LOCAL LIVES, GLOBAL STAGE: DIASPORIC EXPERIENCES AND CHANGING FAMILY FORMATION PRACTICES ON THE CARIBBEAN ISLAND OF SABA, NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

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ABSTRACT

AMY ELIZABETH SULLIVAN: Local Lives, Global Stage: Diasporic experiences and changing
family formation practices on the Caribbean island of Saba, Netherlands Antilles
(Under the direction of Paul Leslie)

Collectively, this body of research delineates the ways that contemporary Saban family life

emerged through the creative interplay between past and present experiences of movement, labor, and

family forged within the specificities of the on-going Saban Diaspora. Integrative sociodemographic

and ethnographic analyses revealed that changes in these relationships have been most dynamic in the

black population where non-marital childbearing and growing up in a non-marital home moved from

a minority to a majority experience over the past 150 years and where many black women, through

partner neglect or personal choice, came to inhabit the emotional and economic centers of their

children's lives. Conversely, the social script for forming families in the white community stayed

remarkably stable over time and is characterized by same-race marriage before childbearing and an

increasingly challenged but still strong belief that women should primarily fulfill their roles as mother

and homemaker while their men labor outside the domestic sphere. In addition to these general

trends, divorce, multiple marriages, step-parent and half-sibling relationships, child support issues,

and an increased prevalence of interracial and interethnic relationships and childbearing over the past

20 years have all added layers of complexity to family life in both communities and are connected to

migration and labor experiences in myriad ways. Despite a gradual movement towards non-marital

women-centered family forms in the black community and recent diversification of family life in the

white community after a prolonged period of entrenched family-building norms, historical

fluctuations in family formation patterns and Saban women's own perspectives on family life all

show period and cohort-specific effects that are crucial to our understanding of how modern Saban

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family life evolved within the context of successive labor regimes and associated migration trends. Detailed quantitative and qualitative descriptions of these variations not only place family formation processes in their appropriate historical context but also deconstruct reified notions of "black family life" or "white family life" by showing both the dynamic demographic aspects of how all kinds of Sabans built their families over time and the changes in underlying social, economic, and cultural reasoning that precipitated stabilities and shifts in these processes.

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Even though we never met, the amazing ethnographic work and renowned kindness of the late Julia Crane enriched this project beyond measure and paved the way for this small contribution to her impeccable body of research. Her love and respect for Saba and Saban people is still widely known and appreciated on-island and coming to understand her long-term deeply personal relationship with this special place taught me not only how to be an anthropologist but also how to be a more caring and empathetic human being. I hope that this work would meet her discerning standards and that she would not have spilled too much red ink across the pages that follow.

Although I count all of the people above as both my academic mentors and my friends, my long-term research also required and received the support and dedication of many others. All of the people that I met on Saba, native and ex-pat alike, have touched my life in so many ways and I hold these continued friendships in the highest esteem. When yet another stranger washed up on their shore, Sabans were ready with their legendary welcomes and very enthusiastic about participating in research that had the potential to help struggling families in their home communities. This is the dual essence of the Saban spirit: extend kindness to outsiders and a helping hand to your own.

While many islanders became my new friends, my deepest and oldest friendship kept me going even when I thought that I had nothing left to give. My husband, Scott Seibel, spent many a lonely evening with me glued to the computer and sacrificed many others listening to and assuaging my wide-ranging anxieties as this dissertation took shape. He did all of these things with grace, understanding, and a much needed sense of humor about it all. I am so unbelievably lucky to have him as my partner as we move beyond the bubble-world of chasing PhDs and into a future filled with new challenges and possibilities. Is breá liom tú i gcónaí, mo mhíle stór! Let's go climb Muckish...

