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West Indian Immigrant Adaptation: The Role of Cross-Pressures

By Milton Vickerman

Introduction

By now, the polarized reactions of blacks and whites to the O.J. Simpson verdict have become fixed in the minds of all Americans. According to conventional wisdom the verdict revealed the existence of serious racial schisms and has led to much soul-searching over how relations between various racial/ethnic groups could have deteriorated so drastically. But reactions in the wake of the O.J. Simpson verdict have often been disingenuous inasmuch as they have implied an ignorance of the fact that, in the words of Cornell West, in America, “race matters.” In reality, anyone taking a clear-eyed view of American society would have seen that race is enormously important in this country. Given the conflicts that have surrounded it, an excellent case could be made for the argument that it should be less important. Indeed, it is hard to see that anything positive would have been lost if people stopped thinking racially; if the country attained the vaunted “color blind” ideal. However, to be realistic about the situation, we need to distinguish between the “ought” and the “is.” “Color blindness” is a noble ideal but, at present, it is far from feasible. In present-day American society race *is* important and will likely remain so for some time to come.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss ideas of race and achievement as they emanate from West Indian immigrants.¹ I argue that these immigrants, part of the post-1965 upsurge in non-white immigrants, are helping to cement the significance of race in American life but making the racial picture more complex at the same time. This is occurring because their numbers are growing, their economic performance questions the traditional link that has been made between race and achievement, and their experiences in this country validate the complaints emanating from African-Americans about racial discrimination. In short, West Indians embody the contradictions that are often found among black immigrants and upwardly-mobile blacks in post-Civil Rights America;² the reason being that they are operating under cross-pressures stemming from the conflict between their unique history/socialization/demographic reality and the existence of opposite realities in the United States. These cross-pressures cause West Indians to exhibit a marked ambivalence to life in America and to African Americans. Throughout the paper, I will illustrate these

points with data taken from first-hand interviews with West Indians in the New York City area.³

The Impact of Immigration

A major reason why race will continue to be important in American society is that immigration and differential fertility rates among various racial/ethnic groups are causing the American population to become ever more heterogenous. Following 1965 reforms in immigration laws, the immigrant stream shifted radically away from Europe towards Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The data tell the story: Prior to 1965, upwards of 70 percent of all immigrants originated in Europe, but between 1980 and 1991 only 9 percent of immigrants fell into this category. Instead, we find in that decade, that 35 percent of all immigrants originated in Asia, and Mexico, alone, accounted for 27 percent of all immigrants. If Central and South American sources are included, the Latin component in that decade rises to 39 percent. Similarly, immigration from the Caribbean has registered impressive gains. Where these immigrants accounted for only 4 percent of all immigrants between 1951 and 1959, between 1970 and 1979 they accounted for 15 percent.⁴ Indeed, West Indian countries such as Jamaica and Guyana have astoundingly high immigration rates—higher, in fact, than almost all other countries. These data are important because they point to the fact that the American population is being diversified. The Census Bureau has estimated, for instance, that over the next 60 years, the white population might decline by as much as 12 percent, while the black, Asian, and Hispanic populations might grow by 3, 8, and 13 percent, respectively.⁵

The growth of these populations is strengthening and challenging traditional American views of race, thereby creating new tensions in the society. Traditionally, Americans have viewed “race relations” as revolving around “blacks” and “whites.”⁶ They have regarded these categories as fixed by biology but, in reality, have constructed them socially. This means that Americans have chosen to imbue obvious physical features and the ambiguities associated with human ancestry with particular meaning.⁷ The well-known “one-drop rule” is the best example of this in American history since it has posited that any individual with any known African ancestry, regardless of their appearance, is to be deemed “black.”⁸ Similarly, though the category “white” is often taken as a given, historical research has shown that some populations now accepted as such—e.g., Eastern Europeans—were, in the past, suspected of conforming to the “white” ideal only fitfully. To be certain, physically, they were Caucasian but their different culture and poverty in an age emphasizing racial “fitness” caused native-born Americans to suspect whether they were really “white.”⁹ Thus, while obvious physical differences exist between various human populations, the intrinsic meaning of these features is often in doubt and has to be interpreted within particular social contexts.

