bicultural typified experience of collective acts and shared categories of behavior. One can see in Leroy Comrie a picture of the image he claims for himself.

During the life history interview, I got the sense about some events in his life that feelings were suppressed when speaking or dealing with them. Here we have a man who lives in the neighborhood community, concerned with the well-being of the people of the neighborhood community as well as the subjective awareness of himself.

In Leroy Comrie's recollection of his life, there was no perception of self questioning, anguish, or self-conflict. His thoughts about events of his life he sees as typical. Even those events that caused him overwhelming grief as the death of a kin, he cast them as something to be expected. There were certainly regrets as perceived in his voice tone modulation; however, he suppressed his emotions, perhaps unconsciously.

Comrie lives equally in both cultures successfully and has performed roles in both contexts as though he is able to balance the elements of life where tensions between the two groups existed. He thinks of his self-identification that is structured around interests and goals of his life as his public service that spans both cultures and characteristics of his mode of neutrality.

In the life history which touched upon kinship, institutions, events, values and beliefs, and self and community development, Leroy Comrie gave us a picture of the positive aspects of his life. However, in light of understanding a fuller aspect of his life history and its social and psychological context, I need to elicit from his life these areas of conflict in the neighborhood

community and how he has addressed them. The interpersonal challenging experiences would give a more rounded experience of his life and relationships.

One of the most salient features of Leroy Comrie's social and cultural adventures is his ethnicity. He is an African American, with a spouse and parents of Afro Caribbean heritage. He acts as a bridge between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans. He holds the view of neutrality between the Afro African im/migrant groups and, by extension, any other ethnic group under his influence; hence, there is a reflection of ethnic homogeneity deprived of the frustrations of what some public servants encounter in trying to build consensus among ethnic groups. He is unabashed in stressing his roots and takes great pleasure in identifying himself with the ethnic groups in the institutions and organizations in St. Albans that have taken great pride in his successes as one of the foremost community leaders and public servants in St. Albans.

However, it is my opinion that enough is shaped in the life history of Leroy Comrie to conclude that the nature of individual social and cultural relationships can essentially determine the nature of the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

Interpretation

I have argued that life history may be regarded as a source for understanding the subjective aspects of individual experience articulated through the presentation of a subjective world.

An interpretive analysis is of necessity for a comprehensive understanding of the nature of reality. The data alone which some believe can speak for itself is insufficient for understanding the meaning of the account. There need to be also the views of the researcher's interpretive analysis of the data.

In order to apply a perspective to the life of Leroy Comrie, because of time and space, I will not present the entire sociocultural horizon on the total life history itself, but I will try to give a balanced aspect treatment. Although there is some edited and condensed presentation of the account, I feel that I have retained enough information to justify my attempt to interpret the life history account. My endeavor serves as a brief demonstration of what kind of understanding can be obtained through the basic principles of phenomenology.

The narrative material is presented as a personal history and consists of illustrative extracts and summaries marshalled together by an outsider from the original life history text in the service of his analysis, evaluation or interpretation. I have chosen my highlights and representation to conform closely to the continuities and life sequence in the personal narrative of Leroy Comrie.

The life history of Leroy Comrie, a 62-year-old elected official and American politician, is a first-generation African American of Afro Caribbean parents, living in St. Albans, Queens, New York. This is the neighborhood where Comrie grew up. He related his life history to me over an hour and thirty minutes in 2020.

In order to put the events of Comrie's life in proper perspective, it is essential to first consider the general cultural background that constituted Comrie's horizon, one in which traditional Afro African im/migrants live, as well as the more specific ethnographic encounter and the interpersonal situation from which the life history was elicited.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Afro African im/migrant cultures is the adaptation into a neighborhood community that was formerly occupied by Euro Americans—a community where the housing boom in the 1920s and 1930s in Queens brought more residents with European heritage to St. Albans.

Also striking is the matrilineal and patrilineal principles of social organization that permeate the fabric of Afro American im/migrant cultural life. These principles resound in virtually all areas in which they conduct their lives. Afro Caribbean marriages tend to adhere more to the patrilineal principle of home governance, while African American households tend to be a more balanced negotiation principle.

In both groups, both exogamy and endogamy in marriage are practiced by them. Marriages between Afro American im/migrant groups are very common. In some cases, it becomes a basis of social security. It is customary for families of both groups to give consent to family members to marry the ones they love and who love them. This accommodation has its advantages. In this way, alliances are built in intercultural marriages, which result in a greater understanding of the nature of groups: their preferences, customs, values, and beliefs. Marriages that are inter-ethnic help to foster great opportunities for integration between groups.

Any criminal act committed by a member of either group (rape, murder, theft) is the responsibility of law enforcement whose precinct is present in the neighborhood community.

When someone dies belonging to either group of Afro American im/migrants, that person's property is redistributed among members of the family lineage group. His or her bodily remains are buried in the national cemetery. In some cases, burial plots are acquired ahead of time. Most Afro American im/migrants adhere to the Christian faith, whose eschatological belief is that the departed souls of this life go to a place where they join the spirits of other departed members with whom they will live forever in peace and harmony.

Kinship sets the dominant tone of the individual culture relationship in the neighborhood community. The role of the individual in the division of labor determines the quality of life in the

home. Male and female roles in the culture, for the most part, are dissimilar. In some cases, females compete with males in certain roles.

Men as well as women work outside of the home. They both own houses. Both men and women are involved in political decisions affecting the neighborhood community, depending on their social status. Both men and women serve in the same branches of government.

Social class positions affect the nature of experience. An upper-class person who is more likely to be involved in major decisions assumes more responsibility for protecting and sustaining the well-being of the neighborhood community than the average person.

I now turn to the account of the interview, which I hope would give the reader some of the tone of the encounter, along with the pleasures it afforded, the humor, trust, and good fun which are readily apparent within the serious business of doing this ethnography.

Some of my pre understandings were the insistence of directing the flow of the personal narrative into pre established narrative categories which I wished to investigate as part of my research design. I believe that data bearing the themes were good, important, and worthwhile, and that other types of data, while interesting, were not essential for my purpose. The life history and data on the cultures were the only sources I considered to be relevant to my research. Now I realized that my methodological questioning did not allow me to hear the questions or comments that could have been posed by the subject in his world of experience.

To engage with the dialogue with the life history text of the subject's account is to engage in a life of values and beliefs that has claimed my attention and interests. The text, as I have it, the events that made up the text, what it means and says, all were negotiated in the original encounter with the subject. Questions were asked and answered in the process within the agreement.

Ultimately, I realized that the subject articulated values and attributes that were meaningful to me as a person and not just as an anthropologist.

Our phenomenology poses the possibility of a dialogue through which some of that subjectively intended world can be interpreted.

Certain values seem to constitute part of the subject's life world that he accepts. The following statement of the subject intimates his work ethic and a sense of security as two important values. He stated:

> I always worked even when I was living with my parents. I delivered newspapers. I worked at Macy's Department Store. I worked at repairing bicycles as well as working in a factory in Long Island City. As soon as I was able to work, I worked in summer youth employment programs. So as soon as I was able to have working papers, I found something to do.

Work ethic ensures a type of security one is able to provide for oneself and also help their parents and sometimes the larger kin group because of one's work ethic. Having the necessary resources helps in providing some of the essential materials by which one can support oneself, but also help in protecting oneself from outside aggression. The outsider can be threatening and dangerous and Leroy Comrie accepts that this threat is natural in one's existence. Outsiders can take advantage of persons who may not have the means to support themselves. Thus, the individual is vulnerable to potential evil unless the individual is able to count on an interested kin group member or on his ability to provide for his needs through work.

Another of Leroy Comrie's critical values is respect for others. This value pervades Comrie's sense of self-worth in all of his encounters in the world—respect for others, not merely for those who render protection and security but those who render social support to him. Respect is considered one of the fundamental values of society since it allows human beings to live in harmony. Respect means accepting the differences of others, whether cultural, ideological, or

religious, and valuing people for who they are. Respect that accompanies the fulfillment of social obligation serves to enhance self esteem. Comrie stated:

> They encouraged us to start a youth group, but insisted that we be at our homes at a reasonable time. Many people at the church were role models to us and were consistent in their efforts…. These members showed by example that they cared about us.
>
> My parents were very strict with my brother and I. However, we understood that they were not trying to be difficult, but they were trying to survive and wanted the best for us.

People cannot really say that they are somebody if they cannot count on the respect of others. It is not only enough to find food and shelter in one's family; one must also be counted on as a reliable person. Leroy Comrie learned the rules and applied them to his life; hence, his life became very successful.

In describing his marriage in particular, Comrie indicated that in his case, the contract binding human relationships in marriage in the cultures of St. Albans were not violated. He stated:

> I met my spouse Marcia when she worked in an office that was near my office…and once I was in the hunting stage, I definitely sought her out and we went out on a couple of dates…. I told her … I was looking for a wife…. I told her where I was heading, and it will be thirty years in July 2020 since we have been married….

Given the cultural definition of marriage relationships in St. Albans, which Leroy Comrie accepts, one can see that it was only proper for him to submit to his decision as the right thing to do.

Marriage between a man and a woman, as exemplified in the life of Leroy Comrie, is a striking example of what can be seen as one of the values in the neighborhood community of St. Albans. The right of sexual access between a man and a woman through marriage was a value held by many in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

* * *

The Comrie family continued the structure of the extended family idea and moved beyond the nuclear family. Leroy Comrie stated, “My parents had only one other child, a brother, but we always have family members staying at our house. Our family was an extended family.”

For Comrie, the family is central in his life. Despite his career as a public servant and a man of the neighborhood community of St. Albans and in his district, he allows time for his family in a meaningful way. He stated, “…my family and I have the desire to travel in the next year or so, to see different parts of the world…. I feel very strongly that it is about time that my family and I see parts of the world….”

Leroy Comrie showed by his interaction with friends that friendship is integral to interpersonal relationships. Communities cannot be based on justice alone; friendship is the necessary binding agent that holds communities together. However, friendships are not something that appear immediately. Comrie has shown us in his account that the strength of friendship comes from the long-term cultivation of common bonds. Thus, friendship is a great external good. Comrie stated, “I have friends from my early life in kindergarten and elementary school. We were tight all the way through my years in college.”

The life history of Leroy Comrie is a chronological study. He ends his story by pointing out how the institution of the church helped him along the way, and now he is here to help others. His story seemed like real-life similarity to Horatio Alger, Jr., later an American writer of young adult novels about impoverished boys and their rise from humble backgrounds to lives of middle-class security and comfort through hard work, determination, courage, and honesty. Alger’s writings were characterized by the rags-to riches narrative, which had a formative effect on the United States during the Gilded Age—an era that occurred during the 19th century, from the 1870s to about 1900.

Unlike some individuals in some traditional societies who may be loath to admit humble beginnings and their rise to success for fear of making their story known, here we have Leroy Comrie, who is very pleased to have achieved success. He expressed no reservations about telling his story to the world.

In viewing the arc of life, we can see in this life history an account of how the institution of the church is a kind of missionizing organism, with the tendency and desire to bring everyone, who is receptive and eager, to their fullest potential and in return impact the world around them. Leroy Comrie stated:

> As a result of my consistent attendance and rapport with members of the Episcopal congregation, through their encouragement, motivation, and support, I was inspired to become an elected official of New York State. I give much of the credit to the members of the Episcopal Church in St. Albans.

This life history mirrors many of the stories of many Afro African im/migrants and their transitions and opportunities. Many Afro African im/migrants came to New York City simply to obtain a decent job and opportunities that are offered in this metropolitan city. Others came to the city with professional skills or for family unification and education. The state is seen as a place to work out a rational life plan.

Leroy Comrie is actively engaged in bringing ways of thinking about ethnic groups in line with the changes that have already occurred. The community of St. Albans is now built out of persons of diverse backgrounds, and this process is quite different from that taking place in a society with a homozygous dominant community.

St. Albans is part of an international community. However, the people in St. Albans are well aware of an individual life that is shared in many aspects of its neighborhood community life. Events, institutions, and New York State have an immediate impact on their day-to-day

lives. The people of St. Albans are proud of their multicultural capabilities, which serve to link the neighborhood to a new system of integration, beliefs, actions, and accommodations.

The old thinking of local interest, group partisan beliefs, and stereotypic thinking of other groups is being replaced by an integrated sociocultural system of valued localized loyalties, where ongoing social, cultural, and institutional powers are centralized, and whose values and ways of life are desirable. These practices are clearly demonstrated in the works of the people themselves.

Leroy Comrie's awareness of his early struggles and his carefully considered methods to adapt and overcome them, with the recognition of his own freedom to change his environment, seem to form an unbroken sequence in his recollective experience, starting from his early life memories and continuing into adolescence and adult life. At the center of his life, Comrie appears to be a self-reflective person who is maintaining a sense of identity and whose actions appear to be consistent and meaningful.

These aspects are not things that I could reasonably expect Leroy Comrie to comment on at length. They are beyond the task of my interpretation. However, they are highly interesting and show some characteristics that make him want to serve the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

At the end of the life history account, Leroy Comrie seemed to be saying to us, "This is the kind of person that I am." Apart from the other experiences that we were not able to get into, mainly because of time constraints, he was saying a concluding statement: "I am a product of my interaction with experience, both personal and environmental, in which I interact."

Reflections on the Life History of Leroy Comrie

The life history account of Leroy Comrie reveals not only the culture and immediate context of St. Albans history, but also some aspects of my own history that contributed to the product.

I grew up in a family that had experienced some of the family struggles experienced by the subject as well as those that are experienced by Afro African im/migrants in a new environment, as well as the personal need for additional guidance, motivation, and encouragement.

The life history account impacted me in the sense that my experience of the interview process served as a joint production in that it is a process. As Frank (1979) argued, that blends together the consciousness of the investigator and the subject perhaps to the point where it is not possible to disentangle them (p. 85).

One of the aspects of the subject's life history that I deemed to be of great significance to me is his attitude toward "Personal Responsibility," which he embraced for everything in his life. If one goes through one's life without taking personal responsibility, day-to-day life can be chaotic, career advancement would be almost impossible, and concepts like intrapersonal relationship would be easily overwhelming and not feasible. Central to the focal point is the area of creating a successful life, meeting and achieving goals, and creating a structure in which to guide one's life. When one is willing to take responsibility for his actions and advancement, then the idea of growth becomes a reality and many opportunities will be enhanced.

Leroy Comrie was being truly honest with himself as well as others about what he was aiming for and needed. This to me is an integral part of him taking responsibility.

Another characteristic of Leroy Comrie I observed was “Self-Discipline.” We already know that self-discipline is important. We know about success tools, and if we familiarize ourselves with them, they can be useful resources that can lead us to success. There are common goals, but many times one may not achieve one’s goals and that may be due to a lack of self-discipline.

The art of self-discipline is one of the best gifts people could ever give to themselves. The ability to say no to oneself is a very crucial step toward becoming strong, wise, and a more mature individual. Self-discipline can help one to have more focus. Leroy Comrie was able to shut out those things that distracted him from what he needed to do and was able to focus on those things that were important. He concentrated on being a public servant and ultimately became successful.

So self-discipline is crucial if one wishes to live one’s life to the fullest and realize one’s goals. My takeaway from my life is that I must learn to control my impulses, while at the same time making solid decisions, because this is among the most positive things that individuals can do for themselves.

The subject’s account has helped me to retrace the significant turning points in my life. I have learned that struggles and challenges in life can help me to become an example of fortitude and endurance. It has helped me to see the value of life itself and to allow myself room for the presence of others who can motivate me to become a better person who can contribute to others in vulnerable situations. Some of the events of my life were sometimes difficult, but I have learned to be content.

The next benefit that I saw was a deeper realization that human life is fragile, but it is very valuable. When my grandfather died, I was very young—a boy of ten years. It had not

really sunken in yet. I never had a picture of him or a photograph by which I can remember him. I only had memories of him when he visited my parents. The mental picture I had of him, I hope, will be a lasting memory. His death made me realize how precious human life is, and once it is gone, it will not return. It is my hope that I will have the same effect on others.

Another benefit I see in Leroy Comrie's life history for me is the willingness to let myself experience the enjoyment of others in my life, whether it is kinship, affiliation, friendships, or people connections in institutions and in a community. I must learn to let people into my life and trust that I would not be hurt by them or by something that could happen to them. Through their eyes, it is my hope that I can see myself as someone who matters and who can make a difference.

The life history account helped me to know the subject better for who he is, notwithstanding his past or present. In essence, I became a greater person and more willing to contribute to those who are in need of my help.

I have been moved and transformed by this research.

Conclusion

My goal in understanding the life of Leroy Comrie has been to grasp fully the many facets of his life in its subjective dimension. To this end, I have tried to see this unique character of the subject's consciousness as a product of past and present events, transmitted in the context of certain conditions he defined as his ongoing reality. Our understanding of his life is something that we have entered as a true account of his subjective experience. The process of interpreting this life history is through events, conditions, and negotiated meanings, the unfolding dialogue between the subject and the ethnographer, the transcription process itself, the dialogue between all of these parties and the environment that surrounds them and changes as it moves through time. Each of us becomes a prisoner of the meanings we have created with another, and each

seeks to make sense of what is going on in one's own way and arrive at one's own understanding.

As interpreters of life histories, we understand that in creating life histories through our own self-understanding, we grasp the person's experience within the context of their environment. We join Leroy Comrie in efforts to overcome his initial struggles, to search for the right path, and to choose a destiny according to our interests. This is a self-reflection that has brought us an understanding of how Leroy Comrie has situated himself in his world, first in the life history account and later in the text itself.

Very often, ethnographic research can miss a true feeling for human life as it is experienced by individuals. All too often, the real thing seems to get lost along the way. Leroy Comrie's life and case are instructive. His struggle is very much like our own human struggle. His attempts to allow people in addition to his parents and kin to motivate, guide, and instruct him toward self-development and practicing the values and beliefs that encompass him are some of the very things that impress us about Leroy Comrie's life because that is what his life is saying to us.

Leroy Comrie treated civil rights, work ethic, social justice, family life, individual and community development, ethnic neutrality, respect for one another, personal responsibility, friendship relations concurrently with religious life in the neighborhood community in St. Albans. I should mention that he attempted without much elaboration to outline a knowledge of his life from his early years in St. Albans to the present. His interests and the direction of his life were varied, but these areas open up new areas for additional life history research.

One of the points that is central to this presentation is his objectivity to the whole of life as lived in the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

Watson and Watson-Franke (1985) summed up this life history account in line with my thinking about the relationship of Afro African im/migrant cultures in St. Albans: "We hope that this little excursion [in the life of Leroy Comrie] offers at least some evidence for our contention that the comparative study of behavior can be accomplished with constructs that are emically sensitive to the subjective authenticity of life histories" (p. 203).

The Life and Work of Desmond Halibut

In order to triangulate the material in the sample, this interview was held with Desmond Halibut, a resident of St. Albans and Addisleigh Park—the sample area—and owner of a Zen Master Martial Arts School on Linden Boulevard, that bounded the sample area of the research.

The location of the interview was held in the office of the school on Linden Boulevard. A list of interview questions, the purpose of the study, and consent forms were given to the interviewee. The interview began at 6 p.m. and lasted for two hours.

When asked to share some information of himself and how he came to live in the sample area, Desmond Halibut said:

> I was born in Jamaica, West Indies. My parents came to New York City and paved the way for me to come to this country. I came in the 1970s. When I came to New York, I had a lot of challenges assimilating in the American culture. I first lived in Brooklyn. I was teased a lot. In the school I attended, I was bullied. My parents did not want me to get into any fights at school with students, and so my parents enrolled me in a school of martial arts. The student who bullied me in school was also enrolled in the martial arts school and was also a black belt in martial arts. It soon became a passion of mine to surpass that student who bullied me and pay him back for what he has done to me. Luckily for both of us, the student stopped bullying me. My Caribbean work ethic teaches that one should never stop trying to achieve one's goal once they have embarked in the process. This admonition kept me going. I went to high school and then to graduate school and shortly afterwards, I began working.

When he was asked to share his life and work in the neighborhood community, he said:

> I got married and my wife and I are proud parents of three children. We are a close-knit family, and we all work together in the martial arts school.

My family and I, along with some other partners, wanted to begin a martial arts school in the neighborhood. Addisleigh Park is a housing area and it was difficult to find space for the school in this immediate area, but we found space in a building on Linden Boulevard that bounded Addisleigh Park. The building was a warehouse and we turned it into space to accommodate a school for martial arts.

When we first opened the building, it was used first to practice the craft and to exercise with my partners, but after a while, my partners left and before you know it, the building was turned into a school of martial arts with the necessary certification by New York State to teach martial arts to students.

One of the main purposes for starting this school is that we wanted to impact the lives of people in Addisleigh Park and the larger area of St. Albans and beyond. We also wanted our lives to matter and that helped us to pursue some of our goals and our vision.

One of our visions for this community is to be a conduit to help people in this community to come together and interact with each other, learn a skill that will help them to defend themselves if there is a need to help people stay healthy so that they can live a meaningful life.

In terms of school enrollment, including the satellite area schools, we have over two hundred students in attendance on a regular basis. We have a staff of forty persons as well as thirty teachers. Enrollment in the school is partly due to advertisement on the internet, word of mouth, billboard advertisements as well as the distribution of flyers in schools and throughout the neighborhood. Our staff attends events in the neighborhood. We are connected with the councilman who represents the area of Addisleigh Park, St. Albans, and other communities in his district. We try to make known our school in the community, so that people would know who we are and our availability as Zen masters.

The school advertises its curriculum as a way of attracting new students. The age range of participants starts at four years to students in their eighties. We believe that the school helps to develop in students a sense of self-awareness and reflectiveness as learning takes place in their lives. The school is inclusive of women and men who are of different ethnic backgrounds, actually whoever wants to join or attend.

Afro Caribbeans and African Americans make up the majority of students in the school. And we believe that this is a place where people in attendance can bond. Through integrating, teaching, and learning, people are given the opportunities to see how attitudes toward other people are temporary constructions if those attitudes are negative. Attitudes to others that are negative can change to positive.