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ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE: SABAN FAMILIES AS A SITE OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION WITHIN THE SABAN DIASPORA

The parting Saban measures his standing among his neighbors by the number that come to bid him farewell. He takes a final look at the village, singling out his own home among the dwellings. Silently, he clasps each friend and relative by the hand. Then, drawing his wife to one side, he takes her in his arms, whispers his last words of love. Each looks into a face whose lines, before another meeting, will deepen. Slowly, he goes down the flight of stone steps. At another ridge opposite, he stands for a moment, waving. The wife, grief-stricken, leans against the great boulder—handkerchief fluttering.

Between them is a chasm, which will become an ocean.

<div align="right">

--Kenneth Bolles
Caribbean Interlude: The Story of Saba the Rock, 1932

</div>

For generations, this chasm of separation stretched wide across unforgiving seas as Sabans at home and abroad struggled to survive in a fickle world. Many sons and daughters, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers found sudden death on those treacherous waves, loved ones hastily buried in unmarked watery graves. Some left and were never heard from again, their fate unknown to even their closest kin. Some died alone with their thoughts of home. Some returned broken while others flourished in foreign lands. All who survived weighed the measure of their successes against the pain of parting from their island and their people. For those who stayed, life was hard. Men worked their hands stiff scratching fields from scraps of rich but rocky mountainous soil. Women worked their eyes blind making drawn-thread work napkins for posh American dining rooms. Their thoughts often turned to those absent—an empty chair, an untended field, a promise perhaps forgotten. They hoped to get word that their kin in Aruba, Curacao, Bermuda and The States were happy and safe. They

prayed that those living abroad would send a little something home to help ease the hardships of life on the rock.

These are the Diasporic experiences that dominated life on this tiny speck of an island that rises defiantly, like its people, from the Caribbean Sea. Interlocking experiences of the Saban Diaspora carved the contours of Saban lives for generations and continue to imbue the collective memory of Sabans today. This is an omnipresent history that breathes life and pride into those who created it and those who heard tales of adventure, adversity and hardship back in the old days. It sends one clear message across time: Sabans are survivors. Knowledge of this past anchors present day experiences and allows Sabans to know themselves and their place in the world more richly. It allows them to understand how and why certain lifeways emerged on Saba and how those practices continue to interject themselves into the realities of modern island life. It inspires them to conceive of a future that honors the adaptability, determination, and grit of older generations of Sabans as the young continually strive to find purchase in an equally unpredictable modern global economy. It is this Saban sense of honoring history and family that proved to be the impetus and inspiration for this study of changing Saban family forms and their relation to broader local, regional, and global socioeconomic trends within the Saban Diaspora.

The Saban experience in Caribbean context

The Caribbean has been bound up in processes of Diaspora since its creation as a zone of European colonization in the late 15th century. It is an incredibly diverse region that shares a common history of European colonialism founded largely on extraction-oriented plantation-based economies, the enslavement of African peoples, and the exploitation of indentured servants and other migrants from all areas of the globe (Mintz, 1989, 1996; Olwig, 1981; Stinchome, 1994, 1995; Trouillot, 1992; Yelvington, 2000). The economic pursuits of European Colonialism and the associated legacy of racial and ethnic discrimination and repression ironically, perhaps poignantly, coexisted with the sociocultural and biological intermixing of many different kinds of people. This

shared historical context has left its mark on the Caribbean and, in many ways, made this region the first experiment of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic modernity, so much debated in recent times, that is signified by the acute ability of Caribbean people to express "a learned openness to cultural variety, an openness not so much relativistic as non-valuative-an openness which includes the expectation of cultural differences, and is not shocked by them" (Mintz, 1996: 295). In the context of European colonial activities, this "modern" Caribbean marked off a place where a complex array of people learned to understand the sameness and difference of each other's lives and to accommodate each other, with variable success, on a widespread scale and at a very early date. This constant social interaction through close proximity challenged Caribbean people to think broadly about the influences that shaped experience in their lives and to reflect on the ways that people different from but similar to themselves had helped to create the many worlds that Caribbean peoples simultaneously inhabit. Ultimately, history wove this unfinished tapestry of humanity together from the movements of many different kinds of people to and from these island homes and from the social interactions that marked the shifting boundaries of sameness, difference, conflict, and harmony across the long arch of time. By recognizing that the Caribbean, as a social space, emerged from these processes of movement and social interaction, the utility, and perhaps the necessity, of Diaspora theory and Diaspora perspectives becomes apparent in Caribbean Area Studies as the entity we now call The Caribbean has clearly been assembled and reassembled by Diasporic encounters and experiences from the moment that Columbus first laid eyes on the region.