In addition to challenging received ideas about race, immigration is also creating new tensions in American society. An excellent example of this is to be found in Wausau, Wisconsin, where Hmong refugees in a formerly homogenous white city have come to play the role normally associated in the public mind with inner-city blacks. Although they did not register in the 1980 census, by 1990 the Hmong constituted 89 percent of Wausau's Asian population. This rapid population growth, fueled by a tradition of having large families, the overall youthfulness of the Hmong population, and their need for expanded educational facilities and welfare has led to the development of a white backlash.¹⁰ Although differing in detail, similar conflicts between groups that are relatively new to the American scene can be found among blacks and Koreans in various cities, Hispanics and Hasidic Jews in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York, and West Indians and Hasidics in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. The likelihood is that as immigration increasingly brings different groups into contact with each other, more of these conflicting situations will arise.

Cross-Pressures: Definitions and Preconditions in the West Indies

West Indians figure prominently among the current surge of non-white immigrants migrating to the United States; and this is but the latest (though largest) phase of three successive waves of migration that have taken West Indians to this country since around the turn of the century. However, regardless of their time of arrival, West Indian immigrants have faced certain common problems. The most important of these is that they have had to operate under severe cross-pressures which have significantly shaped their adaptation to American society. The concept of cross-pressures refers to situations in which individuals find themselves being pulled in opposite directions by opposing forces. So defined, we find cross-pressures occurring in a wide variety of settings. In the political arena, for example, cross-pressures have been found to cause voters to procrastinate, to exhibit unstable voting behavior, and to withdraw from the political process altogether.¹¹ With respect to religion, individuals subject to cross-pressures have been found to exhibit discrepancies between their stated religious preference and actual participation in religious organizations espousing doctrines consistent with these preferences.¹² And cross-pressures can prove to be a divisive element in ethnic groups seeking to present a united front in political and economic struggles with other groups.¹³

West Indian immigrants in this country experience cross-pressures for three primary reasons. First, most West Indian countries measure race on a sliding scale instead of very strictly as Americans are wont to do. Where, for instance, Americans have posited a dichotomous racial scheme consisting of "blacks" and "whites," and have defined "blackness" very strictly, West Indians have always recognized the presence of at least three hierarchical strata: a white elite, the black masses at

the bottom of these societies, and an intermediate "brown" or colored segment stemming from sexual relations between blacks and whites. Traditionally these segments, though theoretically caste-like, have overlapped with each other such that lighter-skinned and wealthy members of the middle segment have gained acceptance as "white." Moreover, to some extent, the idea that "money whitens" has applied. This has meant that as darker-skinned individuals have gained greater amounts of wealth and education they have come to be seen as "white."¹⁴ The situation has been made even more complex by economic and political developments this century which have somewhat delinked the traditional relationship between skin color/shade and wealth and social status. In many West Indian societies, race is not merely a question of ancestry and appearance (which is often difficult to decipher because of widespread miscegenation), but also of wealth, education, and occupation. Taking all of these factors into account, in deciding an individual's race renders the concept more complex than is the case in the United States. The social construction of race has been even more evident in the West Indies than it has been in this country.¹⁵

In many West Indian societies, race is not merely a question of ancestry and appearance...but also of wealth, education, and occupation.

A second important factor present in West Indian societies which leads those immigrants to experience cross-pressures in this country is that West Indians, most of whom by American standards are "black," occupy a majority status in their home societies. By this I mean that, demographically speaking, they far outnumber any other group. For instance, in Jamaica, blacks have constituted at least 74 percent of the population for the past 150 years; and this is a conservative estimate since: (a) their majority status became evident very shortly after the British conquered the island from Spain in 1655 and (b) many individuals who in Jamaican society label themselves "colored" would in this country be regarded as "black." Thus, the black population of the island could be over 90 percent; conversely, whites constitute less than one percent of the island's population.¹⁶ A second important aspect of majority status is that blacks control the political apparatus of many West Indian societies. Thus, their prime ministers of government and civil servants all tend to be black.