Some of the goals of the school are to schedule programs to make a difference in people's lives. We know that learning can be experienced at any point of a person's life. Another goal is that staff will be able to work with families of the students and our involvement would extend beyond the physical to aspects of lives in their education in public schools. Report cards are looked at in consultation with parents. Students are spoken to about behavior patterns, so that is not only about martial arts but also about

conduct, aspirations, functions in schools, and interpersonal interactions. The idea is the school will help to be a surrogate village for young students and their families.

I am sure that these could be some measure of conflict among students in the school, even though we have not experienced any altercation among students. If this should occur, we would encourage students to learn how to communicate with each other, try to listen and understand each other. One of the first jobs I held in this country, coming from the Caribbean region, I was called "beef patty boy." At first I was angry, but also I realized that the teasing had a lot to do with culture, values, and a feeling of displacement. African American folks in many places in New York believe that Afro Caribbeans were coming into this country and taking things from them, which those things were rightly theirs and they were displaced as a result. And then on the flip side Afro Caribbeans felt that African Americans are lazy and they would really do the work.

This challenge exists between the two groups mainly because members of each group are not well informed and the history of the diaspora of Black ethnic groups is not taught in key places.

Most of the students come from the neighborhood and the rest come from the larger areas of St. Albans. Every year we have programs like a Halloween party for the students. These are some of the times when you would find students of all backgrounds come together to interact and just have fun and feel good about each other and themselves.

The parents of students participate in the school in some form. Some are involved in the programs given for students, some in the parent-teacher meetings. These parents by sending their children to the school and participating in some form are demonstrating to their children love for other people. By demonstrating love, it helps to make the atmosphere in this school a loving environment.

When Desmond was asked how meaningful the school was to him and to this community, he answered as follows:

One of the things that I see in me is that nothing makes me feel better than walking along the streets in this neighborhood and people whom I don't know would come up to me and say, "You know, I am really happy that this school is in this community. We need this school here." People who are not affiliated to the school, who are parents, often come to me and say that they look at the leaders of the school as role models. In my office, I display my certifications, not so much to elevate myself, but that those who see these symbols of achievements would see in themselves their potential to achieve whatever they want to achieve. I wanted to create in this school a platform that those who attend can be inspired to believe that they can achieve anything that they set their minds toward achieving.

I've gotten a lot of feedback about the school. The school was highlighted on WABC TV sharing what the school has accomplished in the community.

When Desmond was asked about how he would describe this community, he said that this community was like a "melting pot," with the potential to expand and grow to a higher level.

> A lot of families of Afro Caribbean and African American cultures have invested their lives in the community. I am proud of its rich history that this area of Addisleigh Park holds. A lot of musicians, dancers, actors, politicians, professionals have come from this community. When it comes to Afro Caribbeans and African Americans, they have contributed so much to this community, to the nation and to the world. As compared to other communities in Queens or New York, the people of this neighborhood have made their mark in terms of the arts and other professions.

In terms of the perception of the social relations between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, Desmond's view was that the perceived tension between these two groups is a matter of a lack of education, lack of information. Often it is easier to lift oneself up by putting others down. On both sides of the aisle, if groups ridicule each other because of whatever differences that exist, Desmond thought that was a big mistake on both sides. He said: "I have not witnessed any tension between these two groups in this area. Here people get along. They look out for each other and might as well because that is the only way that we will survive as a people, as a community."

When asked about areas of convergence and bonds of cooperation seen between Afro Caribbean immigrants and African American migrants from the South now living in the area, Desmond saw these patterns emerging when there was a third party or a crisis involved. There was in this community, according to Desmond, a time when women were disrespected by men. When this was fully known, the entire community came together to address the issue. Members of this community might have had their disagreements on minor issues, but when it came to an issue that affected the entire community, all people living in the community came together. Whether African American or Caribbean, people in this community will band together, let their feelings be known, and seek solutions to the problem.

In identifying himself in the neighborhood, Desmond said:

> I see myself as a Black man who has American and Caribbean identities. When I go back to Jamaica, West Indies, I identify myself as Jamaican. When I am in this community, I am an American with a Jamaican accent. Living in this neighborhood, I don't think that these labels mean much. People are human beings with a common humanity, and what we should continue to do here is that all peoples should live in harmony and respect for each other.

In looking at the future of relations between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African Americans in the sampled area, Desmond saw that with discovery and use of the internet, there is a greater understanding of reality among groups in this community. People are now aware of the impact of music on people in general. Music provided by Afro Caribbeans and African Americans has had an impact not only in this community but the whole nation and the world. Not only music, but we have the food industry, where foods of each ethnic group are enjoyed by all peoples. There are shared experiences of each other's group lives and people are more connected.

The future of this community will remain strong as there is an increased understanding over time of both groups. Housing costs continue to remain stable, so there is a great opportunity for others to come in.

Desmond believed that groups with a culture of tension between them can change their negative attitudes toward each other to attitudes where there is trust. He stated:

> People with negative attitudes toward each other can change, but changes will come when people are motivated to change. I have witnessed in this community these changes taking place, in events, in institutions, in community celebrations, or get-togethers as in block association summer picnics. Even here in this school, parents and children who are from the neighborhood community often come as guests of different ethnic groups and part of the student body of the school. This proves that where there is an abundance of kindness given, it can be very hard for someone to maintain a negative attitude.

Conclusion

The statement "The account of one's life experiences can teach others about life" is a short but effective statement which lasts in my memory whenever I have to focus on the

collection of data on human experience. I truly believe that one's life experience can help us understand what human life is all about.

From our childhood even to our adult age, we need good teachers who give appropriate education that helps to shape our vision of the world, that guides us to the right behavior in society. Thanks to the experiences of good teachers, they can teach us the best way to grow, live, and not make mistakes that others have made. In the very same way, the life experience of an individual can be considered a good teacher for humanity since it records both good and bad actions carried out by human beings, and it allows us to discern these types of results from experience.

Nowadays in some societies, we are still surrounded by ethnic conflict and tension between groups, and human actions are constantly repeated. No community of people will ever develop to its greatest potential until its population reaches a sense of peace among its inhabitants. What is important for peace is how human beings approach the problems.

If we did not have historical experience as Desmond Halibut and other individuals and families of Afro Caribbean and African American cultures in Addisleigh Park, I am not sure if this neighborhood community would have had a stable condition of peace as it is experiencing now.

Summing up Desmond Halibut's life experience is to say that it helped to preserve cultures and memories. It taught people of the sampled neighborhood community how to behave and to have the right attitude toward each other, to remind them about the past and to give suggestions for the future.

Chapter 6: The Focus Group

In order to gather the information from the sample area, I utilized a Focus Group. Anne Seymore (2004), in *Focus Groups: An Important Tool for Strategic Planning*, defined the focus group as a "group of individuals having some common interests or characteristics brought together by a moderator (a researcher) who used the group and its interactions as a way of gaining information about a specific focused issue" (p. 2). This technique has been utilized in many fields to collect primary data, as mentioned previously, and its characteristics are discussed in the following sections.

This research documentation consists of information from the focus group. Its main purpose is to address questions related to the study of the two groups (Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants) and their descendants living in the sample area of Addisleigh Park, St. Albans, Queens, New York.

Methodology

This section identifies and justifies the methods that were used to explore the research question and the relationship outcome between the two groups under study. To increase the dependability of the study, the selection process, the data collection action taken to avoid bias, and the ethical considerations are described below.

Research Design

The exploratory nature of the study requires a grounded theory qualitative approach to data collection and analysis to elicit an understanding of the participants' experiences while ensuring a strong focus is toward the research question.

A focus group was used to approach the research question to understand the themes of the participants' perspectives and to understand the meaning of the phenomena. Participants can find it intimidating to be interviewed on a one-on-one basis, and so their responses are affected, as are the reliability and validity of the study and their willingness to participate in the study.

Planning

Planning was very important to form and facilitate in-depth discussion of the focus group. A key informant, Joan King, made referrals of possible participants for the focus group. Joan assisted in making telephone calls to the referrals to determine their level of interest and availability. The persons who showed interest determined the number of participants in the focus group of the sample. The goal was to have a sufficient number of participants to elicit a variety of experiences and perspectives on the research question as it related to the research sample.

The place where the focus group discussion sessions were to be held was in the conference room on the lower level of the St. Albans Episcopal Church. Most of the participants of the focus group were associated with the institution, which is located adjacent to Addisleigh Park, with space that was offered for community use. I was encouraged to use the offered space for the sessions of the focus group discussion.

The room booked for the focus group discussion was easily accessible for participants. In preparation for the sessions, the chairs were positioned around a conference table. A tape recorder for recording the data was used. The data were transcribed by the moderator, which helped him to familiarize himself with the transcript.

Two factors were taken under consideration in the approach of conducting the focus group discussion.

Ethical Concerns

Although participants' work experience was shared, there was no intent to ask questions that related to age or current work compensation. Therefore, issues of privacy were of little or no concern as they pertained to the focus group. However, to address absolute privacy, only the investigator-transcriber had access to the data from the focus group sessions. The dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of the participants were eminent in the research. The research was justified by Teachers College, Columbia University and passed all the required ethical considerations.

Time Constraints

To address the time constraint factor, it was a stated agreement that there would be two sessions of the focus group, each lasting one hour. However, the second session lasted longer than one hour.

Participants

The participants of the focus group worked to share their knowledge pertaining to the research discussion questions and other comments they had pertaining to the research. It was presumed that most of the participants were currently employed in moderate to moderately high-income positions as well as moderate to high levels of education.

The participants of the focus group were culturally mixed. Two-thirds of the group were African American, one-third were Afro Caribbean. Some participants were descendants of both groups under study. The same ratio was gender mixed.

Many of the participants lived in this sample area, while other participants lived at one point of their lives in the sample area and have retained active participation in the area. They know the sample area very well and still participate in events and block association activities. A

few participants have connections in the sample area, even though they have broadened their neighborhood community to live in an adjacent neighborhood. One participant was an African who became a naturalized American citizen and now lives in the neighborhood community of the sample. I sought to elicit from the group their experiences as they pertained to the sample and the research topic.

All participants felt an affinity to the research study enough to give consent to be participants in the study, making recruitment efforts less problematic. All participants were acquainted with each other, which helped to ensure a robust dialogue with one another and the moderator and assistant moderator. Hence, the focus group was a unique data source and was seen as exploring participants' knowledge and experiences, helping to understand not only what participants thought but also why they thought the way they did.

Identification of the participants in the focus group was given at each participant's introduction to the group. The signatures on the attendance sheet of each participant was done at the genesis of each session. The goal for this procedure was to have a sufficient number of participants take part in the discussions of the questions that were presented.

Structure

Wild and Diggines (2009) asserted that no person is able to absorb a discussion of over twenty minutes by using his head alone; some points will certainly be missed. Sessions should be preferably recorded (both visual and audio) so that the researcher can view or listen to the sessions later to get insights.

The researcher utilized a structured format with a moderator and an assistant moderator.. The moderator presented to the focus group a list of questions, which was open to discussion by participants in the group. The moderator then transcribed and evaluated the data.

The moderator conducted the discussions and included icebreakers, kept the discussion on track, and solicited deeper discussions as required for enhanced understanding. The moderator was free to clarify the purpose of the focus group to probe more deeply into the given topic and allow new topics to be raised as needed. The intent was to allow a free flow of conversation toward the end.

The focus group sessions ended by thanking the participants and by providing them with refreshments at the end of each session.

Summation

The intent of this qualitative research was to determine how well the two groups under study were prepared to function in the real world. The concept of integration, resulting in attitude change and trust between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants, assisted the researcher in identifying strengths and weaknesses to these experiences. It also helped the researcher identify any basic threats or opportunities. Finally, it served as a baseline to compare and contrast this standard of behavior and its outcome experienced by the two groups under study.

Description

Having been present in the room and conducting the research, I was able to record the discussions and take note of the responses of the participants in the group. Eighty percent of the content analysis was found in the transcript and twenty percent in all other things in the room, as described below.

Being in the discussion room gave me a sense of energy, passion, and emotion that did not come through the transcripts. The comments of the participants were insightful and detailed. There were some questions that drew more discussion than others. Those questions that were

most relevant I gave the most attention to. I did not have any preconceptions of what I might find; hence, I was open to multiple realities that might occur in the group. Different voices and multiple views needed to be presented, and in the analysis of the discussions, I tried to represent a range of views.

Most of the participants answered the questions and took part in the discussion, which showed that the group size adequately represented the sample. The body language in the group was important. There were signals for the level of responses of the group. None of the participants raised their voices, but all were passionate about what they were sharing as they expressed their feelings.

In the pattern of responses of the participants, some were nodding in affirmation as other participants stated their experiences. There were times of laughter in the group, which indicated that participants were taking delight in what was being shared. Time did not allow me to record all of the participants' responses. The degree of conversation that was preserved fell between serial interviewing, where all the comments were directed to the moderator, and more of an unstructured interview. It fell somewhere in the middle where questions were directed to participants and later directed to allow conversation. Some conversations were more extended than others, but they had the advantage of observing how individuals responded to others in the group, which is a predictor of how participants responded after they left the focus group.

Summary

This focus group analysis was intentional and purposeful. Some qualities were observable in the process of the research. It was systematic, there was the use of verifiable procedure, and it was done in sequence. This could also be seen as a continuing process.

Analyzing the Data

Data analysis using the grounded theory approach was used to analyze responses to the open questions posed to the group for discussion. Grounded theory is a methodology, a way of thinking about and studying social reality that is well suited to generate theory in complex social settings, while retaining rigor and being open to critical inspection (Miller, 1995).

Although the data were analyzed using a grounded theory approach, it was not possible to provide a saturated analysis to extract a theoretical framework. However, the semi-structured question responses were analyzed from the discussions around the questions posed to the participants in the focus group sessions. The hope from these responses was to be able to see some consensus of themes or a theme in the discussion.

The task of analyzing the data collected grew out of the purpose of the study. I used several themes in looking at the data after they were transcribed. I looked at the frequency of concepts, how often a concept was mentioned by respondents, how many people mentioned the concept, and how much detail the respondents provided about the concepts. The concepts were not necessarily reported in descending order of the progression of the research.

In the response of the group to the question related to Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants living in St. Albans and their experience, the group affirmed that these two groups consist of the majority of Blacks living in the neighborhood community. Their experience with both groups was a positive one.

A common theme throughout the discussion was the presence of the two groups and the different cultural and social factors in the neighborhood community. The two groups provided basic cultural diversity and social differentiation. It was pointed out that cleavages to a group's customs alone can be a cause of social intolerance, and one of the factors that can contribute to

one of the most predominant reasons for social intolerance is the lack of integration between the two groups.

This opinion led into probing the concept of integration. The focus group agreed that integration resulted in understanding and empathy within the cultures. The lack of integration can help to reinforce stereotypes, bridging a further gap and, therefore, a level of intolerance. However, it was the view of the group that individuals need to break these boundaries and walls that can be built between the groups. It was also the feeling of the focus group that these walls and boundaries can be overcome, and proper stable relations can be built between the two groups, while healthy respect and cultural understanding can be an antidote to social intolerance.

Another discussion question dealt with attitudes of people who were living in the neighborhood toward them when they arrived in St. Albans. One participant chose to give his experience in coming to Addisleigh Park, stating:

> When I came to St. Albans to live, my wife and I were looking for a house to live in. We never thought that we were purchasing a house in a historical area. The first people that greeted us were some of our neighbors. Our neighbors were the ones who educated us about the history of Addisleigh Park community and they wished us well. It is a pleasure living in the Addisleigh Park community. The neighbors here are friendly. We met many people. Many neighbors offered to baby-sit for our family. These neighbors opened their houses to our family. It is a friendly neighborhood and these neighbors are very much like the neighbors I left in my former country that I lived in before I came to New York. The environment that I was used to, where everybody knew everybody. They were kind and looked out for each other. I will not change places with anybody for Addisleigh Park. The community is now a landmark. When people on my day job talk badly about their neighborhood to me and how bad it is, I will always say to them, Come to my neighborhood.
>
> One of my coworkers who was invited to my home, as we drove through the streets to my house and the co-worker saw this area, he said to me, “Are you sure Black people live here?” My response to him was every house that you see here is occupied by Blacks, most African Americans and Caribbeans. My family and I were well received by the people in this community and we are enjoying every minute of it.

Another participant said:

> The neighborhood is a place that has not changed much since it has become predominantly a Black neighborhood.
>
> The people here are very friendly. There are a lot of people who have moved into the community. Some are African Americans and some are West Indians. The friendliness in this community by the people who live here remains the same. You cannot see many people during the wintertime, but in the summertime, that's when you can see most people in the neighborhood. I went on vacation for two weeks and my neighbor said to me and my family, Don't worry about anything about your house, everything will be alright. When we came back to our house, everything was all right. My neighbors kept all of our mail except the newspapers. How everything remained the same when we came back.

One of the discussion questions was: What does it mean for you growing up in this neighborhood and in this neighborhood community with one parent Afro Caribbean immigrant and another Southern African American migrant? This question did not generate much discussion. However, one member of the group said:

> When my parents came to New York, they came here from different places. My mother came from Barbados, and my father was born in the American South. The people from Barbados and the people from the South have some similarities in terms of the same lifestyle. Back in colonial days, some of the people of the Caribbean region were moved to some areas in the South, so there are some similarities in patterns of doing certain things. However, at our home in Brooklyn and here in St. Albans, we made adjustments to the cultural norms in both places. My mother loved to cook her Caribbean foods and my father loved to cook Southern style foods.
>
> There were no problems in our home between members of our family in terms of not being able to get along. There was much love among us and where there is love, it is easy to make adjustments.
>
> We are not the only family with mixed cultural marriages. There are also other families that I know in this community who have married into Caribbean families and Caribbeans marry into African American families. In my case, I don't know much about the country where my mother came from, but she tells us many of her former experiences and stories. My father doesn't object.

Another discussion question was: Who in this community has made significant contributions to the community and has gone on to achieve something significant for the community? This question elicited a very lively discussion. Participants in the group exclaimed,

"Oh, we have them right here. Two persons participating in the group fit the description!" A public official as a participant in the group said:

> As a public elected official, I have been able to help this community of St. Albans in many ways. I have been able to have a career. The church that I belong to gave me the desire to be in public service. During the Sixties and Seventies, the church was an oasis for young people of the community. Those who saw how the church can play a part in subtle ways in their lives took advantage of this opportunity. This is one of the places where people can be encouraged on a path that can lead them to succeed in life.

Another participant who had made a great impact on the neighborhood community of St. Albans chose not to speak of his achievements, but spoke about the nameless people in St. Albans neighborhood community and Addisleigh Park who are not spoken of and recognized publicly. He said:

> To me, there are nameless people who have helped to make this community whole. There are people who live in this community of Afro Caribbean and African American heritage who have brought this community together. They took a stand to improve the lives of others. Because of their love for people in general, some have participated in the "March on Washington" to show a sense of solidarity for like-minded people. Even here in this community of St. Albans, people of this community demonstrated in the streets to keep the Naval Hospital of St. Albans open and to remain in service to this community. The people who live next door received the benefit of those who laid the foundation. The people of this community who are involved in civic association groups, who are involved in block associations, people like Paul Gibson who have laid the foundation of what it means to be involved in the community, these people need to be remembered.

One of the high points of the focus group discussion was in the area of discussing integration between the two groups under study within cooperatives and associations. The group identified a mutual finance activity called *susu*. *Susu* is basically a grass-roots credit union run by people in a community or an institution to extend credit to meet personal needs. One participant stated that in Jamaica, West Indies, it is called "partners."

There was much laughter by participants in the group. Many were nodding in affirmation, which meant that they were taking delight in what was being shared. *Susu* was present in the

activity of the people in the neighborhood community. It was made up of a group of people who started a savings club. One participant said:

> *Susu* is a little different to a Christmas club because you can pick your payday. The average membership of the club is about nine people and many people use it for their vacation. In this activity, there has to be a level of trust. In St. Even though this activity is evident, it is composed of people who have a strong bond of respect and association. People of both groups in this community do engage in this activity.

In pursuing the concept of integration, the group had many experiences in various forms and levels. One participant said:

> For me, I don't think in this neighborhood anyone cares about whether you are originally from the North or from the South or Afro Caribbean or African American. We live here as one people. This is a community that is more inclusive of the two groups under study than many other neighborhood communities. We have here people who have seen how stable this community is, and how they are in solidarity with each other so much that other ethnic groups are making plans to come in.

> Integration of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans has never been a problem in this community. The only area where there might have been some tension is when it comes to competition for jobs. Economic factors can be one of the key features to social intolerance. However, here in this community, there is enough opportunity for everyone who is willing to work hard to fulfill the American Dream.

In answer to the question concerning memories of connections to the neighborhood community and expressions of affinity to the people and neighborhood, the discussion on this question was lively, and many participants expressed their experiences. One participant stood out when he said:

> You see me on my runs through some areas through and around Addisleigh Park. I run through the streets to Roy Wilkins Park, through on Linden Boulevard and Merrick Boulevard, through Addisleigh Park. These are some of the touch points. These are the times I do what I call memory runs to various parts of my neighborhood community.

> When I run through Addisleigh Park, I make sure I go by my old house, where I lived for many years, and that's my grounding point of who I am. I also went by my first job, my elementary school, P.S. 36. This is part of my upbringing, so I keep that very close. Addisleigh Park for me is part of my life. My relatives there are well and active in the church institution. And so my neighborhood of Addisleigh Park has broadened to include other areas, but I was born here. I will die here and will be buried here.

Another participant expressed how she experienced integration among children of families in the Addisleigh Park community sample area. She stated:

> When I came to New York, I went to live in Brooklyn. I didn't know much about this community before I came to live here. My daughters went to school in the area. Because they were kids, many of the kids in the community would come to my house. This neighborhood is a nice place to live in. There were Jamaicans living near my house, and because they had children, their children and our children who are African Americans would get together. My back door in my house, when it's open the kids in the neighborhood would come through there. When my neighbors take trips away from their homes, like the neighborhood would look out for these kids until the neighbors return. That's how we live like we are still living in the neighborhood.