However, sharing a common, if varied, Diasporic history rooted in European colonialism has not predetermined either the response of Caribbean nations, emancipated or still formally tied to European power, to the contemporary currents of the social, political, economic, and cultural world or the relationships that these small places forge with external sociopolitical entities. The points of view espoused by people living in the intersecting matrices of specific Caribbean Diasporas are diverse and debate about shoring-up the Caribbean as a common economic zone with common problems requiring common solutions is often stymied by appeal to this diversity of opinion and perspective.

Despite the problems involved with "figuring out what to do", it is clear that certain economic problems are shared by people throughout the Caribbean and that these problems are linked to wider economic forces like industrial modernization, free-market policies, neo-liberal trade agendas, massive out-migration, decimation of local agricultural industries, widening gaps between the rich and poor, and increasing dependence on tourism rather than production as the center of economic policy (Deere, 1990; Demas, 1997; Itzigsohn, 1995; Payne and Sutton, 2001; Portes et al., 1997). Economic dilemmas stem from the unequal power-laden, although not always predictable, interactions between competing local and non-local socioeconomic, political, and cultural perspectives on "how things should be run". In practice, these economic dilemmas are not experienced as monolithic external economic forces that exact the same effects, positive and negative, on individuals caught in their grip but are, instead, differentially experienced along multiple social axes like age, race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and, in particular, gender (Aymer, 1997; Barriteau, 2001; Bolles, 1983; Ellis, 2003; Freeman, 2000; Ho, 1999; Leo-Rhynie et al., 1997; Moberg, 1997; Mohammed, 2002; Mohammed and Shepherd, 1999; Momsen, 1993; Oropesa and Landale, 2000; Safa, 1995 a,b; Slocum, 2003; Yelvington, 1995). Negotiating the diversity inherent in Caribbean individual and collective experiences of these economic processes while trying to present a united front against perceived economic injustices will be the primary challenge for this region for the foreseeable future. The stakes are perhaps higher than they have ever been and the history of understanding, cooperation, and consensus building among many different kinds of people should, hopefully, allow this on-going conversation to forge a mutually acceptable collective Caribbean future.

Anthropological and social science research in the Caribbean reflects both the complexity of this area and the historically shifting intradisciplinary context of the work itself. As a whole, anthropology tended to stay away from engaging with the Caribbean until the second half of the 20th century while sociology remained content to study the "complex" and fully "modern" societies centered in Western Europe and North America (Mintz, 1996; Trouillot, 1992). The abandonment of

the Caribbean by anthropologists was due, in large measure, to the perceived lack of intact primitive cultural wholes available for study and the view that the constant cultural contact in this area of the world left only remnants of partial, incomplete, dilapidated, and therefore lesser, intermixed cultures that were inappropriate for anthropological inquiry. With the rapid reevaluation of the discipline beginning in the 1970s and extending through today, anthropologists began to take up interest in the Caribbean as a place where the new post-modern interests of hybridity, culture-contact, globalization, and Diaspora could be usefully examined. However, this emerging literature is still set in reference to the older literature and retains some of these earlier interests, especially with respect to studies of the family in Caribbean contexts.