These facts have the very important consequence of allowing West Indians to sidestep the issue of race in their daily lives. Since they are a majority of the population, they usually do not have to think about race. Moreover, being members of a majority group causes West Indians to delink race from achievement since, on a daily basis, they encounter a wide range of role models, from social failures to supreme court justices, all belonging to the

same race. To West Indians, race has little to do with achievement. Instead, they usually place intense stress on merit, especially as demonstrated through the attainment of educational qualifications. But, for them, “education” goes beyond mere book learning and into such implications as having respect for law and order, being well-behaved, and speaking and dressing well.¹⁷

A third key factor leading to the experience of cross-pressures among West Indian immigrants is that many West Indian societies possess deeply-entrenched ideologies inveighing against race thinking. Again, Jamaica is instructive in this regard. Its national motto—“Out of Many, One People”—literally means that though widespread miscegenation has taken place historically, and though a wide variety of races and ethnicities are to be found living on the island, these differences are not particularly important. Instead, all groups form one united people, Jamaicans. Several commentators have convincingly argued that such race-denying ideologies exist because the light-skinned elites who continue to dominate island economies need to distract the poor (often black) from this reality.¹⁸

Thus, to say that West Indians define race liberally and that they can avoid it in their daily lives is not to say that it is unimportant. Potentially, race is a very explosive factor in these societies because of the aforementioned correlation, and the anti-race ideologies serve the purpose of suppressing its public expression. This works very well since in Jamaica, for instance, race rarely becomes a public issue and individuals making overt racial appeals quickly find themselves silenced by being branded “racists.” This is a very serious charge in societies that pride themselves on the non-importance of race in the attainment of upward mobility. As I noted previously, West Indians tend to emphasize merit and regard public expression of racial ideas as seriously misguided, at best, and quite dangerous, at worst. The key point to bear in mind is that many West Indians strongly embrace their societies’ anti-race ideologies and, consequently, habitually think in non-racial terms.

Specific Cross-Pressures Affecting West Indian Immigrants

As mentioned in my discussion of immigration, American society differs rather dramatically from West Indian societies with respect to the three points outlined above. Americans tend to: 1) define race very strictly; 2) hold rather negative stereotypes of blacks who clearly form a minority group (politically and demographically); and, 3) practice obvious racialism, despite the existence of ideologies downplaying race. It is the meeting of these opposites that produces four specific cross-pressures among West Indian immigrants:

1. possibilities for economic achievement/the focus on merit vs. racist stereotypes limiting blacks;
2. conservative social attitudes in West Indians vs. public attitudes equating blacks with a variety of social problems;

3. West Indians’ tendency to ignore race and measure it liberally vs. Americans’ tendency to overemphasize and define it strictly; and,
4. West Indians’ tendency to resist assimilation into the African-American population and desire to institute their more liberal view of race vs. the society’s tendency to lump all individuals of African ancestry together.

Although not a comprehensive listing, these four points show the main cross-pressures faced by West Indian immigrants. In explaining how these work out on an everyday basis, it is convenient to treat them together. To begin with, we find that West Indians, migrating from economically underdeveloped islands, place economic achievement at the top of their list of priorities; and, comparing their homelands with the United States, view the latter as possessing great scope for bringing about upward mobility. Among other things, this means that West Indians tend to be highly motivated.¹⁹ One measure of this is the stereotype (often true) that several members of West Indian families will simultaneously work at many jobs. Census data reflect these facts in that they show West Indians to have the highest labor force participation rate of all groups. For instance, the overall U.S. labor force participation rate in 1990 was 65.3 but Jamaicans registered a figure of 77.4, Trinidadians, 77.2, and the Guyanese, 74.2. In contrast, the figure for whites was 65.5 and for African Americans, 62.7. As a result of facts such as these, West Indians display several socioeconomic indicators that hover around the national median. For example, the Census Bureau reports that where the median family income, in 1990, for all American families was \$35,225, that for the Guyanese was \$36,278 and Jamaicans, \$34,018.

West Indians’ focus on economic issues is accompanied by conservative social attitudes deriving from their socialization—recall our discussion of the emphasis on and meaning of “education.” Among other things, this means that, at best, they express lukewarm support for affirmative action²⁰ and hostility towards welfare. Note, for instance, the opinions on the latter of one Jamaican whom I interviewed:

[Black Americans] believe that America owes them something from slavery...for America to pay them off for what happened...We [West Indians] all come here as slaves but we were taught to work for a living. We have nothing named welfare in Jamaica. If you don’t work, you don’t eat...Welfare is for the handicapped. Welfare is for a child...Welfare is to assist you until you can come off your legs...But nobody sit down, haughty and strong and accepting money: I don’t believe in that...A lot of that is going on.