Conclusion

The data on the discussion consisted of the experiences of the participants of the focus group in the sample area. It was source triangulated, where I examined from different respondents the nature of reality between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in the sample area. With the use of different respondents with the same method of group discussion, I was able to see and hear the thinking of the group. Each participant had unique experiences, and I tried to look for patterns or contradictions against what was generally shared by other participants.

One participant expressed that the perceived tension between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans was not due to cultural difference or social differentiation, but because of economic conditions. However, the group concluded that this expression might have been evident in the past, but in these times, there is enough for everyone. Hence, there is no need for tension between groups.

Triangulating the data through group discussions was one of the ways of improving the validity and reliability of the research.

The focus group discussion was a means of investigating a wide spectrum of perceptions and how these perceptions may have affected the participants' social and cultural decision making. It also sought to describe experiences most commonly encountered by the participants

and, to a larger extent, the people of the sample, which is believed to have an ethical dimension. To further triangulate the information from the discussions of the focus group, semi-structured interviews were done with other residents of the sample area. The participants met the substantive requirements in that the human qualities of honesty, courage, and integrity were evidenced, which helped to evaluate fully the complexity of the study.

The possible desirable outcome of this focus group discussion was that the participation of the participants would lead to a greater interest in the topic of the research, and that the focus group discussion would provide information to support the current debate regarding the issue among ethnic groups so that the awareness of the outcome becomes engraved in the practice of individuals in the sample and elsewhere so as to stimulate further research.

Chapter 7: Life in St. Albans

The St. Albans story is not limited to entertainers who lived in the area. This neighborhood community represents home ownership and the expansion of the Afro Caribbean immigrant middle class and of the Southern African American migrants in southeast Queens, New York.

St. Albans is a place of many religious organizations, active associations and civic groups, and institutions which have contributed to the neighborhood community appeal. During some of the interview sessions for this research, several current residents shared what life in St. Albans was like when they first moved into the neighborhood community as compared to now. One informant said:

> I worked in Wall Street, in Manhattan, but I always lived in St. Albans from the time when I first moved in. There are businesses that brought the community together. There were activities in many areas of life that I still remember that were so enjoyable for the whole community. However, some activities have changed and hence the atmosphere, socially and in other aspects, has changed somewhat, but I still like it here.

Another informant said, “This beautiful suburban area of Queens is ideal for raising a family just like some of the other neighborhoods of Queens like Rosedale and Jamaica.” She further stated that “the proximity of St. Albans to the transportation hub of South Jamaica makes it an appealing niche as the working class continues working and as the kids in this community start going to the community schools. Shopping for personal items is made easy for people living in the community because of the proximity of the shopping area on Jamaica Avenue.”

It is impractical for me to mention in this research account every activity or conversation that took place in St. Albans during the time of this research. However, I will endeavor to mention a few that I believe give a picture of some aspects of life in St. Albans.

Conversations with Mr. Rasta

I met Joseph Anthony, formerly an immigrant from Jamaica, West Indies, an Afro Caribbean who immigrated to New York in 1968. He first lived in Brooklyn before relocating to St. Albans. Joseph said to me, "My real name is Joseph, but people call me Mr. Rasta. I suppose they call me that name because I wear these dreadlocks on my head."

When Joseph was asked about his impressions of St. Albans, he said:

> When I first moved up here in St. Albans from Brooklyn, the majority of people who were living here were Euro Americans. There were not many Black people living here. Soon many of the White people moved away and now there are a lot of African Americans and West Indians living here.
>
> St. Albans is a nice community to live in. The only problem I see is that illegal drugs are creeping in. The illegal drugs are not manufactured here. I believe that the drug dealers do not live here, but they come in from outside of the community and make the drugs available, especially to our young Black men, to see if they can make some easy money, but the drugs are having the heads of our young men all messed up.

When Joseph was asked how African Americans and Afro Caribbeans in this neighborhood get along, Joseph said:

> I believe and know that these two groups of people get along very well. The African Americans that I have met and live among treat me fine. They seem to be loving people. Though it might sound strange, some of my own Caribbean people sometimes do not treat me as kind as African Americans.
>
> Marcus Garvey, an activist from Jamaica who lived here, showed us Black people how we can live together as one people. Look, man, Garvey was a master in his own right. Garvey had a huge following, both West Indian and African American followers. So for anyone to say that Black Americans and West Indians cannot get along, it is a myth.

Joseph feels that the key to understanding how African Americans and West Indians should get along is education about their histories, the histories of their foreparents and how they

manage to get to this hemisphere. Then with this knowledge, African Americans and West Indians will continue to be loving toward each other. Joseph further stated:

> No one should look at skin color or accents to make a judgment call. We should look at a person's character, how they are brought up, what are the values that they hold, and the goals that one has in life.
>
> If one wants to live a productive life in this world, one must be determined to plant good seeds, the seeds of right living, of kindness to their neighbors, regardless of who they are or where they came from or how they talk.

Joseph has friends who are African Americans in St. Albans and elsewhere. He said, "These friends treat me very well, from the time before they became close friends. I remember when I first came to St. Albans, some of the African American guys I hung out with would call me 'coconut' in jest, but now attitudes and behavior have changed for the better. It's so different now that all of us are like one person."

The St. Albans Higgler

With the shortage of consumer goods and services from the Caribbean, many Afro Caribbeans seek to find ways to keep domestic units in their lives together.

Eunice Haley is a fifty-five-year-old Afro Caribbean immigrant from Jamaica, West Indies, who has developed a strategy of economic survival to survive in a tough economy for the elderly. With a limited quantity of cash, Eunice purchased a used van along with a fractional number of consumer goods and began selling these goods in an effort to provide food, shelter, and clothing for herself and her family. Though Eunice owned a house, she was deprived of having additional space around the house for producing food crops to aid in food consumption by her family or for sale.

In the Caribbean as well as Latin America are some societies that come not from the sources predicted by either neoclassic or Marxist economies, but from groups of women who thrive throughout the regions in Jamaica as "higglers." A higgler is an intermediary market trader

who buys products wholesale, breaks down the bulk, and sells the products in smaller quantities (Williams, 2018). These women who sell goods on the sidewalks and roadsides and in the local markets have become integral to providing a wide range of commodities more cheaply and more accessibly than the more formal outlets. Armed with U.S. currency, often purchased on the black market, they would (and still do) fly to Miami, New York, Panama, Central America, or neighboring islands and shop and return with a quantity of goods in short supply to sell in their communities.

Eunice Haley has her own transportation, a van she purchased and used to haul and store overnight goods that she purchased for sale in the St. Albans neighborhood community. The depot outlet is in Brooklyn, New York, the area she lived in before relocating to St Albans. The goods purchased by Eunice are mainly fruits and vegetables originally coming mainly from the Caribbean and the U.S. South. Hence, the consumers of these goods are mainly Afro Caribbeans and Southern Africans. Some of the goods for sale are coconuts, sugar cane stalks, watermelon, papaya, oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, soursop fruit, mangoes, cantaloupes, and so on. Eunice resells the produce in smaller quantities out of her van and on a table at the side of the van, which is often parked at the northern end of Linden Boulevard in St. Albans, where she conducts her sales.

The work of Eunice, the higgler of St. Albans, updates earlier work on higglers in the Caribbean (Besson, 2002; Katzin, 1973; Mintz, 1957, 1960; Simmond, 1987) through offering contemporary ethnographic material and paying attention to how Eunice works her market space.

Eunice uses the authorized requirement to conduct business. She said to me after meeting and spending two hours at her place of business during my fieldwork that:

> Every now and then, the authorities in the borough would come and check on my business to see if my license is current. I have to pay taxes on the sale of my goods to the

> public. You know Uncle Sam. He has to get his money. That is something that is certain. They have to get their money or else they will shut you down.

Eunice uses a range of tactics through which to maintain viability of her trade and to maximize scarce available resources. These tactics create the opportunity of maneuvering within St. Albans to maximize profits. Such informed business techniques find expression not only with Eunice but with other local businesses in St. Albans. For example, when business in St. Albans is slow in one area where Eunice parked her van and conducts sales, she will seek out other areas where there are more activities of people's interactions and remain there doing business until conditions change. Likewise, in local business, if a product listed for sale has lost its appeal to customers, management of the business will substitute that product for another product. Maneuvering space and products is a marketing technique through which merchants can engage new clients.

I will argue that Eunice's ability to maneuver in such difficult economic circumstances is defined by her ability to manage her relationships with customers who are Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, and treading the fine line between cooperation for mutual benefits and competition for scarce resources.

Another technique that Eunice uses is placing the goods for sale on a table outside annexed to the rear of the van. This makes the produce more usually pleasing and means that the passerby can see the goods without obstacles. Eunice dedicates care and attention to the layout of the produce and puts considerable thought into how to present the produce to the customers.

The relationship between a higgler and a customer, as well as customers and other customers, defines successful integration among people. Eunice establishes rapport between first-time buyers and potential buyers. Sometimes Eunice will give a little extra to customers to enhance her higgling and to encourage them to shop at her business in the future. Often

customers will strike up conversations with each other, sometimes in relation with the quality of produce and sometimes about current events in the nation, city, or neighborhood community of St. Albans.

Groovin' in the Park

St. Albans is a cultural touchstone of southeast Queens, New York. It has been a constantly evolving neighborhood shifting alongside Black culture through the years. St. Albans is the hub of Black history and culture, and serves as proof of many great accomplishments within its neighborhood community.

Every year and in more recent times, musical concerts are common celebrations held in Roy Wilkins Park. One of the most memorable and well-attended events from the neighborhood community is the Groovin' in the Park concert. It is a day of Reggae and rhythm and blues artists that families and fans in St. Albans have grown to love.

Groovin' in the Park is North America's largest annual Reggae and rhythm and blues concert. It is a family-friendly entertainment event which provides an electric array of popular music catering to very diverse audiences from the United States and the Caribbean. Recognizing that many quality events of outdoor park concerts are mostly held in the borough of Manhattan, specifically Central Park, and in Brooklyn's Prospect Park in the summertime, this event, which is held in Roy Wilkins Park in St. Albans, brings quality entertainment to the neighborhood community of St. Albans and, by extension, to the borough of Queens. In this way, residents in both areas have easy access and share in the main spin of activities that are associated with the staging of such a premiere concert.

Groovin' in the Park has continued to intensify its focus on presenting a cadre of high-quality performers, coupled with an atmosphere of relaxation, integration, and enjoyment for the

St. Albans neighborhood community, in response to their increasing demand for first-class entertainers and entertainment in the tri-borough area of New York. This annual event concentrates its efforts as a positive development within the population of St. Albans, who view this event as another avenue to respond to one another.

This celebration has become a staple in the annual summer concert calendar in St. Albans. Families and concertgoers and visitors are eager to attend. The year's event was scheduled in the month of June and featured some of the best combinations of Reggae and rhythm and blues artists that fans and families have grown to love. These include Michael Bolton, Beresford Hammond, and David Rodigan.

The gate in Roy Wilkins Park opens at 11 a.m. on the day of the event. Tickets, which range from $70 to $280, can be purchased at the gate on the day of the concert. All tickets are scanned to grant access to the park on the day of the event and duplicate tickets are rejected. The VIP entrances are on Merrick Boulevard and the entrance to Roy Wilkins Park. The general admittance entrance is at the Baisley Boulevard entrance to Roy Wilkins Park, and persons with such tickets are not allowed at the VIP entrance. The concert is a family event, and children under the age of twelve enter for free with the required proof.

The VIP area is furnished with chairs at the front of the stage. Each VIP patron is provided with two meals and unlimited beverages for the duration of the concert. The VIP patrons are assigned to one of the several tents which are furnished with sofas, cocktail tables, and a monitor (in addition to the elevated view) to get a closer view of the performance. The VIPs also receive unlimited meals and beverages for the duration of the concert.

This is an outdoor event and attendants dress in comfortable attire. Because of the unpredictability of the weather patterns, patrons are advised to take the necessary precautions.

Patrons are allowed to bring their own chairs, provided each chair's seat height is two feet or less. Chairs that do not meet the requirements are not allowed inside the venue. Other items that are not allowed are weapons, including knives and sharp or pointed objects, alcohol beverages of any kind, luggages including briefcases or duffle bags, grills, coolers, glass bottles, containers, or camera lenses over six inches long.

There are concession stands with a variety of food and craft vendors whose wares add to the ambience. A variety of Caribbean food and beverages is sold for the duration of the concert. There are also designated areas for wheelchairs that are wheelchair accessible. Service animals trained to assist the disabled are welcome at the performance. Pets and smoking of any kind are not allowed. Because it is a rain-or-shine event, refunds are not returned to patrons.

One Afro Caribbean informant, Lewis Sutton, when asked what this concert event of Groovin' in the Park meant to him and the people of St. Albans, said:

> This event of Groovin' in the Park is something that I and the people of St. Albans look forward to every year since it started years ago.
>
> It is a powerful, moving, and enjoyable experience that is overwhelming, and it captures the moment. You can follow each note that is played by the musicians. This concert event creates the moments that have some meaning in life. It is a time when people of this St. Albans community and elsewhere come together and listen to the creative work of the artists. It's a time when you can be caught up with feelings of ecstasy. There is a healing power in this music. You can feel it and they make new memories for all of us. The music is educational and informative.

One major observation that Lewis made that I found was impressive was that during this concert event, a reciprocal action is taking place. What is happening is a two way street: the artists are giving their music to the audience, and the people in the audience are giving their responses to the artists.

Jeff Pressing (2002), in *Black Atlantic Rhythm*, published a study and asked the big question: "How does such rhythm work and why does it appeal so widely?" Pressing argued that

Black Atlantic rhythm is founded on two main approaches to time: groove and speech. The latter is found in jazz, singing, rapping, and elsewhere, floating above the regularity of the underlying rhythm section, giving aligning reference to it only at certain points. Meanwhile, groove is the foundation of any dance music style, including European forms, both ancient and modern. Pressing suggested that:

> For groove to be successfully conceived, executed, and more perceived by both musician and audience, it must call up a series of sharp motor responses, musical interests, and values. Groove is a social musical phenomenon and success relies on shared or at least compatible conceptions of timing and accentuation by the performers. It is a product of those of African and African diasporic traditions with concomitant heightened power to evoke emotions…. It is through the interactions of performers' actions and listening expectations, culturally situated, that allows meaning to emerge in the musical performances. (p. 296)

In analyzing the description of some of the attendees to Groovin' in the Park, one informant said, "You can know when there is a good groove. When you get into that groove, you ride right down with that groove with no strain or pain—you can't lay back or go forward in moving to the rhythm of the music." Here, the informant described bodily states or the possibility of bodily motion. Those who know groove know what makes for musical rhythm, how the body might respond, and the context within which large-scale, multilayered patterns of pitch and rhythmic materials are produced.

Moving beyond the music and rhythm to the people and setting, and how the social space at the concert and its dynamics, can help to construct these musical practices that might be thought of as extra musical notions of associated identities and histories.

This experience at the concert exemplifies the race/ethnic musical becoming of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African Americans. It makes a claim on Black cultural heritage. Although working from different kinds of intellectual premises, this visual traditional event is an ongoing reinforcement of social and cultural integration rather than a deconstruction

of ethnic culture forms. Such consolidating maneuvers, along with a progressive vision of immigrants and migrants, is posed to succeed in ethnic integration as long as community leaders and the population of St. Albans continue to inspire and reward the staging of these musical practices.

Cricket

England in about 1850 introduced the game of cricket, which soon became a universally popular West Indian sport. Cricket clubs formed among Afro Caribbeans and their descendants in St. Albans, playing the game against other cricket clubs in St. Albans and elsewhere in New York City. Many of the cricket clubs include Southern African American migrants and their descendants. These cricket clubs in St. Albans play cricket matches in the parks of St. Albans that can accommodate the games. Two of the parks where the game of cricket is often played are Roy Wilkins Park and St. Albans Park.

The game of cricket is played with a cricket bat and a ball covered with leather. The game is played between two teams of eleven players in a bounded field in the park. At the center of the field is a strip covered with canvas, often called the cricket pitch which extends for twenty-two yards. At the end of the strip are three vertical stumps called wickets, with a horizontal piece on all three stumps and bails. The wickets are on both ends of the cricket pitch.

At the time when the game begins, all eleven players of one of the teams are on the field at special positions. These are bowlers and fielders. The only members of the opposing team on the field at this time of the game are two batsmen. The only other person who is on the field at the time of the game is an umpire—an official who rules on plays of the players in the game. There is an accounting system set up to tally all the runs batted in. Traditionally, all cricketers play the game in white attire. Players wear protective gear to prevent injury that can be caused by

the cricket ball. The ball is a solid spheroid made of compressed leather with a slightly raised, sewn seam enclosing a cork core which is layered with tightly wound strings.

The major objective of each team is to score more runs than their opponents. The team with the greater score is then said to have won the game. Mr. Joseph, a captain in his cricket club, said, "Usually cricket matches played in St. Albans between teams last only one day. The matches are mostly played on Saturdays or on public holidays. The results in these games usually end with a win for one team as well as a draw or tie for both teams."

When Joseph was asked what meaning the game of cricket holds for him and the people in the neighborhood community of St. Albans, he said:

> The game of cricket is a gentleman's game. As a cricketer, one should be open to winning some games as well as losing some. How you respond after you have won or lost a game speaks to how you are a gentleman of the cricket game, and it's a way of teaching others how to live life and to be happy, no matter what is the outcome.

Joseph further stated that this game of cricket is much more fun "for those of us who know about the game almost all of our lives. It is one of the ways of bringing people together and help in developing social skills like cooperation, communication, social interaction. It's a great way of meeting new people and making new friends of a different culture." He added:

> When cricketers are playing a game with another club, they often bring loved ones and friends to see them play the game, and this is a good time for integration with new people. Here we have people who are African American and people from the Caribbean coming together for a game, and we are just enjoying each other while the game is being played. When a cricketer batsman hits a ball from the bowler to the boundary, there is applause from the crowd of onlookers. It's a happy moment for all of us.

Diversity, interaction, and integration can be seen in these events in the park. It affords people of Afro Caribbean and African American ethnic groups to be able to come together and enjoy these events. It also affords vendors who specialize in their native food and beverages to embrace this opportunity to serve other cultures as well as make a profit for themselves. It is in these times that culture and tradition are in full display.

One cricketer, an Afro Caribbean immigrant from Barbados, West Indies, said to me after asking him what the game of cricket meant to him:

> I am a cricketer and have been playing this game since I was just twelve years of age. My hero is Garfield Sobers, who made history during his career. Garfield Sobers was a great batsman from Barbados. This game is transformational, for it has transformed my life and helped to make me who I am today.

St. Albans Community Issues: Save the VA Hospital from Demolition

In 1915, the St. Albans Golf Course was built, and it brought rich and famous golfers, including Babe Ruth, a baseball icon who set numerous records. In the Depression, the golf course owners tried to sell, but plans for private development fell through. The land was seized by the U.S. federal government in 1942 and construction soon began on St. Albans Naval Hospital in 1943. The hospital was turned over to the Veterans Administration (VA) in 1974, and more recently, it evolved into the Veterans Administration St. Albans Primary and Extended Care Facility. The property was earmarked to all veterans who were promised health care needs. The land was designated specifically for this cause.

The issue that brought about a reaction from the residents of St. Albans was that:

1. It was felt by many in authority that the Veterans Administration Hospital in St. Albans was too close to Northport, a historic maritime village in the town of Huntington on Long Island, New York.
2. The New York State Directors Office had sent a letter to community leaders that fewer veterans would be using the facility because of the proximity of the New York Harbor Health Care Facility, which has a variety of options for patient care.

The VA Enhanced Use Lease (VA EUL) planned the demolition of the St. Albans VA Hospital, which is a significant landmark in the St. Albans neighborhood community. The veterans and population of St. Albans wanted the existing VA Hospital to be renovated and

retrofitted to provide more needed services to the Queens and Nassau County vets. Furthermore, the St. Albans population and veterans wanted the VA building landmarked as well. All the elected officials of St. Albans and Queens supported the veterans' need for a full-fledged hospital.

The United Coalition for Veterans and Community Rights sponsored a town hall meeting on May 20, 2010, to address the need to save the VA Hospital from demolition. The first speaker of the Coalition stated:

> The council of the community of St. Albans County Council V.F.W. wants the existing hospital renovated, to provide a full VA Medical Center with an emergency room, primary extended care for female veterans, a comprehensive domicile treatment facility and domicility for homeless veterans at St. Albans. We would also like to see an existing skyline remain as is, have owners protected from eminent domain, the existing infrastructure preserved and upgraded to sustain the community as it exists today.
>
> Finally, once the VA agrees to renovate the facility (and we will make sure that they do), we would like to see the proposal as a shovel-ready project eligible for stimulus funds and would like to put southeastern Queens residents to work until we re-establish an industrial base.

The second speaker was not a veteran but her husband was. She indicated that she was taking over from where her husband left off. She stated:

> I think that it would be unconscionable to take property from all veterans who were promised health care and to turn it over to a profit-making enterprise which has nothing to do with either the needs of our veterans or the community…. Nobody should be coming in here doing what they wish to do, pulling out money from this community and not really offering anything back that would mean enough either to our veterans (male and female) or to our community…. We are not going to stand for this!

A petition was sent out to residents of St. Albans and the adjacent areas that stated:

> Please help us save St. Albans VA Hospital in Queens, New York for our vets. The demolition of our St. Albans VA Hospital is NOT a done deal. We can stop this VA EUL progress now. Call or email your U.S. Congressional Representative now regarding this proposed private developer grabbing VA land through the VA EUL program. Let your representatives know you want this EUL terminated now!

> Queens and Nassau County veterans need a local VA hospital. F.Y.I. Queens does not have infrastructure or the economy to sustain overdevelopment for the benefit of a greedy private developer. Please sign our online petition at www.ucvr.com

Demonstrations by the people of St. Albans were held on Linden Boulevard every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. outside the VA Hospital. “The residents of St. Albans wanted to continue the demonstrations until the VA gets the message,” said one informant. “The people of St. Albans and adjacent neighborhoods want a full-service hospital and the VUL plans for St. Albans are not appropriate.”