Focus on the family has been intense in the Caribbean and this intensity is linked to the spoken and unspoken belief that the widespread practice of having children outside of marriage and the predominance of female-headed households in African-descended communities represents a dysfunction of community life that is in need of fixing (Clarke, 1966; Dirks, 1972; Goode, 1960, 1961; Rodman, 1966; Trouillot, 1992). Much of this discourse is similar to that found in sociological studies of poor, urban African-American communities in the United States and surfaces as much from a misunderstanding of those communities as it does from the middle-class, largely, although not exclusively, White, belief that this kind of family building practice is not culturally acceptable (Stack, 1974; Anderson, 1999). The question here is not one of whether or not these practices are acceptable in the abstract, but how and why they came to be acceptable to different people at different times and how notions of acceptability are shaped by individual and collective historical experience. By setting research on the family in reference to these earlier works, projects like this aim to shift the focus away from judgment and towards understanding of why people follow certain family-building paths while others go in entirely different directions. The family-building choices people make or feel compelled to make, the shifting historically specific cultural meanings that surround different family-building practices, the consequences and opportunities afforded by those decisions, and the ways that people understand and make sense of these processes are of critical importance to family studies in the

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Caribbean. In acknowledging the connectivity of the family to a range of related social, economic, political, and cultural processes, anthropologists interested in family studies can continue opening analytical spaces to tackle issues of race, power, gender, socioeconomic inequality, and Diasporic social interaction in Caribbean communities in ways not possible in most of the circumscribed overtly ideologically-driven early literature (Bongaarts and Watkins, 1996; Greenhalgh, 1995; Handwerker, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993; Olwig, 1981; Rutenberg and Watkins, 1997; Sargent and Harris, 1992; Watkins, 1995). By shifting the central questions from a negative "why" that assumes maladaptation and cultural degeneration in Caribbean family life to a more open and neutral "why", anthropological studies of the family can continue looking toward complicated personal and group experiences of historical processes as explanations for the multiple, non-hierarchical ways that people create and experience their families throughout the life course.

Situating Saban family formation practices within the Saban Diaspora: A sketch of Saban migration and family building history, the research agenda, and an analytical map

A sketch of Saban migration and family building history

The tiny island of Saba in the Netherlands Antilles has shared in many of the triumphs and failures of this common Caribbean history and is currently experiencing many of the economic and social stresses that characterize modern Caribbean life more generally (Figures 1-2; Crane, 1971, 1987; Fry, 1981; Hartog, 1975; Johnson, 1989; Keur and Keur, 1960; MacQueen, 1989). Although the mountainous terrain of Saba did not allow for its full participation in the plantation economies that dominated life on most of the surrounding islands, slavery was practiced on Saba and the discrimination that stemmed from racial hierarchies and the socioeconomic repression of non-European peoples continues to play out in every day life on this island. However, the lack of abundant on-island plantations meant that the population composition of Saba differed greatly from other Caribbean islands where African-descended peoples comprised the overwhelming majority of the population. Until the mid-20th century Saba retained a majority European-descended population at which time African-descended people, through a combination of differential fertility and migration

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rates, became the majority on Saba. This unique history is imbued with the combined legacies of

enslavement and racial bigotry, but retains its own character and nuance as these two communities

have learned to live together, respect, and love each other in this small place. As a community,

Sabans have also experienced the penetration of largely externally-driven economic realities into their

local lives. The opportunities and constraints presented by these greater economic forces have

continued to shape Saban experiences as many people, past and present, have chosen to spend the

bulk of their lives working and living outside of Saba. By pursuing the increased economic

opportunities they find, or hope to find, abroad, generations of Saban migrants have continually

reformed the connections that their island has to the outside world and have changed the ways that

Sabans see themselves both at home and abroad. The recent infiltration of the tourist economy also

provides interesting challenges to life on Saba as the influx of non-local peoples both to engage in (as

proprietors and service workers) and partake of (as divers, hikers, and world-travelers) the tourist

industry forces even more introspection about what it means to be Saban in the wider world. The

Saba University School of Medicine, chartered in 1989, also continues to grow and exert economic

and social influences through the interactions and interconnections it creates among students, other

non-local island residents, and the Sabans themselves.