The relatively harsh tone taken towards African Americans in this excerpt is the factor that has fixated

many observers for decades. Commentators, going all the way back to the 1920s (e.g., Reid 1939)²¹ have recorded this intra-ethnic conflict and, today, we still find great interest in this aspect of West Indian/African-American relations. One reason for this is that West Indians, being mainly black but somewhat successful, seem to give the lie to the notion that race poses a significant obstacle for the success of blacks in American society. The idea is that if they can achieve success, so too can African Americans. And, unfortunately, it is true that many West Indians tend to distance themselves from African Americans, holding some of the same damaging stereotypes one finds in the larger society.

There is no doubt that possessing values stressing hard work and self-sacrifice will, if applied by any group, yield certain benefits but like many other issues affecting West Indians this is only one side of the story. We need to examine the other forces pulling at these immigrants. As much as some West Indians would distance themselves from some African Americans, they find that Americans do not hesitate to lump all blacks together, applying to them singularly negative stereotypes. Indeed, the stereotypes held by some West Indians towards some African Americans stem from their realization that Americans tend to discriminate against individuals with black skin, regardless of whether they are native or foreign-born. The West Indian reaction is an attempt to differentiate themselves; to say that since they uphold values of achievement and conformity to social norms, they should receive better treatment than African Americans.

It often takes West Indians several years of residence in this country to understand that though Americans may understand, intellectually, that differences exist between West Indians and African Americans, in many instances this makes no difference in how West Indians are treated. I do not wish to be categorical here since some evidence exists to support West Indians' contention that employers prefer them over African Americans.²² However, like African Americans, West Indians also experience employment discrimination, physical violence, threats, and avoidance behaviors (especially in public) stemming from race. Overall, they must contend with the same negative stereotypes of blacks which daily challenge African Americans. Consider the following example taken from my interviews with West Indians in New York City. An engineer described his difficulties obtaining promotion in his company:

For promotion, I had a hard time. I remember once...I was assistant to this guy for a while and he was promoted and I thought, well, I'm going to succeed this guy; just fit into his slot. But I was there, still acting. Then this...Irish guy said: "You know...the chief is looking around for someone from outside." I said: "What!: Because, you know, in Jamaica we were taught that you go up by merit...So I thought that since I was there they wouldn't

look for somebody [from] outside. It was a shock to me...I was doing the work but I would be in charge of all whites...They didn't want me to do that.

Or take this example of racial threats as experienced by a middle-aged accountant:

I go to the track one day a year--the Belmont stakes...There are...benches around the place that you can sit on; not reserved, not paid for...And we sat and these people stated to tell us that these seats were reserved. So we said, "Look, these seats are not reserved..." And this redneck guy looked around and told us that...he used to...kill black people!

Perceptions such as this result from West Indians' gradual realization that much of American life revolves around race and that severely negative stereotypes attach to "blackness," in particular. The problem, from the West Indian point of view, is that their society trains them to ignore race, to define it broadly (recall the distinction between "blacks" and "coloreds") and to detach notions of race from achievement. In a sense, they feel that America betrays their (and its) higher ideals by pandering to baser racial sentiments. While they do not abandon these ideals, over time West Indians cannot help but be influenced by American society's pervasive racialism. Their racial experiences push them towards African Americans as much as their history and conservative socialization push them away. The result of these push and pull forces is an ambivalence towards life in America and towards African Americans. With respect to the former, West Indians express the sentiment that living in America is economically advantageous but socially stressful. Resenting the society's attempt to impose limiting notions of "blackness" on them, they react by resisting assimilation.