There were demonstrators using bullhorns making announcements to the crowd of attendees. There were people in their cars driving by and honking their car horns. Flyers with written reasons for the demonstration were handed out to occupants of the cars as they slowly drove by.

One demonstrator with the use of a bullhorn loudspeaker began chanting along with the response of the crowd: “What do we want?” to which the crowd responded, “A full-service hospital!” The other line of the chant was, “When do we want it?” The crowd response was “Now!” “When are we going to quit?” The response was “Never!” “When are we going to win?” and the crowd response was “Now!”

There were signs posted on the fence that encircled the VA Hospital and the protestors gathering. There were placard signs which read:

Say NO
To Ten Story
Buildings!

Who is making
Money On this
Deal?

Secretary Shinseki
Show us
Some Love!

Just Say NO
To the
VA RFP!

Just say NO
To 4,000 Rental Units!

VETERANS NEED
A FULL-SCALE
HOSPITAL
NOT HOMES!

There were also motorcades of motorcycle bikers who were dressed in their uniforms and protective gear in the parade on Linden Boulevard to show support for the community protest. One biker shouted, “We say no! We say hell no!” to which other bikers in the motorcade and the protestors responded, “We say no! We say hell no!”

As uniformed bikers temporarily parked their motorbikes, many protestors on foot greeted the bikers with handshakes and smiles.

These protest rallies held every Saturday outside of the St. Albans VA Hospital were sponsored by the United Coalition for Veterans and Community Rights. U.S. Representative Gregory Meeks in a statement to the southeast Queens press stated, “The process should be terminated. We have decided that what is being proposed (concerning the VA Hospital) is not what we want.”

There was a march held on Saturday, May 18, 2010 by the United Coalition for Veterans and Community Rights. This march was organized differently than the other protest rallies. In this march, there was a marching band, uniformed in blue, that led the parade. This parade was done under police escort. Veterans from the World Wars and community residents were in the

parade. A marcher bearing the American flag suspended on a pole proceeded the band and marchers.

Banner 624 was carried by two marchers while the people marched to the drumbeat of the band. The marchers chanted, “Hey hey! Ho ho! The VA Project’s got to go!” There were others with banners and placards bearing these messages:

Veterans Need Full Scale
Hospital Not Extensive
House for Private Profit

Just Say
NO
To the
VA’s R.F.P.

Vietnam Veterans of
America
Chapter 20

Support Our
Veterans

Say Yes
To More
Park Space Say No
To a 10-Story Building!
No Private Developers!

Respect
Our
Vote!

There were several speakers who addressed the marchers. The first speaker was State Senator Joseph A. Addabo, Jr. Others were Pat Toro, VA Queens Chapter 32, President; Veteran Tom Holleran; Reverend Ardeen Green Cooke; State Senator of New York (Queens) Leroy Comrie; State Senator Shirley L. Huntley; Veteran Steven D. Epps; New York Senator Frank

Padovan; and Rubin Wills, Queens City Council candidate. All these speakers, some of whom are leaders in St. Albans, resonated with the marchers in the parade.

During my fieldwork, I read newspaper articles, listened to and interviewed informants, and looked at videos pertaining to the issue. I heard the anguish in the voices of informants as they related their experiences about this community issue. Many informants grieved for veterans of St. Albans and the neighboring counties who would not be able to have access to health care at the VA Hospital in St. Albans. They ached for women veterans who were subjected to lack of service at the VA Hospital, and many times had to use their husbands' insurance. They grew angry and anxious over reports of elected officials abusing the public trust. Residents of all ethnic groups, leaders, veterans, and elected officials raised their collective voices in support of the VA Hospital and against the demolition of the VA Hospital. This integrative activity served as an inspiration to the people of St. Albans.

Like most other community efforts where its residents make a strong stand for a worthy cause and ended in a positive outcome, the population of St. Albans believed that the plan of demolishing the VA Hospital would not succeed. They believed in their strongly united resources and resolved to persuade the mayor to overturn the plan to demolish the VA Hospital. The outcome of the people of St. Albans' united efforts in protest marches and representation resulted in an overturning of the plan to demolish the VA Hospital in St. Albans.

The House Appropriation Committee directed that St. Albans Naval Hospital, which the Defense Department had ordered closed in April as part of the nationwide economic program, be kept in operation as a military installation. The Appropriation Committee said in its report: "It is the committee's opinion that it would be a waste of government's funds not to keep this medical facility open and available to eligible persons in the New York area" (Tolchin, 1973).

Eating Black-Eyed Peas on New Year's Day

The eating of black-eyed peas on New Year's Day is a Caribbean and U.S. Southern tradition for luck and prosperity in the new year. If someone is planning to celebrate the New Year in the Caribbean or the U.S. South, it is most likely that person will be offered black-eyed peas in some form, either just after midnight or on New Year's Day. From gala gourmet dinners to small casual gatherings with friends and family, these flavorful legumes were traditionally, according to Caribbean and Southern folklore, the first food to be eaten on New Year's Day for luck and prosperity throughout the year.

With the relocation of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants from Brooklyn and Harlem to St. Albans, these two ethnic groups brought with them this custom to St. Albans. The first big meal of the New Year with a pot of black-eyed peas at its center is deeply entwined with Afro Caribbean and Southern African American cultures.

The tradition of today says that the practice of eating black-eyed peas for luck has evolved into a number of different variations and embellishments of the luck and prosperity theme. But black-eyed peas were domesticated in West Africa and were carried to the Caribbean and the U.S. South in the era of slavery. Dried legumes were looked down on as a poor man's food, and in America, the economic scarcities of the The Civil War severely impacted the diets of both enslaved Africans and White Southerners. Black-eyed peas became more common, and it is said that people considered themselves fortunate to eat them during a time rife with food insecurity (*The New York Times*, 2018).

Today, black-eyed peas are served with greens (collard, mustard, or turnip greens), which vary regionally. The peas represent coins, and the greens represent paper money. In some areas, cabbage is used in place of the greens.

Cornbread often served with black-eyed peas and greens represents gold. For the best chance of luck every day in the year ahead, one must eat at least 365 black-eyed peas on New Year's Day. Black-eyed peas eaten with tomatoes represent wealth and health.

The catch to all of these superstitious traditions is that black-eyed peas are the essential element, and eating only the greens without the peas, for example, will not work. There was some pushback on this tradition by one informant in St. Albans. Jessica, an Afro Caribbean living in the neighborhood community, felt that to only have blackeyed peas on New Year's Day is a shame to this consumption of only one day of the year. She stated, "Black-eyed peas have too many health benefits to waste in not eating them frequently year-round." Jessica continued:

> For one, these peas are a phenomenal source of fiber, which can help to regulate your digestive system. This legume contains potassium, known for keeping blood pressure levels in check. When you eat a bowl of black-eyed peas, it means you are eating food low in fat and calories, making them a healthy addition for everyone watching their weight.

Another informant stated:

> If you want an easy plant source of protein, black-eyed peas fit the bill. If you have iron deficiency or want to prevent it, fix yourself some black-eyed peas which will help you to feel energized.

There are a variety of explanations for the symbolism of black-eyed peas. One is that eating these simple legumes demonstrates humility and a lack of vanity. For Sylvia Colleck, an informant and neighborhood community resident, the hope is to get people thinking and talking about the origins and complexities of a heritage that is shared both by Afro Caribbeans and African Americans. "I am convinced," says Sylvia, "that discussions and use of black-eyed peas is one of the ways whereby this goal can be accomplished." Sylvia further stated, "There is more to New Year's than the tradition of eating black-eyed peas as my first meal for luck. I strive to create a broader reach to a broader table than my family and the people of my culture to peoples of other tables and cultures."

The eating of a meal carries with it great significance. Pollan (2008) spoke of the meaning and importance of food, not only for an individual but for its meaningful connections. He stated:

> Food is therefore about pleasure, community, family and spirituality, our relationship to the natural world and about expressing our identity, and plays an important role on why we form a relationship with food. (p. 8)

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is a day of honoring those who gave their lives to serve in the United States and protect the freedom of its citizens. It is the practice in many parts of the American nation that each year, friends and families come together to pay their respects, celebrate the country, and share a good meal and perhaps an adult beverage or two.

As a national holiday, Memorial Day was celebrated on the last Monday of May 2018. With it being a federal holiday, many Americans swap the office for social gatherings, and many head to social outdoor venues. Some people skip the crowd, but they raise the American flag at home as they host their own celebrations. Many of these celebrations are accompanied by delicious filling meals that everyone can enjoy. For many people, Memorial Day marks the unofficial start of summer. Hence, people definitely want to go outdoors and fire up the grill and whip up those honey barbecue chicken and ribs, along with other delicious entrees, to mark this festive celebration.

In St. Albans, Memorial Day is celebrated with a parade that involves veterans of World Wars in St. Albans, the New York State Senator Leroy Comrie, and the Veterans Advisory Committee of District 14, Queens, and the St. Albans neighborhood community as they pay tribute to the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. This parade is a proud tradition that brings neighborhood community members together to honor those who gave their lives to guard the freedom of the people of this nation.

I interviewed several people who attended the Memorial Day parade. It was a discussion group of sorts. Respondents were sitting around a table having a meal after the parade ended. It was a somber mood around the table. No background music was playing. Neither did it seem as if the people around the table were enjoying themselves. In response to the question of what Memorial Day means for them, the respondents said the following:

> Memorial Day should not be seen as a day of celebration and happiness. There is nothing happy about the loss of the brave men and women of our armed forces who died in combat defending America.
>
> Memorial Day should be a time for reflection, a pause, remembrance, and thanksgiving for patriots who gave up their lives to protect the lives and freedom of us all, including the freedom of generations long gone and generations yet unborn. We owe the fallen a debt so enormous that it can never be repaid.
>
> Memorial Day is a time to honor the lives of those who would rather die than to take a knee when our national anthem is played, but will fight for the rights of those who honor it.
>
> This is a day and a time to think of lives cut short, of wives and husbands turned into widows and widowers, of children growing up without a father or mother or parents burying their children.
>
> Unfortunately, for many Americans this day might be called "Summer Day," marking the unofficial start of the reason for barbecue, day on the beach, time spent on baseball fields and golf courses, hiking and enjoying the great outdoors. We all appreciate these things and are some of the best things in life. However, these things are the result of a great price that has been paid.

One informant, an Afro Caribbean from the island of Antigua who fought in the Korean War, was determined to impart meaning for the war and today's ritual of the parade. He said:

> I know that my fellow comrades and I were on a mission, not only by the U.S. government but also by the Creator, and he was protecting innocent people from bad guys. While in the war, we were not fighting for our freedom, but we were fighting for the freedom of others.
>
> The rituals on this Memorial Day are to continue to raise awareness and honor for all those who fought and especially those who gave their lives and made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom for so many people.

Each year, the Memorial Day parade begins at Francis Lewis Boulevard and Merrick Boulevard in Laurelton. The parade ends at the Veterans Memorial Triangle at 225th Street and North Conduit Avenue. There was a closing ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Triangle. The parade is followed by a reception at Legion Hall Post on Linden Boulevard.

The women of the American League Auxiliary prepare and serve lunch for all attendees at the parade. Lunch at the headquarters building is in the form of barbecued ribs, collard greens, Caribbean peas and rice, macaroni and cheese, sweet potato pies, and carbonated drinks. The women shared with me the many programs sponsored to raise funds for the association. These programs are scheduled throughout the year and involve the people of the St. Albans community.

Troops of Boy Scouts sponsored by the Legion Post were also part of the parade and assisted in the ceremonial activities.

The streets of the parade route are often lined with onlookers who are from the St. Albans neighborhood community. Membership of the Legion Post includes Afro Caribbeans and African Americans who concern themselves principally with the maintenance of the solidarity of the group.

Foodways

For Caribbeans as for other immigrant groups, food forms are a vital component of cultural uniqueness in which they construct and retain ethnic and Caribbean identity in St. Albans. Caribbeans have varied their daily diet somewhat to better suit the hectic pace of American life, particularly in urban areas like St. Albans, where many of them live.

However, for the most part, they hold tenaciously to their dietary habits from the Caribbean, even though by living in a multiethnic neighborhood community, the acceptance of American food is almost inevitable. Consequently, the food habits of the Caribbean immigrants

can serve as an index of their integration with other American ethnic groups. According to Marcus E. Rangel (1917), in *An American in Making*, "Nationality is principally a matter of diet" (p. 226); then it stands to reason that Afro Caribbeans' identity is related to the foods they eat. Hence, the question: Have Afro Caribbeans' food habits been able to survive in their new environment, or have they abandoned their dietary habits in favor of eating habits in America?

Edward S. Maynard (1972), in *Endogamy Among Barbadian Immigrants in New York City*, wrote about the accessibility of Caribbean foods from Caribbean areas where there is a high percentage of peoples from the Caribbean. He stated:

> Food as an important aspect of every culture is a vital part of the Barbadian's life in New York. He has access to foods from the Caribbean area in such stores as La Marqueta in what is called Spanish Harlem and DeKalb Avenue Market in Brooklyn. In recent years, Nostrand Avenue from Fulton Street to St. Johns Place has become another source of supply. There are many smaller outlets, but these are the chief sources. The Barbadians travel from all parts of Brooklyn to Manhattan to get to the market. Here again is a major meeting place where news is shared and old friends meet. (p. 50)

In St. Albans, Afro Caribbean food habits have survived, and the food products are readily available. The food habits from the Caribbean island nations have a persistent survival in the new environment. In St. Albans, numerous varieties of native Caribbean foods can be purchased in either the West Indian stores or Puerto Rican stores or in warehouses in Brooklyn. Caribbean street vendors often purchase their merchandise for sale in bulk from warehouses in Brooklyn.

The Caribbean foods are highly seasoned with chive, garlic, curry, onions, peppers, and lime juice. They have introduced into the St. Albans neighborhood community vegetables and fruits, yams, pumpkins, yuca (cassava), pigeon peas, papaya, guava, eddoes, alligator pears, breadfruit, pone, black pudding, and radish. Most of these products constitute an Afro Caribbean staple diet.

In addition to the sources mentioned, there are also American supermarkets providing West Indian food items. Separated sections are allocated for West Indian food products. This indicates that there is a demand for these products as well as providing space where Afro Caribbeans meet friends and integrate with African Americans. It is also economically feasible for management of the supermarkets to cater to West Indian food habits.

Many of the Afro Caribbeans interviewed responded in a positive manner when they were asked if Caribbean food items were available to them. Almost all of the Afro Caribbean immigrants claimed that, while they do eat American foods, they much prefer the types of food they were accustomed to in their home country.

Most Afro Caribbean immigrants have incorporated into their dietary habits some aspects of American cooking. In some situations, as in mixed marriages of Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans, the study showed that most husbands and offspring of Southern African Americans preferred an American diet, while their spouses' practice was for both West Indian and American foods. According to one respondent:

> Don't get me wrong. I eat American food. To me, food is food, and I eat American, Chinese, Asian, whatever, but my problem is not with the food per se but the way some foods are prepared. I have seen how some food vendors on the side of streets would cook chicken straight from the cardboard containers. In some cases, if the chicken is washed, it is patted dry with paper towels and then they begin to cook the chicken. I like my Caribbean way of washing, seasoning, and even marinating meats before cooking them. On Sundays, my family must have their Caribbean food, and this is a common custom in the Caribbean culture.

The cooking of Caribbean food on Sundays is like a ritual that is observed. In addition, in many Caribbean immigrant social functions, Caribbean food products and drinks are served.

One of the central places in St. Albans where West Indians and African Americans go to enjoy meals is the Smokehouse on 189-33 Linden Boulevard, an authentic Jamaican jerk and Southern BBQ restaurant. The restaurant offers catering and indoor and take-out services. Lunch

and dinner meals are served with one's choice of one starch, rice and peas, white rice, macaroni and cheese, fried plantains and steamed vegetables, or collard greens (with turkey). Here is the menu:

CHICKEN MEALS
BBQ, Jerk, Curry, Brown Stew, Fry Escovitch,
(Fried Chicken Topped with a Sweet and Tangy Sauce),
Wings (Jerk or BBQ)

CHICKEN ONLY (Jerk, BBQ, Fry)
Chicken, Wings (5 per Order)

BEEF MEAL
Oxtail

PORK MEAL
Curry Goat

FISH
Escovitch SaltFish (3 pieces)

SOUP OF THE DAY
Chicken, Peas (Saturday)

STARCHES
Rice and Peas, White Rice, Baked Macaroni and Cheese,
Festival (each), Potato Wedges

SIDE ORDERS
Fried Plantains (5 slices per serving)
Potato Salad, Macaroni Salad, Fried Dumpling,
Collard Greens (with Turkey), Steamed Cabbage and Carrot,
Fresh Salad, Jerk Chicken and Macaroni Salad,
Corn Bread (3 pieces)

One respondent said:

> I ordered a variety of food here in this restaurant, and everything was always good. The food is always well seasoned, authentic, and full of flavor. The prices for each order are reasonable for what I ordered, and I was able to see from time to time some of my friends whom I have not seen for quite some time.

Another respondent said, “My family have been ordering food from the Smokehouse for more than ten years. The barbecue chicken is excellent, and my family loves it. We are so glad that this restaurant is in this community providing the foods that we love from back home.”

The Smokehouse restaurant exemplifies the typical meals of West Indians with Southern African American style dishes. The increase in demand for these foods has made them affordable and more available for West Indians and Southern African Americans in St. Albans. This has allowed the Caribbean immigrant and Southern African American migrants their particular eating habits in a multiethnic neighborhood community.

Caribbeans often include South Asian heritage, and they have developed unique cooking traditions in keeping with harvest time and the religious ritual cycle. Most of them have already formed indispensable parts of Caribbean dietary habits.

“Doubles” is a popular Caribbean-style street food, which is made with wet curried channa (a kind of yellow peas) wrapped with two bara (or baarao) breads—a small flat fried bread made with ground andeedal.

Another kind of food is phulauri, a balled, spiced, and deep-fried dough made with ground split peas and flour, usually accompanied by curried rice.

Probably the most popular of all Indo Caribbean delicacies is roti (or rhoti), which is a very thin flat round bread, folded over curried meat, fish, or potato filling. Caribbeans enjoy roti in various styles, such as paratha or bus-up-shut, which is torn or beaten into pieces and served as a side dish with curried meat or other ingredients. Many Caribbeans often discuss or exchange information as to where one can find the best roti shop. The signs on shops selling roti would be displayed as “Hot Roti.”

In St. Albans, there are roti shops as well as restaurants where roti is one of their staples. Migration to the United States does not discontinue Caribbeans' perpetual search for a better roti. Restaurants and roti shops compete to satisfy the passion of this Indo Caribbean delicacy. For Caribbeans in St. Albans, these dishes, though of South Asian origin, evoke and reinforce a broad sense of affiliation to the Caribbean nations. Many of the roti shops and restaurants that sell roti are not only owned and run by Indo Caribbeans but also by Afro Caribbeans.

Education

Mary C. Waters (1999) makes this point:

> The idea that black Americans do not take advantage of opportunities available to them is contrasted with immigrants who have risked and sacrificed a great deal to come to the United States for those opportunities. Education in particular divides the groups. Many of the immigrants set a great store on education both for themselves and their children. (p. 66)

West Indian immigrants to the United States were often perceived by some people as pretentious, and this is usually manifested in their reaction and response for immigrating, which was allegedly to secure an education in order to go back to their home country. Although inconceivable to some, this was not entirely true, as most West Indians would have undertaken this migratory sojourn with some sort of educational pursuit in mind, whether it was primary or of some lesser priority. Education, as it was understood, was deemed a necessity and important. However, there were surely other reasons for obtaining an education than the principal purpose for financial security, and that had something to do with perception of how the individual was seen and regarded by compatriots.

With West Indian society being a class structure, a proper education is not only necessary for instilling knowledge, but it is also vested with the essential qualities of cultural elitism. A person does not qualify for high society if that person does not come from a "good family," attend the right schools, or attain the proper credentials. Nor was the accumulation of wealth an

automatic pass to high status in that the two circumstances are not mutually marked by harmony, regularity, or steady continuity.

In West Indies class-oriented society, education is therefore looked upon as the ultimate bridge to social prominence, which is more important to the ambitious West Indian than money. It helps one to move from the lowest station to the highest, unencumbered. Yet in the European colonial societies of the West Indies, the avenues for securing a proper education were extremely limited, with only small or limited access available to those who lacked the proper connections. However, this is not the case in the United States, where quality education could be reasonably obtained by anyone and at any age with the desire, fortitude, and ability. Recently, a war veteran who was shipped off to war before he was able to achieve his high school diploma has now received his diploma at ninety-three years of age.

For most West Indians, education meant adherence to the European paradigms— those that they were accustomed to in their native lands. English citizenship was something that they cherished and was special to them. In St. Albans, many parents would prefer not sending their children to the inferior public school and would rather have them attending private immigrant elementary schools, especially those with some denominational connections present in the neighborhood community. In rare cases, some parents faced with this choice opt instead to send their children back to the West Indies to continue their education.

There are churches in St. Albans whose members of that faith felt an obligation to conform with church doctrine, regardless of the doubts they may have harbored for the American education standard. These churches have organized their own schools. In these schools, tuition is paid by guardians or parents of their children. However, those who cannot afford this

undertaking (or are unwilling) choose a reputable public school as the next best thing for their children's education.

Youth Profile

Alex James sees "Education as a source of liberation." Born and raised in Jamaica, West Indies, Alex moved to the United States and lived in Brooklyn, New York. In our interview, he thought that his move was typical of the Caribbean immigrant movement to the United States. Like any other immigrant, Alex's mother wanted the best for her family and, eventually, Alex's brothers, sisters, and parents were able to join him in the United States. When Alex got to the United States (Brooklyn), he spent two years in high school, and when he relocated to Queens, New York, he attended college and majored in computing.

Alex experienced culture shock like most immigrants. Everything about living in this new place was emotionally challenging for him. His first real intimate experience of culture shock was his need to do work that involved African Americans. One of the questions some African Americans would ask him was "Where are you from?" His initial response to himself was "Duh, I am from Planet Earth!" Actually, Alex was baffled by this question and did not know how to really answer the question. It took a great deal of thinking and emotional work.