For the bulk of the twentieth century, Saba experienced rapid depopulation resulting from

migration to participate in emergent Caribbean and North American shipping, oil-based, and service-

oriented labor markets (Crane, 1971, 1987; Fry, 1981; Hartog, 1975; Johnson, 1999; Keur and Keur,

1960; MacQueen, 1989). For those who remained, Saba, at this time, was truly for the Sabans as

rates of in-migration, and thus ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, remained low. This long period of

population decline also witnessed the slow but steady transformation of the Saban community from a

predominately European-descended population to a majority African-descended population as well as

radical changes in Saban class-structure brought about by the decimation of the white elite class and

the rise of the black middle class on-island. Almost all of the elite white families vacated the island

during seafaring times and left behind a small aging group of whites who lived comfortably off their

connections to the shipping industries and remittances sent home by family members living in The States, a large group of poor agriculturally-oriented whites and a few blacks who continued to draw the bulk of their living from the land, a large group of black and white families who came to depend heavily on remittance monies generated through employment on the oil-producing islands of Aruba and Curacao, and a small but substantial group of very poor white and black families who had no land to cultivate and only their on-island labor to trade for subsistence. With no elite white class on island and with growing wealth through migrant labor becoming more apparent in the black community, a situation arose were there was not only more economic differentiation in the black community and a larger black middle-class than ever before but also a diminishing gap between the average wealth of black and white families. With more black families challenging the economic supremacy of white Sabans, race became the primary means to differentiate status divisions in the Saban community as many white Sabans, irrespective of educational or economic status, began to forcefully assert their social superiority on the basis of race alone. As a counterpoint to these reactionary responses, many black Sabans and a small but growing group of white Sabans actively resisted these claims of racial superiority and worked towards creating an environment of equality in their homes, villages, and on the island as a whole. When economic opportunities associated with shipping and the oil industries declined in the 1950s, migration became associated with government sponsored off-island secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities designed to enhance the skill-set and marketability of Saban youth both on- and off-island. The irony of investing in educational migration is that many of the most educated Sabans could not and cannot find financially adequate skills-based employment at home. Current budget crunches in the civil service, increasing demands to cut back government spending, and the practice of splitting a single job and salary among several, often under-qualified, workers add to the general dearth of sophisticated well-paid jobs on island. Because of this, many educated Sabans continue to find life on Saba untenable and eventually make the decision to leave the island either temporarily or permanently. Migration in pursuit of employment and education

continues to be a defining characteristic of Saban life to this day and the population of native-Sabans remains small due, in part, to this continuing exodus.

Recently, however, the total population of Saba swelled from a low just over 1000 in 1964 to a high of about 1400 total residents in 2004, a population size not experienced since the middle of the 20th century, while the total population of native Sabans continued to decline from 978 in 1964 to just 832 in 2004. Employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the burgeoning local tourist industries, especially those involving ecotourism, large-scale construction projects including a long-term project to upgrade Fort Bay pier in the hopes of attracting larger tourist and trade ships, and the foundation and expansion of the Saba University School of Medicine are responsible for producing the bulk of this influx of non-local people. These forces, in combination, have not only provided for more non-governmental career opportunities for Sabans but have also diversified the population and maintained its African-descended majority by bringing in a significant group of predominately white yet still ethnically and racially diverse medical students, mainly from the United States and Canada, and a large ethnically diverse pool of migrant laborers of color from the Dominican Republic, Dominica, Haiti, St. Vincent, Colombia, and other Caribbean locales. However, employment of Saban locals is an on-going issue and claims of discrimination against Sabans in the hiring practices of non-local business owners have surfaced in recent years. Many Sabans also continue to question the value of development initiatives that promote businesses established and controlled by non-local people. The marked exclusion of many Sabans from the recent economic boom has not only heightened these latent tensions but has also forced many islanders to seek economic stability through education and employment on foreign shores.