With respect to African Americans, long-term residents begin to counter anti-African-American stereotypes that are most frequently heard among newly-arrived West Indian immigrants. After the actual experience of discrimination, West Indians begin to better understand the African-American point of view. However, this does not mean that they abandon their ideals or ethnicity. Hence, we begin to see a more positive if, at times, still ambivalent response towards African Americans. Two respondents stated:

Those [African-Americans] that I have worked with who are professionals work just as hard as West Indians...But the ones on the lower end...don't work! They don't like work! So, again, I think it has to do with the level of education. Probably that's the very reasons why they are uneducated: they don't work in school either. But those that have managed to come through the school system and become professionals work very hard.

I wouldn't say [that I have] a lot of black American friends but I am beginning to find out that I tolerate black Americans more than I do Jamaicans nowadays...There is a certain arrogance that Jamaicans have that...is not warranted...and I find it very disturbing...I think it's wrong and I think it's ridiculous...It doesn't do Jamaicans any good and it doesn't do black Americans any good.

Conclusion

Comparing these positive sentiments with the more negative ones discussed above illustrates the cross-pressures under which West Indian immigrants are operating. To repeat: These stem from conflict between socialization in societies that define race loosely and de-emphasize it; and American society which strictly defines "blackness," views it as very salient, and attaches to it a variety of very negative stereotypes. While such stereotypes also exist in the West Indies, culture, politics, and demographic realities conspire to quash them. America is the opposite in all of these respects. West Indians cope with these conflicts in several ways, including: 1) embracing anti-black sentiments; 2) rejecting anti-black sentiments and identifying with African Americans; 3) ignoring race altogether and focusing instead on achievement; 4) procrastinating with respect to becoming citizens, thereby maintaining psychological distance between themselves and anti-black stereotypes; and, 5) positing themselves as role models for African Americans. This latter formulation attempts to combine distancing and identification by holding that values emphasizing achievement effectively separate West Indians from some African Americans, but that should the latter emulate these values they too will achieve success.

Although West Indians do score higher on several socio-economic indices than do African Americans, a more comprehensive view of the situation reveals that several groups score much higher than do West Indians in terms of their socioeconomic indicators. For instance, while the median family income of Trinidadians significantly exceeds that of African Americans (\$33,206 to \$22,429), it still falls below the median for the nation as a whole (\$35,225) and far below, say, that of Asian Indians (\$49,309). Similarly, with respect to secondary education, we find that 70 percent of Jamaicans over 25 years of age have graduated from high school. This exceeds the figure for African Americans (66 percent) but falls below the average for the whole country (78 percent) and many Asian groups—for example: Asian Indians (87 percent) and Filipinos (92 percent).

This implies that though values influence achievement, structural factors may be even more important. Even West Indians, themselves, realize this since in my discussions with them several indicated that they do not expect discrimination against blacks to disappear. Rather, they intend (and exhort African Americans) to maximize the opportunities that present themselves within the existing

barriers. Thus, even with respect to achievement, we see contradictory forces at work: a clash between high motivation and values emphasizing hard work and education, on the one hand, and on the other, a pessimistic assessment that attitudes and practices in America still tend to hinder achievement by blacks. In the end, we have to conclude that cross-pressures are a permanent part of relations between West Indians and African Americans since they stem from virtually unchangeable historical and social realities. The growing size of West Indian communities in such core areas of settlement as Flatbush and Crown Heights underscores this fact since immigration is diversifying the black community as much as it is diversifying the population as a whole. Census Ancestry²³ data indicate that roughly 12 percent of all blacks in the Northeast (the region with the highest concentration of West Indians) claim West Indian heritage. Despite these factors, one would hope (as tends to happen over time) that West Indians would eschew their often-negative characterizations of African Americans and recognize that, in several ways, both groups experience circumstances which emphasize their essential similarities in a country that places a premium on skin color.

Notes

¹Generally speaking, the term "West Indian" refers to inhabitants of the non-Hispanic island in the Caribbean sea, in addition to mainland territories (e.g., Guyana and Belize) with close historical and cultural ties to these islands. Because individuals from the British West Indies—e.g., Jamaicans and Trinidadians—dominate the flow of immigrants to the United States, the term is often used in a more limited sense to refer to these immigrants. See David Lowenthal, *West Indian Societies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 2-4; Philip Kasinitz, *Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992).

²See, for example, Howard Kohn, "Humiliation, Sunny Side Up," *New York Times Magazine*, November 6, 1994, 42-80.