After his high school experience, Alex came to realize that ethnicity was an important and descriptive tool, both formally and informally. It took him a little while to realize that ethnicity is important to him, at least to the point where he appreciates his African heritage and how he lived among different ethnic groups in his home country of Jamaica. He does not claim that one ethnic group is better than the others. He believes that all human beings are equal. Being a Jamaican national and a naturalized citizen living in the United States, Alex has had the opportunity to experience a society where "difference" is a norm. He feels ethnically privileged,

and his ethnicity allows him to recognize and embrace differences, but this difference does not define him for he is more than just ethnicity.

Alex feels fortunate to be the recipient of a good education. Education has always been a necessary part of his life and his family. He believes that education is a source of liberation. Education is not just about schooling and getting a degree. It is more than that—it is about exploration and growth. His education did not stop at high school and college. He went on to do formal education in graduate work at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York, and earned a Master's degree as well as a Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Along the way, Alex got married and fathered children who have also earned Master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Living in a neighborhood community with a large percentage of Blacks has increased the pressures on West Indian families. While living in Brooklyn, Alex recalled his exposure to crime, declining private investments, and a declining tax base for city services. Yet he believed that the most important consequence of living in this neighborhood was the exposure it brings to the schools in the neighborhood. His hope for a better future hinges on doing well in school. He believes that schooling has always been seen as the path to upward mobility for immigrants and their children. He stated:

> My parents can hardly get by on the low wages they earned from low-level service jobs. High-paying service jobs are available for workers with college and graduate degrees and specialized training. Hence, education is liberation and one can reach the top half of the hour-glass economy by getting formal education.

Neighborhood Community Gardening

Some residents living in St. Albans have the good fortune of open space at their homes that they can utilize to plant vegetable gardens, when and if they desire to do so. However, there are residents who do not own or rent houses that can accommodate garden spaces but want to

grow their own food and have connections with a food supply chain. For these residents, a good solution for this dilemma is becoming a part of a neighborhood community garden association.

Value of a Neighborhood Community Garden

According to Marin Master Gardeners (2016):

> A community garden is any piece of land gardened by a group of people, utilizing either individual or shared plots on a private or public land. The land may produce fruits, vegetables, and/or ornamentals. Community gardens may be found in neighborhoods, schools, connected to institutions such as hospitals and on residential housing grounds…. Individual plots are rented by gardeners at a normal fee. (p. 1)

For some Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in St. Albans, neighborhood community gardening is one of the ways of growing their own vegetables and herbs, while at the same time saving money on food and bills. They also see it as one of the ways of connecting with other gardeners for relaxation, exercise, enjoying the outdoors, and as a teaching program, offering an opportunity to pass along cultural gardening practices to students attending the local community schools.

Other aspects of the neighborhood community garden are that it helps to beautify the neighborhood and brings people together. It has proven to be a tool to reduce neighborhood crime—particularly when vacant lots are targeted as a convenient place for loitering. Neighborhood community gardens can provide safe green space in certain places in the urban area and can contribute to keeping the area clean.

Neighborhood Community Gardens in St. Albans

In St. Albans, I visited two neighborhood community gardens. Both garden areas receive plenty of sunshine, at least six to eight hours per day during the planting and reaping times. Both garden areas are flat. In the frontal areas, the gardens are fenced in while being open on the other sides. All garden beds are made on the surface of the ground—hence, there are no elevated garden beds. The beds are no more than four feet wide and eight to twelve feet long. There is a

space between beds to help in facilitating access to plants from the sides without stepping onto the plants or the beds. The soil of these on-ground beds is amended with aged compost, or measures to improve fertility and increase its organic matter content.

Hand watering of garden plants is the most practical and affordable for individual plots. This is necessary for the plants, especially when they are tender and young.

Gardeners bring their own tools and supplies. In one of the gardens there is a picnic table with attached benches, where gardeners can relax, take a break, have lunch, and interact with other gardeners. There are also adjacent areas of trees for shade and benches for relaxation.

There is a high level of trust among the gardeners, and because the gardens are in the urban area, there is no fear of four-legged intruders like deer and so on that can decimate the gardeners' hard work. Some of the garden plots are assigned to students of the neighborhood schools where they participate and learn gardening. There are no visible signs of names of gardeners, sponsors, or contact phone numbers.

Joseph Simmons is an African American from South Carolina. When he was asked what gardening means to him, he said:

> I am originally from South Carolina, and when a lot of people from my hometown were moving to New York in the 1960s, I made the decision to give it a try. I did not know about St. Albans, so I went first to Harlem to live. When homes were available in St. Albans, I moved here.
>
> Gardening back home was one of the ways that helped me to raise my family, so when I came to St. Albans, it was just natural. Gardening wherever is a lot of work. Sometimes you have to work long hours. It is a little different here in St. Albans gardening because what is available are community gardens. We here have adults and young people gardening. Some of the adults are from the Caribbean. However, we get along because I feel like we are all Black people together. Fortunately, there is trust among us. Everyone has an interest in their garden plots and contributes to their development and maintenance.
>
> This community garden means a lot to me because it is not only a way of helping my family, but I try to help some of my neighbors with produce from the garden.

Another gardener, whose name is Dennis, is an Afro Caribbean from Barbados. When asked how he would describe his experience as a gardener in St. Albans, Dennis said:

> I am from Barbados living here in St. Albans after living a while in Brooklyn and "knock on wood," I have not encountered any major problems living in this community or cultivating my crops in this community garden.
>
> Planting my crops begins in the month of April and harvesting is around October, and some crops can go to November. Some of the crops I plant are tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, chives, string beans, collard greens, and some other crops if space allows. This is just something I do for the benefits and the joy and fulfillment I receive from doing this.
>
> One of the things I enjoy immensely is the interaction of other gardeners. We here have a mixed community of African Americans and Caribbeans, but that doesn't matter because we look out for each other. When I went home to Barbados, it was a fellow gardener from Georgia that looked over my plants for me. The only downside that I experience is that one or two gardeners would sign up for plots to garden and didn't follow through, but then there can be some reasons for that. However, for the most part, most gardeners follow through.

Conclusion

Based on the responses of gardeners in St. Albans and my observations, I conclude that neighborhood community gardens are much more than residents growing plants and vegetables on a piece of ground and harvesting the produce. As I see it, it is an opportunity for residents to build community relationships, pass on cultural practices, grow food, help others who are in need of food, beautify the neighborhood, and instill values among community youth.

Some of the key areas needing special attention are securing the garden plots, vegetable planting, and maintaining a trust level and interactions among gardeners. These are some of the components that I have found to be critical for the successful integration between Afro Caribbeans and African American gardeners in St. Albans.

Religion and the Church

Several social institutions are universal to all cultures. A social institution found in all cultures is religion. Stephen A. Granlan and Marvin K. Mayers (1979/1988), in *Cultural*

Anthropology: A Christian Perspective, stated that "every known society practices some form of religion" (p. 220).

The social consequences and interest in religious beliefs and action are probably as old as the interest in religion itself. Robert N. Bellah (1968), in *Religion and Society*, pointed out that:

> In the sixteenth century Machiavelli gave in his Discourses a functional analysis of Roman religion which had considerable influence. Spinoza, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Comte continued and developed the analysis of the political significance of religious commitment and the related problems of the influence of religion on personal morality and social solidarity. In one of the earliest quantitative studies in sociology, Durkheim introduced a religious variable in his study of suicide in 1897. Subsequently, many studies of varying breadth and quality have included a religious variable and thus advanced our knowledge of the influence or the lack of influence in religion on some aspect of social existence.
>
> The man who contributed most to systematic understanding of the interrelations between religion and society, and who stimulated more research (both quantitative and nonquantitative) than any other scholar was undoubtedly Max Weber in his thesis…On the Influence of the Protestant Ethics on the Rise of Modern Society (1904-1905). (p. 412)

In *On Religious Liberty*, William P. Barr spoke to the student body at the University of Notre Dame Law School. He addressed the topic of the centrality of religious liberty in the United States, its history, the institution of religious values, the mind of the Founding Fathers, and how important they are to a fully functioning democracy.

In the Americas, historically, and currently as well, religious life and its institutions have been central. Afro Caribbeans and African Americans demonstrate high levels of religious involvement as reflected in the centrality of religion and the church in individual and community life. Religious involvement is also seen in public religious participation in church attendance, private devotional behavior, expression of religious identities, and the reliance on networks based in the church.

Spirituality for peoples in the Caribbean, more so in its organized form, was regarded as civilized conduct and the manner in which one behaves and conducts oneself. Having been

convinced of this thinking, Blacks upon liberation began taking part in the mainstream of the religion of their masters and their ancestors. Those who became part of the church establishment of Whites were expected to conduct themselves as their White masters in religious establishments, and in all appearances they did. Religious services, then as well as now, are ceremonies enveloped in solemnity. The rituals performed are loyal to their tradition. The sermon and music (instrumental and vocal) are important aspects of worship. There is a sense of reverent interaction with the presiding clergyperson and audience, and this is true in all the major European established denominations as well as in other religious faiths.

Most West Indian immigrants in the United States brought with them their religious practices and customs to their communities where they reside. This is seen in St. Albans among Afro Caribbeans. Some brought their practices because of their faith, while others saw that it was expedient to do so. It is clear that West Indians preferred the settled sedateness of the Episcopalian (Anglican) and Catholic churches to the raw emotional Pentecostal religions. This tendency has social implications that go beyond the mere intent of worship in that it suggests hierarchical strata of class, which was very often lost among Black American people. Those immigrants who have a semblance of means are able to participate in church activities on a regular basis.

Membership in the Episcopal church in America is dominated by middle- and upper middle-class White Americans, predominantly European in orientation. African Americans, however, are predominantly Baptists and Methodists. This factor highlights the distinction between African Americans and Afro Caribbeans.

Membership in the Episcopal Church in St. Albans—St. Alban the Martyr—has a mixture of African Americans and West Indians. The West Indian immigrants are a significant

part of the church congregation. This situation of the church being predominantly Black evolved as Whites, who were the original members, relocated to other communities, which resulted in the influx of West Indians and African Americans, who relocated to St. Albans, especially at the time when the Whites moved.

Clergypersons and staff who served this church were White, African American, and Afro Caribbean.

There are many churches in St. Albans that are of different denominations. To name a few, they are Catholic, Methodist (United Methodist, UMC), African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Congregational, and Baptist.

Worship in the Episcopal and Catholic churches is highly structured, with what is termed "high church" forms of worship, including vestments (robe and stoles) worn by clergy persons and helpers. The vestments and paraments on the altar and pulpits are changed according to the occasion of the church's calendar seasons. Some of the less formal forms of worship are found in many of the other churches. The music and worship styles are different to the high church forms. However, these differences are treated minimally, given the common derivation of many cultural similarities, and a common language which facilitates cultural interactions among members of each church and sometimes in interchurch activities. These churches are stable institutions in terms of their traditions and governance.

Attendance at church services and church-sponsored functions among the churches in St. Albans is the most prevalent form of organizational participation of the aging attendees. Attendance rises during the age range of 50 to 65, and then decreases with age. There is some

evidence that religious piety and especially belief in the afterlife have similar developmental patterns and increase at times when crises such as retirement and widowhood occur.

Not all Afro Caribbean immigrants are churchgoers or were members of any particular church in the Caribbean. However, since coming to New York and then St. Albans, many have found themselves as regular attendees at churches of their choice, even only for the social contacts that this provides. An Afro Caribbean immigrant whom I interviewed saw the church as being helpful to him when he came to America. He remarked:

> When I arrived here in America, I was like a "fish out of water." Not knowing anyone. I would have been lost had it not been for the church. I had problems finding work and people who would be willing to associate with me. My neighbor suggested to me that the church might be a good place to meet people who are friendly and may be from your home country. I remember going to an Episcopal church where there were many people from the Caribbean, and I felt at home when I met them. Not only did I meet people from my home country, but I made new friends who assured me of their willingness to help me if I ever need them.

The church continues to be the focal point in the lives of Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans. A wedding is not really a wedding to them unless it is performed in a church. One Afro Caribbean immigrant said to me:

> Weddings are times of great celebration. They are times to "fete" with families and friends of the bride and groom, and the expectation is that the church, not the Justice of the Peace, must play a major part along with the blessings of clergy, whether priest or pastor. A child of a member or non-member of the church should be baptized or christened early in infancy. When the child is older, the child should be confirmed. Funerals of the deceased should never be performed in a funeral home, but in the church, no matter what the denomination is. These are some of the values that we hold very dearly and they are reinforced by the church.

The church then becomes a bastion of the cultural habits of Afro Caribbeans, and they seek to practice them in the integrative processes with Southern African Americans in St. Albans.

In my observations and participation in the churches in St. Albans, there are certain systematic central values I saw that are patterns and modes of interaction among congregants. They are as follows:

a. The behavior of congregants is visible in the way they treat other congregants. They are treated with courtesy and respect, not because of one's ability or performance capabilities or inherited qualities, but because they believe that they are all members of one body of believers. Congregants see each other as brothers and sisters in one family.
b. There are general standards of greeting and response by congregants in relating to each other. Greetings may take the form of a hug, a handshake, and sometimes a kiss on the cheek as some of the ways of expressing affection.
c. High priority is given to the special needs of congregants. It can be a health need, the need of a job, an unanticipated incident in one's life, or the death of a family member. Congregants also join in celebrating the accomplishments of others.
d. Visitors to the church congregation are welcomed and shown appreciation for their visit in the form of recognizing their presence in the worship service.

These value patterns are not conceived as scales along which the churches in St. Albans could be ranked in terms of their relative position or to other churches in St. Albans, but these observations are relative approximations to the pure expressions of their individual values.

Conclusion

One of the most significant observations and characteristics of this study is the recognition that religion and the church are important factors in maintaining positive attitudes and feelings among members of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans. One respondent stated:

> The church is a unifying factor among West Indians and Black Americans. It is difficult for a stranger to make negative comments about West Indians and African Americans can't get along. When I see them interacting in many places together, I am baffled at such comments. I see West Indians and African Americans sitting together in

> church, see them singing in the church choirs together. Members of both ethnic groups take part in the leadership of the church and its activities. Furthermore, both group members can belong to the same political party. Parents of both groups send their children to the same schools in the neighborhood. They shop in the same stores and shopping areas. There are interethnic marriages between them. To experience all these things together without conflict shows that members of both groups can and do get along together.

Based on my interviews, conversations, participant observations, and the integrative processes between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans, it seems clear that religion, its beliefs and practices, is one of the unifying factors as well as the avenue for integration between both ethnic groups. It highlights the notion that a positive view should be taken about the role of religion in society.

I will argue that the capacity for religion to provide ideals and models for social development and integration between ethnic groups can be realized and increased, despite individual social and ethnic differentiation between them.

Interpretation

All of these experiences in the life of the St. Albans neighborhood community described what life has been in the neighborhood community. These experiences show that St. Albans has many factors at work such as kinship, group cooperation, identity, and social and cultural integration. The neighborhood community helps the society because it creates solutions, provides security, and reveals dedication. It discovers truthfulness. By its very nature, it contains a diversity of opinions, ideas, and knowledge that it can never encounter alone. It is part of everyday life and has positive effects on its members.

Observing the behaviors of others lets one realize and understand the characteristics of different groups of people. Seeing how these groups react and act to situations they encounter lets us see more perspectives and, hopefully, appreciate their points of view. It is important to be part of a community for many of the same reasons. Participating in and discussing issues

involving the neighborhood community helps to lead to solutions and improve social skills as well as relationships. How people feel about certain issues, events, and activities lets one know more about other people and, in turn, one can gain personal awareness about oneself.

Chapter 8: Roomers, House Tenants, and Integration

In order to maximize time for me to collect the data of the research, I decided to rent an apartment and live on the research site in St. Albans. The rental cost for an apartment was too high for my budget for the research, so I decided on the next option to rent a room in a house with rooming tenants who shared living facilities in St. Albans. The rental cost was within my budget, but I had to share the living facilities, excluding the bedroom. Although I felt restricted to some extent in shared housing facilities than in an apartment, which included all basic furnishing, I chose to settle for renting as a roomer in a house with bedrooms for rent because of cost. This, however, served my purpose in many ways, with the major reason for my decision being budget constraints.

The choice of living as a roomer in a tenant household meant that I would have to make some adjustments and the accommodation of other rooming tenants living in the household. This was intimidating for me initially, mainly because it was the first time I ever experienced living with people whom I did not know and I was tortured by the uncertainty of what the future may hold in a shared housing environment.

I conversed with other peers who have had similar experiences. One person said to me, “Living with people who you do not know and are not family related isn’t always the easiest thing to do. Hence, if you have made the decision, you must be prepared to make the adjustments. Sharing housing often means moving into someone else’s established property and agreeing to live by their rules.”

Christine Bodist, an African American migrant from North Carolina, a registered nurse who lived off-premises in Brooklyn, New York, bought a three-bedroom house in St. Albans in 2003 and saw a way to change its quarters. She turned part of the living room of the house, which was on the first floor of the house, into a bedroom. The house now has four bedrooms, three on the second floor, one kitchen on the first floor, and one bathroom on the second floor. The basement of the house was turned into its own quarters, with a bedroom, living room, kitchen, and bathroom. There were five tenants, each occupying a bedroom.

The main entrance to the house was through the side entrance door. The front door entrance was restricted only to the roomer on the first floor. The house is a semi-attached building with a driveway on the left side of the house. There is an open area at the rear of the house for yard space. Roomers use the backyard for cookouts and other forms of entertainment. The front area of the house had a flower garden with different varieties of plants.

Christine's intention when she bought the house was not to be her primary residence, but for rental purposes, to singles who were willing to occupy a bedroom and share the other facilities of the house. Singles in the neighborhood community of St. Albans saw this service as a needed one, mainly because the cost to live was cheaper than that of an apartment.

When Christine was asked about what was the main reason for her idea of a rooming house, she said:

> I wanted to survive and live out my life to the fullest, be with my friends and family, and use the income from the rooming tenants as another stream of income. After some repairs and changes, the house was advertised through real estate agents and by word of mouth. "Rooms for Rent. Singles only" was the caption. In a quick turnaround, four bedrooms were occupied, and roomers came and rented according to their needs.

At the time I applied, there was one vacancy of the bedroom on the second floor, in the bedroom facing the street. The room was comfortable, was of a standard bedroom size, and

during the summer months, a cool breeze filled the room, making it very airy. I was granted the room after meeting all the other requirements.

Roomers in the household were a mix of Afro Caribbean immigrant and Southern African American migrant residents. Three roomers (two men and one woman) were Southern African American migrants, and two roomers who were Afro Caribbean immigrants were men. Three males, including myself, lived on the second floor, while the female lived on the first floor, and one male lived in the basement quarters. Christine made the house rules with the agreement of the rooming tenants. Their input in decisions was sought out, including who gets to join the rooming tenant community if a roomer left.

Joseph, who occupies the bedroom at the farthest end of the second floor, is an Afro Caribbean from Trinidad, West Indies. He works at the John F. Kennedy Airport in Queens. He lived and worked in Brooklyn before relocating to St. Albans.

Alexis occupies the center bedroom. He is an Afro Caribbean immigrant from St. Lucia, West Indies. He also lived in Brooklyn, New York, and relocated to St. Albans. He works at a medical facility in Queens.

Sharon occupies the first floor bedroom. She is a Southern African American migrant from North Carolina. She is a cousin of Christine, the landlady, and has oversight of the house property. At the time of the research, she was seeking employment and was available to what was open in her field.

My initial meeting in seeking residency at the rooming house was with Sharon. After a series of questions in the interview, she seemed satisfied and recommended to Christine and the other roommates that I should be welcomed to the household of rooming tenants. Christine

wanted to know what brought me to St. Albans. I took the opportunity to share my research project and its purpose with Christine. Her response was:

> Mr. John, you are in luck. You have come to stay in the right place. You have what you set out to study right here in this rooming house. You have people from down South and from the West Indies living together, integrating together not only with other rooming tenants in the house, but they have family and friends who visit from time to time. There are backyard parties, cookouts here. So if you are looking for places where Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants interact and live together, you have it here in this house. And if you come to live here with us, you will see how we get along. You don't need to go elsewhere. All your work could be done right here.

I accepted the offer for the bedroom and living arrangements.

In order to have house-sharing harmony, a set of house usage rules was discussed by the landlady and roomers in order to resolve roomers' issues if they should arise.

Christine believed that what is of great importance is a high level of trust in roomers who are tenants in this household and that they are on their own honor. However, all roomers were assured that Christine is sensitive to their needs and should there be issues in the household, there is host guarantee, covering property damage, protection, insurance, and support, throughout their time spent on the rental property.

The rooming tenants and I had multiple meetings in the dining area of the house. Some of the discussion dealt with ongoing issues in St. Albans. Some Roomers shared about the sociocultural interactions sponsored by Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in St. Albans like events such as concerts in the parks, where cultures interact. They spoke about events like the circus performers when they come to St. Albans, cricket matches between cricket teams in St. Albans during the summertime, activities of sports by competing groups of the people of St. Albans and other contesting groups. The community comes out to see and enjoy these events, they said, and there is always food at these events—food of all kinds: Caribbean, Southern hospitality food. "All kinds," one roomer said. Other roomers shared about the political

landscape and how the gatherings are huge with both African Americans and Afro Caribbeans in attendance and taking part in the process.

Some of the questions posed to roomers were intended to find out integrative experiences between roomers and their external connections. Some questions were: Do you like spending hours quietly by yourself reading on the sofa in the living room, in your room, outside the house building only, or do you prefer to interact with others in this household? Do you like inviting your friends over to this house for conversations or to socialize? Do you prefer just to have quiet times in our bedroom only instead of interacting with other roommates? To these questions, roomers discussed their preferences.

All of the roomers preferred to interact with other roomers rather than doing things alone. One roomer said, "There are times I need my personal space to think and meditate or to make personal calls, but for most of the time I like being together here with other tenants. We are a family here. We eat together, share our experiences together. We are family."