This prolonged mass movement of Sabans from their island and subsequent changes in the racial, economic, and ethnic composition of their population coincide with important restructurings of the family in both the African- and European-descended native communities. Changes in family formation processes have been most dynamic and dramatic in the black population where non-marital childbearing and growing up in a non-marital home has moved from a minority to a majority

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experience over the past 150 years. As evidence of this transformation, 60-70% of black Saban

women now have children outside of marriage, sometimes by different men, and tend to marry only

after childbearing is initiated, if at all. Formal paternal recognition of non-marital children is

common but not universal and may have little to do with subsequent financial or emotional support of

these children or their mothers. The intersection of these aspects of family life in the black

community has produced a situation where of 30% of black Saban women now become unmarried

long-term single mothers and bear most if not all the burden of supporting their children. Although

the impulse to marry and secure a life-long partner remains strong in the black community, marital

instability and divorce have also become common experiences for black women and the dissolution

of marriage transitions many divorced women into a pattern of unsupported single motherhood that

mirrors the experience of their unmarried childbearing peers. Black families that formed exclusively

within the context of marriage now comprise a small segment of the total black population and the

marriage-before-childbearing tradition that was once strong in this community appears to be quickly

dying out. However, some black couples do enter into marital unions shortly after having children

and some simply live together for extended periods of time without being legally married. Both of

these situations can be indistinguishable from marriage-first unions, especially from the perspective

of children, but delayed marriage and long-term cohabitation present their own problems and

instabilities in family life. In particular, cohabitation is a much more flexible alternative to the legal

and social demands of marriage and tends to result in higher levels of relationship volatility due to a

desire to remain "free" from the burdens of married life, constant power struggles where the

responsibilities of family life are contested or ill-defined, and a high risk that women will be left with

the bulk of the socioeconomic responsibilities of family life after a cohabiting relationship dissolves.

This is not to say that these issues do not exist in marital homes, only that they tend to be heightened

in the context of cohabitation where men and women are committed to each other on some levels but

deliberately remain detached or only semi-attached on others. These characteristics typify many

historical and modern African-descended populations throughout the Caribbean and the U.S. but have

only assumed supremacy over the post-emancipation marriage-based nuclear family model among black Sabans over the last 50 years.

The social script for forming families in the European-descended community has stayed remarkably stable over time and is characterized by same-race marriage before childbearing and the establishment of neolocal single-family residences after marriage. Like paternal recognition, marriage does not guarantee adequate financial or emotional support of either the wife or the children although most Saban fathers, black and white, take their responsibilities as family provider quite seriously. Divorce has also become more common in recent years and multiple marriages, step-parents, half-sibling relationships, and child support issues have all added layers of complexity to white Saban families. In addition to these familial complexities, non-marital family forms that currently dominate the black community are, for the first time, mounting a direct challenge to long-standing marriage-centered family building traditions in the white community as younger white Sabans are increasingly abandoning marriage as a prerequisite for childbearing. Specifically, shifting attitudes towards race, marriage, and childbearing in the younger generation of Sabans have created a situation where more members of the shrinking white female population, particularly the small group of very young white women, are now entering interracial relationships that sometimes culminate in non-marital pregnancy and entry into extended periods of single motherhood. The experiences that stem from these relationships, particularly those where children are involved, have produced heated social debates over the meaning and impacts of this change that shed light on both the historical experiences of race and gender in Saban society and the divergent family formation histories of these two communities. As another element of these shifting ideas about marriage and family, cohabitation, virtually unknown in the past, has become a popular, although not universally approved, alternative family building style in younger white community over the past twenty years and interracial relationships, both marital and non-marital, have increased in visibility if not prevalence over that span of time. Ethnicity has also come to play a major role in family life in both the black and white communities due to increases in intermarriage between Sabans and, in particular, Spanish-

speaking people, mostly women, from the Dominican Republic and Colombia. Whereas most Saban families in the past lived in racially and ethnically homogenous households, increasing numbers of children are now faced with both the challenges and opportunities of experiencing racial, ethnic, and cultural hybridity in a changing social landscape as the boundaries among black and white, Saban and non-Saban are continually challenged, deconstructed, and reconstructed through this diversity of modern Saban family building practices.