³Consisting of over 100 interviews with foreign-born Jamaican males, these were conducted, using "snowball" methodology, between 1988 and 1990 in the New York City area. These respondents ranged from university professors to mechanics and averaged 41 years of age. They had lived in the United States between 1 and 34 years, with an average length of residence of 11.5 years.

⁴Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1992.

⁵U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1993*, 113th edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), Table 20. These projections assume net immigration rates of 1,370,000 per year.

⁶The media's coverage of the O.J. Simpson case presents an excellent illustration of this fact. Throughout the trial, they were primarily concerned with the reactions of blacks and whites. The split-screen technique, on the day of the verdict, showing the reactions of whites and blacks, side-by-side, powerfully symbolized the media's fixation on these two groups. They hardly expressed interest in the views of, for instance, Asians or Hispanics.

⁷Jonathan Marks, *Human Biodiversity: Genes, Race, and History* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995).

⁸F. James Davis, *Who is Black?: One Nation's Definition* (University Park: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991) and Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 1980).

⁹Thomas Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (Dallas: SMU Press, 1975).

¹⁰Roy Beck, "The Ordeal of Immigration in Wausau," *The Atlantic Monthly* (April 1994): 84-97.

¹¹Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee, *Voting* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), 284; Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1981).

¹²Wade Clark Roof, "The Ambiguities of 'Religious Preference' in Survey Research—A Methodological Note," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 44 (3) (1980): 403-407.

¹³Stephen S. Fugit and David J. O'Brien, "Economics, Ideology, and Ethnicity: The Struggle Between the United Farm Workers Union and the Nisei Farmers League," *Social Problems*, vol. 5 (1977): 146-156.

¹⁴Gad Heumann, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and the Free Coloreds in Jamaica, 1792-1865* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981); Douglas Hall, "The Ex-Colonial Society in Jamaica," in Emmanuel DeKadt (Ed.) *Patterns of Foreign Influence in the Caribbean* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 32-48.

¹⁵Lowenthal, *West Indian Societies*; Carl Stone, "Race and Economic Power in Jamaica," *Caribbean Review*, vol. xvi (Spring 1988): 10-34.

¹⁶See, Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1972), 151; George W. Roberts, *The Population of Jamaica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 65; Colin Clarke, *Kingston, Jamaica* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 152; The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, *Pocketbook of Statistics* (Kingston: The Statistical Institute of Jamaica), 27.

¹⁷Diane J. Austin, *Urban Life in Kingston, Jamaica: The Culture and Class Ideology of Two Neighborhoods* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1987); Nancy Foner, *Status and Power in Rural Jamaica: A Study of Educational and Political Change* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1973); Adam Kuper, *Changing Jamaica* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976). This point does not ignore the existence of drug-dealing gangs centered around Jamaican immigrants ("posses"). These, however, do not typify West Indians and are only a latter-day manifestation of social tensions in Jamaican society. Sentiments touting the importance of "education" are more deeply-rooted than is drug dealing.

¹⁸See, for example, Rex Nettleford, *Caribbean Cultural Identity: The Case of Jamaica* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1978); Trevor Monroe, "The Left and Questions of Race in Jamaica," in Rupert Lewis and Patrick Bryan (Eds.) *Garvey: His Work and Impact* (Trenton: African World Press, 1991), 283-298; Carl Stone, "Race and Economic Power in Jamaica."

¹⁹Palmer has shown, however, that greater numbers of immigrants have been entering under the family reunification provisions of the immigration law. Correspondingly, fewer professionals have been emigrating from the West Indies. (*Pilgrims from the Sun* [New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995], 34.)

²⁰Actually, most of the West Indians whom I interviewed were unfamiliar with the policy but the ones who were indicated ambivalence. One would expect this given that West Indian culture emphasizes merit.

²¹Ira D. A. Reid, *The Negro Immigrant* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939).

²²Jonathan Kaufman, "Help Unwanted: Immigrant's Businesses often Refuse to Hire Blacks in Inner City," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 6, 1995, A1.

²³It should be emphasized that these data provide only a rough estimate since they define "ancestry" vaguely; for example, it can be unclear how many generations are being measured and individuals may claim multiple ancestries.

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