In another interactive session with roomers and landlady, Christine shared with us a little history of one of her passions in life. She said:

> When I became an adult and was out on my own, I had this fantasy of believing that one day I will become a landlady. I dreamt that one day I will purchase a promising piece of property, move into the house property with reliable tenants, then kick back and collect rent from tenants well into my retirement years of my life. Another goal of mine toward purchasing this house property is to have tenants of people who need a place to live, to also address the challenges relating to aging singles, housing, and social connections among people in St. Albans. I wanted to have a community of people who are in need of housing and people connections. When this house property became available for purchase, I completed the purchase of this house property which worked out well for me.

Christine further said that "it makes me happy, very happy, that I can provide a place where people can rest at one point of their lives until they are ready to move on to their next step."

In the time of sharing, Sharon also said:

> Though all of the other roomers here are males, having male tenants around provides a sense of safety and comfort for me being the only female roomer. This house sharing is really working out for me and I like it very much. I think many can benefit who are open to this experience of rooming with people from different social and cultural orientations. Everyone is so respectful of each other's space. They are considerate in opening and closing doors. They are very quiet and take turns in the use of the facilities.

Joseph shared that his mother's name was Francess but was commonly called Charity by friends and relatives. Francess had sisters named Faith and Goodness and a brother named Hopeful. So it is Faith, Hope, and Charity, three terms from the Bible. Relatives and friends visiting on a regular basis unannounced is one of the customs among people back home in the Caribbean. After their initial greetings and pleasantries, visitors would ask the parents of the family: What do you have there to give me? This means: Do you have anything like food to give me to eat? In the islands, parents of a household are always prepared with extras for unforeseen eventualities. They would always try to have something to give, whether extra food or money. The hope is that every family will reciprocate.

My observations having participated in the rooming tenant household were that roomers in Christine's tenant household developed an amiable and real connection with each other, despite their cultural diversity. They voiced on many occasions that being in shared housing was an opportunity to make new friends and broaden their worldview about people. The roomers shared an understanding of each other. Though many had experienced challenging times with other people outside the rooming community in their lifetime, yet in the rooming household in St. Albans, there was a welcoming supportiveness of each other.

When there was a sociocultural event in the neighborhood community, the roomers of Christine's household often attended, sometimes as a group and sometimes individually, depending on the nature of the event. All of the roommates except me were living at the tenant household for an extended period of time, some as long as five years. Some roomers shared

feelings about living in their personal house someday, but all were not in a hurry for a change of residence soon.

There were times of extreme quietness among the roomers in the house, and there were times when the roomers enjoyed interactions among themselves. One of the patterns in the household was that when a roomer cooked a meal, enough was prepared to be shared with other roomers, especially if it was a dish that was mainly Caribbean or Southern American style.

Sharon bragged about Southern hospitality, which she claimed is so evident in the American South, especially among African Americans. She shared that it was also common for families in the South to share with other family or friends who would visit, and other acts of kindness and pleasantries are common. Thus, since there is the same practice of hospitality among Caribbeans and Southerners, it is so easy for them to continue the same practice here.

Interpretation

Rooming as a tenant among Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in Christine Bodist's rooming tenant household was a rewarding experience for both groups as well as for me. There were courtesies, kindnesses, patience, and intentional efforts of integration between both groups. There was much consideration among roomers and landlady with much reciprocity. This kind of reciprocity showed in the cooking and sharing of meals was so evident that Joseph remarked, "Here, though we roomers in this tenant household are from different cultures, yet we have bonded with each other as a family, learning more about oneself, as well as our habits and not taking things too seriously."

In his study of four important groups of people, Marcel Maus (1966), the French sociologist quickly established the complexity of gift exchange and "in all groups we see the archaic form of exchange-the gift and the return gift. Moreover, in these societies we note the

circulation of objects side by side with the circulation of persons and rights" (p. 45), hence the importance of this data helps us to conceive of this practice embracing a large part of humanity over time and persisting to this day among peoples other than those Maus described. In cultural anthropology, reciprocity refers to non-market exchange of goods or labor ranging from direct barter (immediate exchange) to forms of gift exchange where a return is eventually expected (delayed exchange). When the exchange is immediate, it creates a social relationship. When the exchange is delayed, it creates both a relationship as well as an obligation for return. The failure of a return may end a relationship between equals.

Maus's essay on the gift focuses on the way that the exchange of objects between groups builds relationships between humans. It shows that early exchange systems centered around the obligation to give, to receive, and, most importantly, to reciprocate. They occurred between groups, not only individuals, and they are part of the phenomena that work to build not only wealth and alliances, but social solidarity, because the gift pervades all aspects of society.

Conclusion

The life ways of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans showed an unbroken experience of cooperation between immigrants and migrants in their neighborhood community. Some of these rituals and cultural customs observed in pre-immigrant backgrounds in Black-dominated societies are seen as strengths to elicit ethnic equality rather than a social advantage over African Americans, especially because an immigrant advantage quickly fades or is greatly moderated in the majority culture.

What is evident in these life ways among immigrant and migrant groups is that recognized integration processes among their cultural practices and norms do not require rejection of their cultural practices and norms, but can be seen as a means of solidarity among the

peoples of each group. It also signals to all that preservation of social and cultural norms play a significant role in community building and ethnic identity.

In the larger American society, there is the tendency in many areas to forget or vaguely identify the distinguished and cherished customs of the Afro Caribbean experience. However, preservation of all cultures, the diverse social customs, language, and culture of ethnic groups, can contribute to the enhancement of America's cultural diversity. They can also highlight the opportunity for cultural exchange and cooperation and progress. The addition of Afro Caribbean culture to St Albans has brought in diversity, which can ultimately promote and strengthen national solidarity.

Chapter 9: Identity

As Afro Caribbeans travel abroad, they begin to see themselves and others in a different way. They travel abroad in search of opportunities and resources, but all too often, many find themselves living in societies in which there is a devaluation of Blackness and some ethnic groups that they did not experience in their home country, and they are faced with significant challenges because of these realities.

However, being Black and Caribbean can take on different meanings in the immigrant situation and can open up opportunities for new divisions and alliances with people of other ethnic and racial groups, with whom they come in contact while they are away from home.

Hence, the following questions: What kind of racial and ethnic identities and relations do Afro Caribbean immigrants develop in their ethnic group? What are the ways in which Afro Caribbean immigrants' racial and ethnic identities are formed and changed while they are abroad?

Identity can be considered as a concept and a process. Racial and ethnic identities are subject to change over time, although these categories are presumed very often to be fixed and constant. Social forces and current experiences can create a process by which previous notions of identity may be challenged, redefined, individually selected, and used. Here we are challenged to give attention to the process of ethnic identification and the force that promotes a choice. In his *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology,* H. Russell Bernard (1998) states, "Identity is reflected in the behavior-guiding orientation to the issue of Who am I as formulated in different context." (p. 342).

This chapter discusses the ways in which Afro Caribbean immigrants identify themselves and are involved in the study with Southern African Americans in St. Albans. The data reflect how Afro Caribbean immigrants identify themselves in the United States and how they are perceived by others.

Identity became a big issue after 1965, when Afro Caribbeans once again immigrated to the United States in large numbers. Although segregation had ended, the view of White Americans to African Americans continued.

The Afro Caribbean immigrant group and the native African Americans had strong identity views and some conflict between them. This divide was further separated by how Whites viewed both groups of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans, especially in the workplace. Caribbeans in the workplace were favored over the native Blacks because Caribbean immigrants were viewed as being better educated than native Blacks.

Afro Caribbean immigrants face different obstacles in balancing their identity with ensuring that their social interests are addressed. Mary C. Waters (1999), in her influential work, *Black Identities: West Indian Dreams and American Realities*, highlighted the importance of local context in understanding social identity. She stated:

> By the time I graduated, only Flatbush Avenue riders were white, and the riders boarding at the rest of the stops through Flatbush were black, until one reached the gentrified neighborhood of Park Slope at Grand Army Plaza. What I did not understand at the time … for the most part, it was not black Americans who were moving into these neighborhoods, but black immigrants from the Caribbean…. It was only years later, as the Caribbean presence grew in New York, that white New Yorkers began to notice the immigrant backgrounds of the newest black New Yorkers. (pp. 1-2)

Depending on the need for identification, identity on the public consciousness of the people of St. Albans accentuated the need to understand Afro Caribbean identity in its neighborhood community.

Some studies have found culture to be a major factor in helping Afro Caribbeans raise their personal profile and distinguish them from African Americans. Yet the question can be asked: Does the lack of public consciousness in St. Albans help or hinder the impact of identity of Afro Caribbeans—hence, how social contact impacts Afro Caribbean identity?

There are some strategies Afro Caribbeans use to maintain their social standing in St. Albans. I argue that Afro Caribbeans balance their country of origin and their race/ethnic identity simultaneously. In St. Albans, Afro Caribbeans recognize the role of race and racism in American society, historically and in the contemporary moment. The visibility of the ethnic group in the public sphere while navigating social structure in the neighborhood community can be a meaningful factor in determining how they engage their community.

To understand the social factors that influence and maintain Afro Caribbean identity, I relied on in-depth interviews conducted with ten Afro Caribbean immigrants and their descendants. Using a semi-structured interview format, I asked participants questions relating to descriptions of their social background and identity; the ethnic make-up of their personal networks; and their residence as well as their relationships with African Americans. There were recurring themes of group consciousness, group maintenance, and management. My goal was to illustrate and describe the impact of the social context on identity, and its maintenance and management in the St. Albans neighborhood community.

The dominant definition of social identity focuses on individuals' self-image as informed by their ascribed membership to a broader group (Tajfel, 1979). In stating this another way, an individual's identity is influenced by how others classify that individual. Hence, such identities are not merely abstract classification.

I also observed in St. Albans that Afro Caribbeans maintain attachments to multiple groups simultaneously, including their country of origin and their ethnic and racial groups. These attachments are maintained with a deep sense of awareness of how the groups are perceived in the public sphere. Therefore, accounting for their role and space is necessary for the social aspects of social identity.

In St. Albans, Afro Caribbeans use cultural and social practices to garner recognition and importance of the group, while at the same time this signals ethnic responsibility. Ethnic respect incentivizes a willingness of participants to reach across the aisle to other groups, not thinking about the past experiences or perceptions associated with stereotypes. Hence, it utilizes forgiveness and openness to increase social standing. This way of thinking lies fixed upon the belief in dominant values and customs being accepted. The process of integration, then, of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in St. Albans has influenced the identity of Afro Caribbeans. According to this view, the dual process of institutional integration and ethnic community formation shapes wellbeing.

Anthropologists today are well aware of the constructed nature of identity. As much recent anthropological theory has made clear, individuals actively construct their own cultural world. Individuals exercise creativity but only within certain cultural constraints (Fisher, 2009).

One informant in St. Albans who worked at a Chase Bank informed me that his country of origin was Barbados, West Indies, and he still has some attachments back there. He said, “I work here in this country. I have a good job, make a decent salary, but I always tell people that I am a Barbadian American.” Similar sentiments were expressed by other informants who were Afro Caribbeans with deep emotional ties and, in many cases, sent to relatives and friends back in their place of origin help in the form of remittances of money and edible food stuffs like

cooking oil, pigeon peas, flour, rice, sugar, powdered milk, and some other staple items of food. "This is one of the ways we Afro Caribbeans maintain ethnic identity and attachments," said Phylis, an Afro Caribbean and owner of a hair salon in St. Albans.

Another way I observed how Afro Caribbeans are maintaining their identities and attachments is by kinship. Family serves as one of the primary sources for formal socialization. One of the practices Afro Caribbean mothers engage in is that they often instill some of their values and raise their children in the Caribbean way as much as they can. Some Afro Caribbean parents, who are not being able to cope with the reactions and interactions of students in public schools in an urban setting, would send their children (those who are willing to go) back to the Caribbean, mainly to relatives living back there, so that their children from the United States could be schooled in the British-type institution of learning. The hope of mothers in the United States is that their children sent to the Caribbean school system would be in a less traumatic school environment as perceived here in the United States. In addition, some mothers fear that their children sent to the Caribbean would lose some of the Caribbean culture norms if they spent their early years in the United States.

In some instances, Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans place a significant amount of value on the maintenance of their language (dialect) in their adaptation to their new environment and also as a way of maintaining their attachment to their country of origin.

Afro Caribbeans practice language code switching relevant for use in specific situations. When in the presence of African Americans or any other group for that matter, they often switch dialect, primarily so that the listening group will be able to understand them.

Hence, particular listening and speaking skills serve the purpose of American integration. Some informants expressed that there were times when they caught themselves in conversations

when using their ethnic accents at work and other spaces to avoid ridicule, stereotypes, and the "otherness" associated with immigrants not being from here and therefore being perceived as not going with the flow.

This attachment and identity maintenance to country of origin described by the study participants suggests that despite citizenship oaths, Afro Caribbeans maintain a strong allegiance to their country of origin that echoes back to findings in transnational literature (Rogers, 2006).

Afro Caribbean Visibility

Afro Caribbeans represent a large ethnic group in St. Albans. Walking on Linden Boulevard, the commercial strip, provides a good example of Afro Caribbean presence. One notices immediately that the Caribbean comes to St. Albans and its presence shouts at the most casual observer. Storefront buildings advertise Caribbean symbolism. Emblems of the flags with their bright colors are displayed. Flags of Caribbean island nations are one of the ways Afro Caribbeans express the pride, connection, and meaning of their country of origin. Televisions in these businesses carry segments of Caribbean life and culture, such as cricket matches during the times when test cricket matches of the British Commonwealth countries are played. On this commercial strip of Linden Boulevard are restaurants, barber shops, hair salons, real estate businesses, martial arts schools, supermarkets, and many other commercial businesses owned and managed by Afro Caribbeans. There are also commercial vegetable stands and the Dollar Vans transportation system on the commercial strip.

The density of the Caribbean population increases in St. Albans during times of their cultural expressions, which take various forms. These expressions often reify psychological connections between the ethnic group and country of origin, while at the same time signaling the meaningful presence of this ethnic community to the broader neighborhood.

This description speaks to the impact of Afro Caribbean immigrants and relocation to St. Albans. For Afro Caribbeans, the widespread presence of Caribbean people, culture, businesses, and organizations in St. Albans mitigates the sharp distinction between life in the Caribbean and life in the United States. Serina, a first-generation Afro Caribbean who works at the V.A. Hospital in St. Albans, provided a portrait of life for her in St. Albans that is largely representative of the Afro Caribbean response in St. Albans. Serina said:

> It's better to live here than back in Guyana. I am a Guyanese immigrant and I am very proud of my heritage. I have family back there in Guyana. I have some savings back there in a commercial bank, but I am not going back there to live. I will go back to visit, but I will continue to live here. There is a large population of Caribbeans living here in New York who understands my culture and language, with whom I interact. It is like living back there in terms of Caribbean population.

The presence of Caribbean culture is evident in the day-to-day elements of life in St. Albans as well as the annual celebrations, which include the large Carnival-inspired parade in Brooklyn. Every September on Labor Day, the West Indian Day Parade is held. Though this celebration is not held in St. Albans, the celebration attracts Caribbeans everywhere in New York and elsewhere. Caribbeans in St. Albans see this event as part of their connection to their identity as Caribbeans, and they attend in unprecedented numbers. This celebration was started in Harlem, New York in 1947 and continued there until 1964. The parade moved to the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn in 1969, where it attracts over one million people each year, placing it among New York City's largest events. Urban radio stations serving New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut play Caribbean music of Reggae, Soca, and Calypsoes throughout the weekend, as local newspapers and television networks cover the parade. Kasinitz (1992) shared his views as he described the Carnival celebration parade as a generation of ethnic identity as it highlights the presence of a vibrant Caribbean community in Brooklyn and across the region, therefore strengthening pan-ethnic ties and raising the visibility of the Caribbean population.

The parade is high visibility of the Caribbean culture which facilitates interpersonal interactions. Joan King, an informant in St. Albans, said, "When it comes to 'Labor Day' celebrations, all roads lead to Brooklyn," meaning that the Labor Day celebration is an event where a lot of people (including Afro Caribbeans, African Americans, and any other ethnic group) attend the event, especially because it is a parade.

The first-generation Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans who first lived in Brooklyn before relocation described some of their networks while living in Brooklyn as predominantly immigrant. One informant said, "Living in Brooklyn is like living in an enclave. It was insulating me from the ridicule experienced by earlier immigrants, and the strength of the community was something that made me feel as though I was back in my country." The informant stressed the ability to see people from the Caribbean and to eat foods from the Caribbean, which is a marker of ethnic difference that gives Caribbeans a sense of pride.

The reference to the parade and life in Brooklyn by first-generation immigrants highlighted the capacity to facilitate the public recognition of Afro Caribbeans as a distinct cultural group. Afro Caribbeans' residential patterns in New York tend to be dense and concentrated in Queens (of which St. Albans is one of its neighborhoods), Central Brooklyn, and Northeast Bronx.

Afro Caribbean immigrants differ from African Americans in many ways:

a. Although there are commonalities in history and collective memories in the diasporic experience from Africa, yet there are differentiation factors like voluntary migration and involuntary migration, the different perception of racism, and the Black-White relations in the United States.

b. The transnational networks versus Black institutions, differing cultural, social, and political beliefs being instilled, which highlight the difference between group identification and consciousness as a result of varying socialization.
c. There is a feeling of a sense of home for the homeland that Afro Caribbeans identify with, while native Blacks mostly identify with the United States.
d. The belief that Afro Caribbeans have an exit option to return to their country of origin, while native Blacks do not have that option and must be satisfied with conditions in America.
e. Caribbean immigrants, when comparing life in the United States, see themselves as having an elevated status. Native Blacks compare themselves to Whites and, in many cases, see the inequality between them.

Some of the factors that influence Afro Caribbeans in their identity can be seen when they identify themselves according to their ethnicity and national origin in an attempt to differentiate themselves from native Black Americans with the assumption that White Americans will treat them better.

Many parents of first-generation Afro Caribbeans often pass on to their children an ethnic mindset because their children grew up with a different society place and, therefore, have a different perspective and do not distinguish the ethnic characteristics that they have. The parents fear losing parental control of their children or their children's ethnic identity, and identify as Black Americans, which they believe would result in social downward mobility.

Some Caribbean immigrants, mostly of the middle class, distance themselves from African Americans, emphasizing a pan-Caribbean background. They agree with their parents differentiating between native Blacks and Caribbean people and, most likely, view themselves in

a superior light. They believe that better performance in school, strong national ties with ethnic institutions, or frequent trips to parents' homes can help them to achieve opportunity in America, despite racism.

Some Afro Caribbeans in St. Albans choose not to categorize themselves as American or Caribbean American, though many have been naturalized as Americans. Their dress, speech, and behavior clearly indicate foreign birth. They visit the Caribbean islands frequently; they have a strong ethnic identity based on experience in their homeland. They believe that they do not need to distance themselves from native Blacks if they have a good education, a decent job, and the advantages of ethnic ties in the workplace.

An important aspect and, in some cases, altering the meaning of identity in America, is the role that gender plays. I found in St. Albans that many of the boys I interviewed have more of a sense of racial solidarity than the girls. This is due to a large extent to exclusion disapproval by society. Boys face more racial harassment and perceive that few job opportunities are available to them. This perception in many cases results in their pursuit of the opposition of mainstream values.

The girls I interviewed did not face the same degree of hostility and exclusion from society. They viewed themselves as having more job opportunities. To be an American, girls viewed this as having freedom from parental control, which parents exercise over girls more than they do boys.

Caribbeans becoming Americans traditionally involves immigrating to America and means assimilating into American society and abandoning ethnic ties. The assimilation theory connects to the fact that the decision to become an American is based on economic success. However, Caribbean immigrants are rewarded for maintaining their ethnic identity and, in many

cases, it results in upward mobility because the Caribbean immigrant is perceived as hard-working and industrious, and can develop networks of many categories. For some, being an American Black means integration into a marginalized race structure, which is perceived to result in downward mobility and other negative characteristics.

For some Afro Caribbeans, there is a desire to become American (and many of them do). However, they believe that maintaining ethnic ties with Caribbeans and having their supportive networks are most beneficial for them.

The children of Afro Caribbeans in St Albans are often Americanized and lack traits such as Caribbean accents that clearly make their nationality recognizable. They love American foods and often resent Caribbean foods for being the foods that are prevalent among them. Very often, it is difficult to distinguish whether they are of Caribbean parents and traditions.

This second generation identifies with African Americans. They lack the knowledge their parents had of their homeland, and they associate more with African Americans than being a complete stranger. One of the reasons for this is that first generation immigrants come from a background of struggle, where to succeed is a great challenge. They came to the United States seeking a better life. However, the second generation of Caribbeans lack the same motivation their parents had. On the other hand, second-generation Caribbeans experience racism that their parents did not have and, in many cases, lose hope. However, those who hold on to their background and affiliate with their parents actually achieve more than those who do not.

Although there are similarities between both groups of Afro Caribbeans and African Americans, in many cases they chose to identify with their nation of origin. Even if West Indians originally are from Africa, what I have observed in St. Albans is that many still want to be considered as Jamaican, St. Lucian, Barbadian, and so on. This propensity, however, is seen in

many other groups. For example, there are nations that are similar in geography like Haiti and Dominican Republic; they speak differently and want to be identified with their own nation. This problem is not unique to Afro Caribbeans and African Americans, but rather it is one of the complex problems.

Interpretation

Afro Caribbean immigrants handle their adaptation to American society in different ways. Unfortunately, some Afro Caribbean immigrants feel alienated because race relations have been developed by historical events. First-generation Afro Caribbean immigrants have embraced their own culture within America and are able to separate themselves from some American customs and ideals through their transnationalism. However, the culturally rich neighborhood of St. Albans shows that Afro Caribbeans are able to identify themselves in different ways within the neighborhood community.

This knowledge of Afro Caribbeans challenges the conception that their ethnic group exhibits a rigid fixed conformity exclusively of its own group at every turn. Diverse countries of origin, cultural practices, social beliefs, and migration circumstances translate to a distinct pattern of engagement with Southern African American migrants. Hence, the Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans provide a window which can be useful in understanding identity and the intergroup relations in this growing segment of the Black socio-cultural landscape.

In reality, Afro Caribbeans migrating to the United States have encountered racism directed toward Blacks. They are stunned because they are used to judging a person by their level of education, occupation, and wealth, and not exclusively by skin color. Many are irritated by the oppressive attitude and American perception of Blacks. However, their cultural drive to succeed and their dismissal of American race relations aid them to succeed in the workplace. The

concept of hard work and academic accomplishments became more important in achieving success than their skin color.

In understanding identity and intergroup relations between the two ethnic groups of immigrants and migrants in St. Albans, the variations of Afro Caribbeans toward

African Americans showed among these variations how Afro Caribbean immigrants and African American migrants reconcile these variations themselves. The gap in the literature showed that Afro Caribbean immigrants not only identified with African Americans but went on to an integration of cultures through events and institutional settings, underscoring the complexity of racial and ethnic attachments, interconnections, integration, and the social impact of such engagements.

This chapter sought to address the gap by examining the social factors that influence Afro Caribbean group identity and its maintenance. However, in St. Albans, Afro Caribbean group identity of first-generation immigrant status has moved through networks to Black racial identity and integrative relations with Southern African American migrants. While the social context in St. Albans, to some extent, showcases the social identity of first-generation Afro Caribbeans and their attachments, second generation Afro Caribbeans understand attachment a little differently, as exemplified by their perceived shared values, group allies, and attachments in their host country.

Whether we look back in the past or across cultures, the racial and ethnic identities that developed among Afro Caribbeans depend, to a large extent, on the social and cultural context in which they interact. The meaning and effects of their Blackness and ethnicity vary from one country and one period of time to the next.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

After the passing of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965, an unprecedented number of non-White and non-European immigrants entered the United States, and now pose a historic challenge for the American demographic experiment (Rogers, 2006). The arrival of these groups of newcomers marked the first time these ethnic groups had to confront the challenge of integration in the midst of cultural diversity and social differentiation.

The United States has proven a long record of success in absorbing immigrants into its political, civic, economic, and social life and integrating people from abroad, and immigrants have been able to achieve some form of integration in the United States. Many of the immigrants from the Caribbean region as well as other ethnic groups have managed to adapt to the country's norms; have participated in political, social, and cultural practices; and have influenced certain outcomes. Hence, in doing so, they have highlighted American democracy.

The question for Afro Caribbean immigrants coming to the United States is whether they will be able to experience not only integration with their European predecessors, but also interethnic integration. My interest in this study was to examine how Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants characterized mutual group relationships through integration and what was the outcome. To explore this issue, I used a representative sample of both ethnic groups to examine factors influencing their perceptions of relationships between them.

Sociologist Mary Waters (1993), in *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*, stated:

> The working-class African Americans were generally hostile toward the West Indian immigrant and felt very competitive…. [However] the middle-class respondents [of Black Americans] were generally quite aware of the ways in which West Indians thought about African Americans. (pp. 74-75)

There were instances where integration had taken place between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans in the past. The Civil Rights Era helped to eliminate any flagrant forms of tension from American life and became a turning point of civility between African Americans and Afro Caribbeans, who participated with African Americans in the struggle. This era paved the way for today's immigrants and migrants in St. Albans to achieve. Since then, some tensions between the two ethnic groups have not been completely eradicated. It is reasonable to ask the question how Southern African American migrants and Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans deal with the challenge of integration in its neighborhood community. This study attempted to help answer this question and provided an ethnographic account from among the current Black immigrants and migrants.

Blacks of both ethnic groups share some commonalities with each other, the historical diaspora and enslavement as well as domination by colonial Europeans, the same phenotype, and are vulnerable to discrimination in U.S. society. However, the foreign-born immigrant shares some similarities with other immigrant minorities. The immigrant experience has ties to other countries of origin and their own ethnic heritage, apart from the American culture. With their immigrant attributes, values, beliefs, and cultures, this study gave an ethnographic account and its findings of the integrative processes between the Black immigrant and migrant groups in St. Albans.

This concluding chapter highlights the findings of the study. The study conceived of integration as an ongoing set of interactions in the neighborhood community of St. Albans. It was also a time of discovery and adaptation to new norms in St. Albans. Amid this adjusted

interaction, the immigrants learned to define themselves, frame their interests, know when and where to draw the line, and establish their ethnic ideological stand and alliances. Many studies have ignored these aspects of immigrant adjustments and focus only on outcomes, but these adjustments of immigrants are at the heart of the integrative process. The immigrants have also learned of their assumed boundaries from coworkers, social networks, and civic associations.

The findings of this research account are as follows:

1. The country of origin experiences and ties of immigrants provided cues that influenced the adaptation between immigrant and migrant groups. Immigrants were able to make the right call about activities and social relationships at the initial stages of involvement as a result of home attachments and memories they have preserved. Home country of origin experiences and attachments had a powerful influence on immigrant adjustment. These country of origin perspectives helped to make immigrant choices in the interactive process with migrants.
2. The study found by the process of integration of immigrant and migrant groups in social institutions, events, recreations, businesses, and other ways
   that the group interactions resulted in attitude change and trust between members of the groups.
3. The findings supported growing literature that points to a nuanced and complex relationship between the two groups that highlighted both their affinities toward each other and the role of race in shaping group attitudes. Other groups felt a sense of closeness to their own ethnic group and, in addition, demonstrated a pan-ethnic link as well. Both indicated closeness to Black people in the United States.

4. Both groups lived in a racialized context where they were regarded as African Americans.
5. Shared social environment highlighted common experiences that served to heighten a sense of pan-ethnic unity that led to a perceptive attitude change between the groups.
6. As Afro Caribbeans encountered discrimination, it helped them to understand the salience of race and led to a stronger identification with African Americans.
7. Afro Caribbeans reported that being integrated with African Americans suggested a different picture than the common assertion that relations between the two groups were strained.
8. The findings indicated that Afro Caribbean immigrants were not tabula rasa when it comes to appreciation of their own place in the matrix of race relations. They have brought with them a developed sense of ethnic consciousness than has been previously presumed.
9. The findings indicated that social, cultural, and political events originally from the Caribbean region were accessible to African Americans. Social events like the Labor Day Parade in Brooklyn (integrated parade) and Groovin' in the Park in St. Albans (integrated concert), as well as games of cricket matches in St. Albans, were known and followed by African American migrants.
10. The findings suggested that closeness with church members is an indicator of the degree to which individuals feel a sense of embeddedness and belonging with this social group, which helps to prevent tension between ethnic groups.
11. The findings suggested that persons who previously experienced negative interactions with another ethnic group may be more likely to interact with social institutions as a

general preventative strategy and/or a means of mobilizing their supportive resources as part of an ongoing effort to cope with difficult circumstances. More than other social groups, social institutions like church members are less likely to engage in ethnic discrimination and risky behaviors that may be detrimental to the cohesion of membership or the wellbeing of someone who has previously encountered negative associations.

However, in comparing the relative significance of attendance to these institution gatherings versus social support, it is important not to over interpret the findings as confirmation that social support "alone" has effects on tension between groups. Social support from institution participants is just one of the several aspects of association with attendance to these institutions. Attendance is multifaceted. For example, the church institution, or specific features of religion, may be helpful in dealing with individual problems.

Summary

In summing up my findings, these discoveries provided no evidence of appreciable rift between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans. Also, race emerged as an important identity and linked the two groups around ethnic lines, although the neighborhood community is not a Black community of one ethnic group.

The people of African ancestry, whether immigrants or long-time residents, native or foreign-born, experience a community and a lived experience that is at the center about race. The study suggested that there is no one identity, but a community of many identities. For Afro Caribbeans, the finding was that identity often involves a rethinking of home of origin, but always within the context of the American landscape filled with messages about race.

The present research used a cross-section of data from a sample of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants, which had the advantage of identifying significance within group diversity in the extent and predictor of perception of integration between the groups. The question about whether Afro Caribbeans negotiated transformation in individual and group identity like hyphenated Americans was not addressed in the findings. This and other similar questions are ongoing interests for many diverse and nationality groups as newcomers to America and finding their place in its society.

Attitude Change

The exodus of community residents of St. Albans out to Long Island to the new developments of Levitt and Sons created an opportunity for an influx of people of different ethnic groups to occupy the homes left vacant in the St. Albans neighborhood community. Among the newcomers were the Afro Caribbean immigrants and the Southern African American migrants, who were living formerly in Brooklyn and Harlem, New York.

The earlier settlers in St. Albans, mostly of Euro American descent, made a revolutionary impact on the traditional economic and social structure. Habits of Euro American culture were adopted to varying degrees. With the relocation of Afro Caribbeans and Southern African Americans to the area, homes of Euro Americans left vacant were occupied by these newcomers. The main new factor in this new situation was the initiation of the presence of a neutral overriding authority capable of mediating between rival cultural groups of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, which in the past was subject to no such control.

One of the barriers in the past among Afro Caribbeans and African Americans was the cultural barrier weight of tradition itself and the accompanying fatalism of ethnocentrism of

beliefs held by both groups in the superiority of one's ways, ideas, and norms and attitudes about pride, skin color, and national origin. Perceptions about work habits and language patterns also frequently influenced receptivity to some kind of change.

There were also psychological barriers that were present in the differences between the perceptual processes of members of each group. One group was perceived as threats rather than as bearers of a better life. Their presence can be perceived as bearers of bad tidings and as robbing others of opportunities and privileges that could be theirs.

The pattern of life in the environment of St. Albans has shown marked resilience and tenacity in the ability by each cultural group of immigrants and migrants in the ability to adopt new values and items of culture without ethnocentric feelings or to suggest fundamental changes in order to syncretize many different features of each group's cultural norms.

The basic conditions in St. Albans help to facilitate the needed attitude change between the two groups. First, there was a new conception of the society of St. Albans among immigrant and migrant groups, which was produced by the institutions, organizations, and associations that have invested in this type of change among groups. Their notions have been strongly reinforced by the aspirations of community representatives and by the policies of the administrations which conceive as their main task to encourage interaction and integration among all peoples in the neighborhood community.

The institution that produced a major incentive for attitude change between the two groups was the church. St. Albans is a neighborhood community of many churches, of which Afro Caribbeans and African Americans are members. These two groups meet for worship in these churches each Sunday and on some weekdays. Many of these churches sponsor events and community outreach programs for members and people of the neighborhood community. Other

avenues of integration between these two groups are local sports of track and field; recreational games as cricket where locals compete; local rituals of cultural customs; engagement in community gardens where vegetable produce is shared with persons of need in the neighborhood community; rites of passage celebrations; population of the neighborhood community engagement in protest rallies for causes that will impact them; and their participation in "Community Family Day" as well as "Community Clean-up Day" sponsored by community representatives.

Other aspects of life that brought about attitude change between immigrant and migrant groups in St. Albans were ethnic group intermarriage and friendships between group members.

These are important motivators of integration and change. They are also filled with reciprocal demands. New ways of doing things are tried with significant others because of this new relationship and the natural expected outcomes. There is also a growing sense of awareness among immigrant and migrant groups in a modern sense which, by extending education and curtailing group identity rhetoric (I am an African American, I am Afro Caribbean), they hope to promote a corrective to the particularistic attitudes and interests that divide the neighborhood community and threaten its unit. It seemed evident that the Afro Caribbean immigrants' tendency is not to discount their proud traditions of Caribbean origin and their sense of "Caribbean particularities," but also to see themselves as Afro Caribbeans in a new society of America with African Americans that displays great cultural homogeneity.

Interpretation

The interactive setting in St. Albans between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants afforded a healthy productive research focus for the researcher. Here, the researcher was able to study what changes had taken place between the two groups. It is

possible that studying change between ethnics under different circumstances can take years for completion; however, studying change between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans was with such planning and organizing that the sequencing that normally takes months or years was compressed into a much smaller and shorter period. My argument was set forth previously about change in the social setting of St. Albans. This was confirmed by what actually happened in the integrative setting.

What was particularly important was the opportunity to study the behavior of the change agents through sociocultural integrative means. The ways and occasions that members of each group grant the evidence of change agents' competence, willingness, openness, and reactions of acceptance certainly afforded rich opportunities to add to the knowledge of the human condition and behavior, and what is possible between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants, or any two different cultural groups, for that matter.

Finally, the researcher sensitively recognized that he too, like the change agents in the St. Albans neighborhood community, was much concerned with his performance and that evidence of approval or disapproval, acceptance or rejection by both group members will have much to do with his psychological well-being and ability to function effectively.

The Future of Social and Cultural Integration in St. Albans

Afro Caribbean immigrants, who are the subject of this study, are part of the large wave of immigrants who have arrived in the United States of America, and specifically New York City, since the changes in immigration laws in 1965. The influx of Afro Caribbeans as well as other immigrants have forever changed the demography of New York City. The people in New York City are at a unique time in its history. When increased population movements come to America's towns, cities, and neighborhoods, they bring about changes that force accommodation

of different cultures in a way that earlier generations of Americans could never have dreamed possible.

Many in America have grown up with a model in which tribalism of culture represented security and freedom of expression, but for many in these times, a better model of security and freedom is for people to work in such a way to be engaged with others and contribute to the making of a place for people to be able to live and function.

Older generations of Americans have focused on traditions, beliefs, and customs that made them feel comfortable in pursuing the kind of lifestyle they desired. With the advent of modern technologies that span the globe and make it possible for people to go anywhere at any time in this world, people are now able to see the world and those who live in the different parts of the world in a different light.

The integration process with people of a multigenerational viewpoint can present a challenge. However, Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans have learned that an age-diverse outlook is a strength. Each generation brings benefits that can enhance the neighborhood community of St. Albans, and each has different ways of putting their skills to use in patterns of integration between the two cultures. Older people sharing and learning from younger people who see the world with different lenses can help to boost morale engagement and interaction.

Those who have been around longer bring an institutional knowledge perspective, social maturity, and stability, and they pass along critical knowledge, history, traditions, customs, and beliefs to the younger generation. Those who have viewed the march of progress nationally and domestically bring a more collaborative mindset and a more open-minded, intuitive understanding to the neighborhood community environment.

If all aspects of the St. Albans neighborhood community function effectively, and if this model of cultural pluralism and integration and change between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants will continue to impact St. Albans for the future, then I believe that the following should be constant in a threefold way:

1. **Individualistic.** Individuals of the Afro Caribbean immigrant group and the Southern African American migrant group living in St. Albans should keep themselves engaged in the sociocultural interactive and integrative process between the two ethnic groups.
2. **Public.** Political leaders and governments at all levels need to enforce policies against cultural discrimination and adopt culturally inclusive policies. This includes:
    a. Afro Caribbean immigrants and those who may be undocumented and may be seeking a path to permanent residency in America if they have not committed any violent crime or are a hazard to the neighborhood community.
    b. The freedom of Afro Caribbean culture should be expressed publicly as long as these cultural norms are not in conflict with national policies.
    c. Organizations in the neighborhood community of St. Albans should partner with other organizations with initiatives and goals toward sociocultural integration and understanding between Afro Caribbeans and African Americans. This can also help the younger generation of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants for the future in ways that will benefit both individuals and society.

Personal Reflection

Reading an ethnographic research study can allow the reader to imagine and perceive a culture in the perspective of the author's point of view. Ethnography represents the knowledge of human lives by collecting data connected to experience, interpreting and representing human culture not only from the informants' but also the researcher's point of view. The data presented can also be subjective in a way as the researcher analyzes people's emotions according to the author's point of view.

Reflexivity is a qualitative method of research that takes ethnography on a further step toward the displaying of personal thoughts and reflections of the anthropologist on his informants. It introduces a new component of the insider's description of ethnography. After describing personal interactions and experiences with the informants, this use of information from inside is helpful to make additional conclusions about the groups being studied.

In this study, I sought to speak from within to depict a neighborhood community as I saw it with the people who dwell within.

One of the instruments I used to collect data during the study in St. Albans was a tape recorder. Its use was a visual representation of the data, which allowed me to feel emotionally connected to the culture as the data were interpreted from the researcher's perspective. There was a collaboration between the researcher and different informants to better interpret the culture as a form of triangulation.

The tape recording influenced my sensory processing in that it generated behavioral responses to feel the cultures or emotions of the people. It also enhanced my cognition and a sense of contact to the cultures described. It evoked a quality of presence and feeling that would

not have happened if it was written without a sound to the text and would have affected the sensory perception.

I was able to reflect on connections with informants and my acceptance into the two groups, which provided valuable insider knowledge.

What I have perceived from observations and participant observations of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans is that relationships between peoples, even if they are of different ethnic groups, are crucial for personal fulfillment. That relationship is a positive social reinforcement that can raise self-esteem, which is required when living in an ongoing process of interaction with other people. This type of integration reveals about the culture that this skill can be learned and can range from the simple to the complex, including a simple hand wave, a smile, making favors, asking favors, making friends, or expressing feelings and opinions in conversation.

The groups of immigrants and migrants shared distinguishing sentiments that put relationships over tribalism or what seemed best for their individual groups. One informant was very quick to point out:

> At birth when we came into this world, we were born into relationships with others. We did not come into this world alone, hence no group can stand alone. Whether people are well to do in this world, or whether they are poor, whether they have well-paying jobs and can afford the finer things in this life or whether they engage in small paying jobs, they need others in their lives.

Throughout the study runs a personal and ultimate tone of self-revelation to informants. My hope is that the readers of this report will make their judgments, but at the same time perceive how the neighborhood community of immigrants' and migrants' conception of the researcher is present in the research. There is a clear central message conveyed throughout the study. Although it is impossible to study all aspects of the study area, I have tried to focus on those aspects that are very meaningful to the population. Hence, it was impossible to translate all

the feelings of the informants into words as well as recording all aspects of human activities in the area.

My account of two groups of equal status being kept from voluntary isolation in a situation of being newcomers to the St. Albans urban setting attempted to lay bare the ligaments of interaction and integration which made up the content of their adaptation. The friendships between the groups, sharing personal stories and national histories told, the cuisines, common rituals, festivals, recreations, sports, institutional and leisure interactions, and so on, provided solutions to the elemental problems of the past, which were perceived between immigrant and migrant groups. In addition, the close observations of behavior involved in the maintenance of equilibrium between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants were afforded by the discovery of individual representation of both groups in St. Albans.

This research has impacted me in many ways. It has given me a deep admiration for the ordinary, caught up in a historical sociocultural tide. It is an experience that I will continue to think and talk about long after this dissertation process.

Suggestions for Further Research

The present study was exploratory in nature, with a qualitative approach, and sought to understand the social and cultural process of integration between Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans.

However, every ethnography is a partial ethnography, and in the course of immersion in the details of ethnographic data, it is easy to lose sight of the edges of one's work. Hence, the study was undertaken with the purpose of generating further research.

There are plans to continue ethnographic research after writing up this report. The following are some suggested possibilities for research:

1. The need for enlarging and additional representativeness of the sample.
2. A comparative study of individual voices of neighborhood community representatives for Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in the boroughs of New York State. Are there differences in modeling and patterns of integration?
3. A comparative study taking into account the different classes in each group of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrant communities.
4. Research on Black immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa as a useful supplement to the present study.
5. To further explore White Favoritism toward West Indians, conduct an ethnographic study on participant observation (preferably in the workplace) of the interaction of all three groups of Whites, African Americans, and West Indians.
6. The length of time in the United States directly influences the process of forming and creating an ethnic identity. Mothers play a role in fusing cultural values in the Afro Caribbean family, and the impact of this on girls and women. Yet there are large gaps in understanding the group as a whole across countries and generation status.

Epilogue

My analysis of human relations between Southern African American immigrants and Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans enabled several theoretical applications. By focusing on the practices of social and cultural integration in specific institutions, sites and moments, I conceived that social and cultural integration is more than a mere social interaction. Neither is it simply the expressions of social and cultural logic that saturated the two ethnic groups of immigrants and migrants. Rather I showed how in different historical circumstances and moments the integrative process between Southern African Americans and Afro Caribbean immigrants has generated specific effects and expressions that have contributed to distinct experiences and articulations of the changing attitudes between members of the two ethnic groups.

The findings of the research are critical because understanding the mechanism behind the discussion between the two ethnic groups of migrants and immigrants can similarly lead community organizers and other leaders toward understanding social integration and cohesion between groups. Indeed representatives of the media and scholars with interest about how groups function should question interethnic agreements of groups, but should also question the myth of group monolith in public narratives.

My argument in the research challenges several assumptions. I examined the specific assemblages of social, cultural, and economic practices, as well as institutions, sites, and moments where Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants meet and interact, which provided the stage on which integration and attitudes change, demonstrating that

these characteristics have actively shaped the active and figurative stage for immigrants and migrants in St. Albans.

To speak about Afro Caribbean immigrants and South African American migrants "alone" in the research site can be misleading. Speaking alone of these two ethnic groups in St. Albans fails to account for the direct and indirect entanglements engendered through integration with other ethnic groups who have lived or are living in St. Albans. Furthermore, it excuses any tension that may have existed between ethnic groups in St. Albans, where animated politics of exclusion existed at distinct historical moments of neighborhood community interactions.

Following this frame of integration between immigrant and migrant groups required the analysis of situated practices that have occurred between the two ethnic groups, experienced at different moments and places within the neighborhood community of St. Albans.

While this new change of attitude between immigrant and migrant groups openly challenged restrictive constructions formerly nurtured by both ethnic groups, it has not provided any insurance and assurance that it will bring forward equal presentations and equal rights to all Afro-Caribbean immigrants.

However, those Afro-Caribbean immigrants who pursued integration developed institutions that helped them to function and not to depend exclusively on the mainstream. This is seen in St. Albans among Afro-Caribbean immigrants who are keen to return to their culture and not necessarily to become blended or assimilated. They became champions of American policies that permit their culture distinctiveness and profit from this, while negotiating their lives in St. Albans.

What does this mean for the nature and composition of Afro Caribbean immigrants in St. Albans? Following the perspective of Milton Gordon (1964), he sees that integration is a two-way street. Two sets of boundaries are involved: those of the established groups in the society and those of the groups that are seeking full membership and equal participation (p. 8).

In the playing out of the two-way street scenario of incorporation, the main elements of either side are recognized to do these complex characteristics of integration, and at the same time, recognizing it as a two-way street means that the social and cultural order is guaranteed, the capital is satisfied, the tapestry of St. Albans's social and cultural fabric is enriched, and the neighborhood is reinforced.

Social and cultural integration practices are important to immigrants of the Caribbean and the migrants from the U.S. south living in St. Albans. These characteristics are indicators of the degree of integration between them as well as they demonstrate immigrants' willingness to be part of the dominant society, while partially relinquishing some of their old ties with their country of origin.

The past is always alive, but the past need not be the epilogue, too. The epilogue of Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants in St. Albans is being written today largely by hardworking newcomers with their skills, values, and social and cultural norms, seeking to make their way and looking ahead to their children's American future. They have and continue to transform the society of St. Albans in the process, even as they are being transformed into the American collective enterprise of immigrants and migrants.

The future of interethnic tension and resistance to that tension, resulting in attitude change between groups in St. Albans, will depend to a large extent on the way Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African Americans and their descendants choose to look and react to

this tension, if it should arise. The concept of ethnic tension invites us to look at both the objective reality and subjective experience of everyday occurrence and avoid the error of adopting any definition by others that is different.

It is the researcher's view that much will depend on how social scientists enable and empower people to analyze accurately and struggle successfully against this evil that can exist between ethnic groups. If there is an ethnic divide among the descendants of the African diasporic groups; if the divide is legitimized in perpetrator's minds by notions of their ethnicity; and if this is no longer going to be allowed, then Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants and their descendants need to live up to the challenge of acknowledging and subverting the totality of this culture of tension, which can engulf them.

My hope is that this research can shed light on immigrant experiences (those who came from the Caribbean region) of their journeys and the tools and strategies that have been employed by them navigating through the process of integration with Southern African American migrants, and in the process, they both created meaningful lives in St. Albans.

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule: Life History

Introductory Statement

General

I am a graduate student doing research on human social relations in the neighborhood of Saint Albans. The topic of the interview is the experience and meaning touching on various aspects of your life experiences, and would like you to tell me as much as you can about yourself up to this present time. The interview is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. The goal is to highlight the extent of human relations by interviewing residents, hearing their responses, to get a greater understanding of and the sense of social integration in the neighborhood.

Interview No. _____ Interviewer _____

Date _____ Time _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____ Email _____

Can you reconstruct for me your past experiences and give a portrait of the following:

A. Early Life
- Place of birth
- Parents: origin, class status, livelihood, education, qualities, social relations, and preferences
- Grandparents

B. Childhood and Adolescence - siblings, how many?
- memories of parents
- family deaths, religious persuasion
- talents, identity, education, role models
- how time was spent
- relationships, idiosyncrasies
- struggles and triumphs

C. Culture of Origin
- cultural customs
- perceptions of family, leadership, division of labor, values, stigmas, and offspring

D. Later Life
- What were the factors/critical events/range of experiences that influenced your coming to New York? Could you comment on the process, coalition, and ultimate move to Saint Albans?

- In terms of your life in New York City, could you share about your experiences of: where you lived and worked, about your family, education, religious affiliation, relationships to other residents in your community?

- There are many types of migrants to New York City. Some intend to return when they make good, as a success, while others return as failures, but most remain abroad. What is your goal about migrating?

- What is your first lesson you've learned upon arriving in New York City?

- The effect of migration/immigration can be manifold. Some societies adjust to migration/immigration as a norm. Others endure it as training or trauma, and often the experience in New York City makes many very much unlike those at home. What has been your experience?

- What basic and critical values that constituted part of your life world that you accept, i.e., security, personal dignity?

- To what extent has your upbringing impacted your life in later years in terms of behavior, self-examination, freedom to choose?

- What are the key events, turning points and significant relationships in your life?

- What volitional quality do you see and accept undergirding your kinship relationship obligations?

- How do you interpret your history in terms of significance through your cultural practices?

- Have you left the past behind you or are there relations that have linked together your society of origin and settlement?

- Do you strive to compare or promote the correctness of your own values and beliefs in comparison to others?

Community Struggles

- What struggles have the neighborhood of Saint Albans encountered over empowerment from national and local levels. Can you identify and comment on processes and resolutions?

- In what ways do you see racialized policies and circumstances forging new identities and alliances among the ethnic groups in the neighborhood?

- What events or inner conflicts helped to shape the affairs of the community neighborhood?

- What political causes were you involved in at the national and local level?

- Do you see yourself as playing a role in the macro and micro processes of social change in the community?

- Being caught in the dramatic situation of change, how do you deal with the feelings of the past to the present?

- Have your first impressions changed as you've come to know the other ethnic group better?

- What experiences have you shared with the other ethnic group that have cemented a good relationship?

- In your day-to-day activities, what kind of experience do you encounter with the other ethnic group, and what things have you done recently?

- How often do you get together with other ethnic individuals or groups, and what are some of the things you talk about?

- Some psychologists argue that in all good relationships, there is a conflict. What kinds of conflicts have you had over the course of your relationship with the other ethnic group, and if there were, how was the conflict resolved?

- It is believed by many that a passive tension exists between African Americans and Afro Caribbean immigrants. Do you know of this as a fact, and how do you pursue strategies for overcoming this problem?

- What were your first impressions of African Americans/Afro Caribbeans, i.e., family, attitude, ambition, etc.?

- Is the presence of these two groups playing a role in altering America's raceethnic conception?

- What light could be shed on the broad cultural and social processes, i.e., the dynamics of segmented assimilation and integration?

- How could residential integration be a step toward a larger structural assimilation?

Community

- What is your approach to living in Saint Albans?

- What does it mean for you to call the Saint Albans neighborhood your home? What has changed and what still persists?

- In what ways has the community culture nurtured you and made you special?

- What institutions have impacted your life within the neighborhood?

- What is your perspective of community endogeny—marriages between African American and Afro Caribbean immigrant individuals and marriages to mainly community residents?

- What customs, practices, symbols of interaction and other ways of communication have helped you to understand and appreciate the community better?

- As you continue to explore meaning for your life in this community, where do you see it defined?

- What is it like in the interactive process with people in economics (workplace), education, community religion, status and role, and family obligations in the neighborhood?

- Some immigrants and migrants to New York find it difficult to live with strangers who are from another culture, even though they are from the same racial background. Do you share this experience?

- What values are derived from African Americans and Afro Caribbeans engaging in the broader life of the community and with each other's groups?

- What events do you and family celebrate and with whom?

Social Integration and Change

- Many have taken as an axiomatic (true statement) that all cultures change through time. Have you observed rapid changes in all aspects of culture such as beliefs, activities, community environment, family life and relationships, and if so, what meaning does it have for you?

- Many North American ideas of race have failed to encompass the complex formation of identities within the construct of Blackness. What are your views on this?

- What values do you see in common with African Americans and Afro Caribbeans?

- What cultural practices persist and are retained by the two ethnic groups' cultures despite imposition of national boundaries?

- What cultural practices are resistant to and entwined with both ethnic groups?

- What cultural forms and stories cross-imitate and rearticulate identities?

- What common experiences help to form new identities for both groups?

- What events provide solid grounds for solidarity between the two groups?

- In any multicultural situation, there can be a constellation of behaviors. What is the striking aspect of change in your observation of the critical drama of social integration?

- What can you identify as symbols of interaction and social change in the community of these two groups?

- Do you have any regrets? If so, what are they?

- What else would you like to have done or to do that you have not done as yet?

- Are there any comments on any aspect relating to this study that you would like to share?

Appendix B: Protocol Title

Protocol Title

The Tapestry of Human Relations Between Southern African American Migrants and Afro Caribbean Immigrants in a New York City Neighborhood Community

Principal Investigator

John Alexander Nelson
Teachers College, Columbia University'

What is a Research Study?

Research is the careful study of an issue that is not fully understood. Research studies are carried out by principal investigators to find new knowledge and reach a better understanding. Participating in a research study may not help you or others, but may help researchers begin to figure out a problem. Participating in a research study is always voluntary—you decide whether you want to participate or not. If you agree to participate, you can always change your mind. Feel free to ask questions so you are comfortable about participating. The first step is reading and signing this informed consent.

Introduction

You are being invited to participate in this research study called "The Tapestry of Human Relations Between Southern African American Migrants and Afro Caribbean Immigrants in a New York City Neighborhood Community."

Any information derived from this research study that personally identifies you will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without any separate consent, except as specifically required by law.

You should receive a copy of the Informed Consent document.

Your signature means that you agree to participate in this study.

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Identity

The interviews will last between forty-five and ninety minutes. The respondent will sign a consent form before the interview begins and provide a pseudonym to use in place of their real name. The following questions will guide our conversation:

- Tell me about yourself, your parents, and your family. Where are you from? Where do you live? What is the racial/ethnic composition of your neighborhood block or street where you live? What did your parents do for a living? Have you and your family thought about going back to your homeland or town? What do you think about that?
- There are multiple ways that Black people in the US describe their identity. How would you describe your ancestry and identity? How do you identify yourself? Does this change depending on the situation?
- Is being African American/Afro Caribbean important to your self-image and ethnic group?
- Has your ethnic identity changed over time either in the way you describe yourself or in the strength of your identity?
- What is the racial make-up of your friends (if you can think of a percentage)?
- Does your racial identity affect your life chances?

Attitudes and Behaviors

- Who are the people that you know that are Southern African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?
- Do you live in close proximity with African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?
- How much do you know about African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?
- How would you describe African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?
- Have you met some of the friends of African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?
- What are some of your emotions when relating to African Americans/Afro Caribbeans?

- What are some of the things you would remember about African Americans/ Afro Caribbeans and what does this mean to you?

- What are some of the plans African Americans/Afro Caribbeans have shared about their future in the neighborhood?

Group Feelings, Values and Beliefs

- Do you feel that African Americans and Afro Caribbeans share the same values and outlook on life?

- Do you have any concerns about African Americans/Afro Caribbeans in the neighborhood as it relates to the quality of life? What are some of the things you have in common, and in what ways do you differ, and how do you handle it?

- Some people say that African Americans and Afro Caribbeans do not get along. What is your opinion of the issue? Do you think there is competition and tensions between groups of African Americans and Afro Caribbeans in the neighborhood? Have you experienced this tension? If so, what is the source of this conflict?

- What are some of the topics of discussion as it relates to values and beliefs among African Americans and Afro Caribbeans?

Issues in the Neighborhood

- What issues in the neighborhood are related to Black co-ethnics, i.e., abortion?

- What are some of the topics of discussion among African Americans and Afro Caribbeans?

- What policy matters are of importance to you, i.e., immigration reform, family unification, etc.? What does it mean to you?

Bond of Cooperation

- What does a Black community mean to you? To what extent do you think about people of African descent constituting a broader community?

- If there are two candidates in the neighborhood who have similar platforms and qualifications, the only difference between the candidates is that one is African American and the other is Afro Caribbean. Whom would you be likely to support?

- Most African Americans think very similarly about the effect of race in the United States. Do you think it is important for all peoples of African descent to see eye-to-eye on matters and problems of race?

- Some argue that there are many lines of cleavage between African Americans and Afro Caribbeans. What are the prospects of seeing an interethnic coalition, social solidarity, homogeneity between the two ethnic groups? What will this mean to you?

Appendix D: Focus Group Questions

- The neighborhood community is a place where integration of groups can take place. Afro Caribbean immigrants and Southern African American migrants have occupied this space in Addisleigh Park in St. Albans. What have been your experiences of this sample area and how have they affected you?
- Describe the experience toward you or your parents when you or your parents came to the sample area by the people whom you or your parents met there?
- What does it mean for you growing up in this neighborhood community sample, with one parent being African Caribbean immigrants and the other being Southern African American?
- Who of Afro Caribbean immigrant or Southern African American descent and who has lived in or is associated at some time with the sample area has contributed to this neighborhood community and has gone on to achieve something remarkable?

Appendix E: White Favoritism Toward West Indians Questions

- How do you describe yourself to someone who asks you about your social background?
- How do you feel about Black immigrants coming to the United States?
- Do you treat West Indians differently than African Americans?
- Do you make distinctions between West Indians and African Americans?
- Do you treat West Indians differently because they are immigrants? If so, why?
- Do you think West Indians interact with Whites differently than they do with other ethnic groups?
- How do you respond to people who say that Whites favor West Indians more than they do African Americans?
- How do you respond to historical interpretations of slavery of Black people, the Civil Rights Movement, and their discontent?
- Do Whites who favor West Indians in the workplace in the United States contribute to their economic well-being that may cause them to fare better than African Americans? If so, why?
- What other (if any) information or advice do you have for the researcher while doing this study?

Appendix F: Introduction of the Study

Southern African American Migrants and Afro Caribbean Immigrant Research Study

The study is about how Southern African Americans and Afro Caribbean immigrants (and their descendants), people of diverse origins with conflict and tensions between tradition of newly arrived immigrants and with mainstream African American culture through social integration, adaptation and their culture -- accepted collection of values, attitudes, and beliefs -- over time experienced possible changed relations and social solidarity.

The study seeks to document the changing structural, social, and cultural nature of life in the Saint Albans neighborhood community of Queens, New York. As a neighborhood, it is home to a majority of Southern African American migrants and Afro Caribbean immigrants and has grown more religiously and ethnically with African Americans and Afro Caribbeans making up approximately 93% of its population, many of whom have relocated from Harlem and Brooklyn, New York. The study arose because of my interest in the social interaction and relations between the two ethnic groups and a desire to understand better the nature of their social integration and relations.

During 2016-2017, the study will be based in Saint Albans, one of the urban neighborhoods in Queens, New York. The study researcher will visit public institutions and commercial establishments, observe daily events and special occasions, speak informally and in arranged interviews with residents, businesspeople, clergy, and private and public organizational personnel.

The study will seek to understand life in Saint Albans from various points of view: old, middle age and young; women and men; long-term residents and newcomers of both ethnic groups. No one will be interviewed who does not wish to be. The study will depend on the goodwill and cooperation of the residents in Saint Albans and those and those of the same background and experience. Arranged formal interviews with residents will be confidential to protect the privacy of people, making up names for people who are interviewed, and any details that might reveal a person's identity will be altered. Interviews with community representatives will seek information of a public nature. The same protection of privacy will apply to any personal information that is mentioned during the interviews.

The study seeks to obtain a many-sided view of life in Saint Albans and not that of a single person, group, or organization. The reports of the study will reflect diverse viewpoints of those from whom the researcher gathered information, with the hope that the results of the study will be helpful to scholars, personnel in human relations, and anyone interested in Black ethnic studies, their religious life and culture, and the broader issues of multiculturalism, immigration and migration, and the influence of civil societies in the history of international human relations and agency.

The researcher will be sensitive to the needs and concerns of the people in the neighborhood community and will seek ways in which the work of the study can be in harmony with the goals of residents and its organizations.

The study researcher is John A. Nelson, a graduate student of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. The study project can be contacted through Teachers College, Columbia University.

Appendix G: Informed Consent

Subject Information and Consent Form

The Tapestry of Human Relations Between Southern African American Migrants and Afro-Caribbean Immigrants in a New York City Neighborhood

Qualified Investigator

John Alexander Nelson

Sponsor

Dr. Lambros Comitas/Hervé Varenne
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study in human relations. It is your choice if you want to be in this study or not. Research studies are ways of finding out new information that might help other people with similar experiences as found in the Saint Albans neighborhood. This form explains why I am doing this study and how the information gathered will be different from other relational experiences. It tells you what will happen during the study. It also tells you about risks in the study. It also gives a complete description of what will be offered. It also gives a complete description and information that will help you decide whether you would wish to take part in the study or not.

You may qualify to take part in this research study because you are over 18 years old, you are a Southern African American or a descendant, an Afro Caribbean immigrant or

descendant, who has lived in Harlem, New York or Brooklyn, New York, who migrated to the Saint Albans neighborhood community after the Second World War or the 1960s or a descendant living or having lived in the neighborhood. If you are presently participating in a study, you can still be part of this study. Approximately twenty people will participate in the study, and it will take two hours of your time to complete.

Why is this study being done?

This study is being undertaken to determine whether changed social relations occurred between two ethnic groups with strained relations who are living in symbiosis in the Saint Albans neighborhood community.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part in this study?

If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by the principal investigator. During the interview, you will be asked questions, e.g.:

- your life history
- your experience of living in this neighborhood community
- your interactions among Black migrants and immigrants in the neighborhood
- what meaning is derived from these experiences

This interview will be audio tape recorded. After the audio recording is written down, it will be deleted. If you do not wish to be audio-recorded, you will still be able to participate. The interview will take approximately one hour and thirty minutes. You will be given a pseudonym or false name/de-identified code in order to keep your identity confidential. Each participant in the study will be asked not to discuss what is being shared, but it is impossible to guarantee complete confidentiality. Finally, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. This will take

about fifteen minutes. All of these procedures will take place at the research setting or at any agreed place at a time that is convenient to you.

What possible risks or discomforts can I expect from taking part in this study?

This is a minimal risk study, which means the harms or discomforts that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life while taking routine physical examinations or tests. However, there are some risks to consider. You might feel embarrassed to discuss problems that you have experienced in your life or while living in Saint Albans. However, you do not have to answer any questions or divulge anything you don't want to talk about. You can stop participating in the study at any time. You might feel concerned that things you say might get back to you or anyone related to you. The principal investigator is taking precautions to keep your information confidential and prevent anyone from discovering or guessing your identity, such as using a code or pseudonym instead of your name and keeping all your information in a locked file drawer.

What possible benefits can I expect from taking part in this study?

There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study. Participation may benefit educators in the field of human relations to better understand some of the ways of training and informing student researchers.

Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will not be paid to participate; however, minor costs (i.e., transportation, refreshments or effort) will be covered. There are no costs to you for taking part in this study.

When is the study over? Can I leave the study before it ends?

The study will be over when you have completed the interview and filled out the questionnaire. However, you can leave the study at any time, even if you have not finished. You will still be paid for the promised incurred cost (transportation, effort, refreshments).

Protection of Your Confidentiality

The investigator will keep all audio recording and written material locked in a filing cabinet in a locked office. What is on the audio recording will be written down, and the audio recording will then be destroyed. There will be no record matching your real name with your pseudonym.

How will the results be used?

The results of this study is in part a fulfillment of an Ed.D. dissertation of the principal investigator.

Who may view my participation in this study?

_____ I consent to allow written or audio materials to be viewed at an educational setting at Teachers College, Columbia University.

…….
Signature

_____ I do not consent to allow written or audiotaped materials to be viewed outside of Teachers College, Columbia University.

……
Signature

Who can answer my questions about the study?

If you have any questions about taking part in this research study, you should contact the Principal Investigator, John A. Nelson, at 718-790-3365 or jan63@tc.columbia.edu.

If you have questions about taking part in this research because of concerns about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Board (IRB), the human research ethics committee at 212-678-

4015 or email irb@tc.edu, or you can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027. The IRB is the committee that oversees human research protection for Teachers College, Columbia University.

Participant's Rights

Research Title

An Exploratory Ethnography of Human Social Relations in an Inner-City Neighborhood

Principal Investigator

John Alexander Nelson
Ed.D. Candidate
Teachers College, Columbia University

Sponsor

Dr. Lambros Comitas/Hervé Varenne
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY

- I have read and discussed informed consent with the researcher. I have a sample opportunity to ask questions about the purposes, procedures, risks, and benefits regarding this research.

- I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw participation at any time without penalty.

- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his professional discretion or the condition of illness or emergencies.

- If during the course of this study significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue my participation, the researcher will provide this information to me.

- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.

- If at any time I have any question regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is 718-790-3365.

- If at any time I have comments or concerns regarding the conduct of the researcher or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board / IRB. The phone number for the IRB is 212-678-4105, or I can write to the IRB, Teachers College, Columbia University , 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027 (Box 151).

- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.

- If video and/or audio taping is part of the research, I [ ] consent to be audio / videotaped OR I [ ] do NOT consent to be audio / videotaped. The written audio and/or video taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator.

- Short segments of the written video and/or audio taped materials [ ] may be viewed in university classrooms, meetings, or professional associations or other similar settings OR [ ] may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

- My signature means that I agree to participate in this research.

…….. ……
…

Participant's signature Date

Printed name:
……

Appendix H: Observational Protocol

ID: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____ Place: _____

Observation:

Reflection:

Appendix I: Thank You Note

January 10, 2018

Dear Participant,

I want to thank you again for participating in our study and sharing your experiences and opinions with me during the interview.

While I am not yet ready to conduct focus groups and more interviews, I also want to express my gratitude for your willingness to participate in a future focus group or interview.

I am at the moment analyzing the transcripts from our first round of interviews. I have included a copy of your transcript. The draft reflects your answers as they were recorded.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions or corrections. You indicated during the interview that you will be willing to answer more questions. Any further questioning will be limited and will be sent to you by mail. Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer them.

Again, if you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact me: P. O. Box 415, Mount Vernon, New York.10552

Sincerely,

John A. Nelson
Graduate Student
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York

Appendix J: A Sample of Names and Characteristics of Respondents

Names	Occupation
Females	
Annette	Nurse
April	Clerk
Beulah	Dental Assistant
Beverly	Assistant Director, Public Affair
Christine	Registered Nurse
Christine	Nurses Assistant
Cynthia	Homemaker
Doris	Teacher's Aide
Denise	Career
Doris	Director of Social Work
Elaine	Teacher
Gwendolyn	Secretary
Jessica	Administrator
Joan	School Principal
Muriel	Guidance Counselor
Norma	Graduate Student
Serina	Career
Sharon	Rental Manager
Veronica	Secretary
Victoria	Store Manager

Names	Occupation
Males	
Alexander	Teacher
Alexis	Medical Assistant
Anthony	Librarian
Charles	Organist
Dennis	Former School Chancellor, President, CEO
Doug	Professor
Emeric	Lawyer
Frank	Optometrist
George	Policeman
Harold	Engineer
Hubert	Counselor
John	Clerk
Joseph	Porter
Keith	Priest
Leroy	Senator
Patrick	Social Worker
Peter	Bank Manager
Ralph	Activist
Randolph	Photographer, Community Organizer
Samuel	Businessman
Winston	College Professor