Despite a general movement towards non-marital family forms in the black community and increasing complexity in family life in the white community, historical fluctuations in the proportion of children born outside of marriage, the proportion of women having non-marital births, the proportion of women married and the timing of marriage, and Saban women's own perspectives on family life all show period and cohort-specific effects that are crucial to our understanding of how modern Saban family life evolved within the context of successive labor regimes and associated migration trends. Detailed integrated descriptions of these variations not only place family formation processes in their appropriate historical context but also deconstruct reified notions of "black family life" or "white family life" by showing both the dynamic demographic aspects of how all kinds of Sabans built their families over time and the changes in underlying social, economic, and cultural reasoning that precipitated stabilities and shifts in these processes in both communities. Saban families are, therefore, conceptualized both as products of this long historical unfolding of migration and family life on-island and of the current socioeconomic conditions that now filter into family building decisions that Sabans make in their daily lives. The goal, then, is not to describe the current situation of movement and family life as if it exists in a syncretic vacuum, divorced from prior historical periods, or to focus only on one specific "family problem" as if it exists apart from other aspects of family life on Saba. Instead, the goal is to delineate the ways that modern Saban family life emerged from a combination of current circumstance and past experience by paying close attention to how long-term migration and family building processes continually transformed within

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the tensions of historical expectation and tradition, on the one hand, and contemporaneous socioeconomic opportunities and constraints on the other.

The research agenda

The Caribbean commonalties and local particulars of Saban history highlight one important fact: any attempt to understand Saban life must acknowledge that the people of Saba, like people throughout the Caribbean, have had the intimate details of their lives shaped by historical, on-going Diasporic processes that have extended and continue to extend their reach to every sector of daily life. One must not only come to terms with the realization that these processes are *central* in the experiences of all Sabans but also find ways to integrate this truth into any research conducted with Saban people. To that end, the arguments made here will assert that the family, in all of its forms, should be seen as an integral part of both creating and experiencing historical processes of Diaspora within local contexts. Specifically, this research aims to highlight the importance of using Caribbean family research as a lens for understanding local experiences of Diaspora by exploring the diverse, historically shaped connections between changing Saban family forms and Saban experiences of emigration, immigration, and shifting local, regional, and global socioeconomic environments.

By viewing families as a crucial part of a larger bundle of mutually constituted Diasporic relationships, we can begin to see how interwoven sociodemographic changes related to family life may reflect the entangled experiences of home and away and represent the complex negotiations between individual choice, the pressures of social conformity, and the acceptance of social practices learned, directly or indirectly, from contact among the various actors within the Saban Diaspora. Saba provides an ideal situation to study these complex relationships within the theoretical and thematic frameworks of Diaspora, and the closely related field of Transnationalism, because of its historical incorporation into global processes of international labor migration, its on-going experiences of various forms of capitalist penetration, expansion, and withdrawal, its unique population composition that allows for analysis of both African- and European-descended family

building processes over time, and the availability of both quantitative and qualitative data that allow for diverse analyses of family-related issues present in all sectors of Saban society over a long period of time.

By studying local expressions of family life as sites of cultural production that actively shape and are shaped by Diasporic experiences, this research is designed to elucidate the historical connections among Saban family forms, Saban understandings and experiences of race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic inequality, the variable impacts of shifting labor disciplines, and the influence of Diasporic social interactions in unique ways that value the voices and perspectives of the men, women, and children whose lives are both productive of and produced by these manifold relationships. Although some of the central foci of this current research on the family are drawn from previous social science work, especially the highlighting of women's experiences and perspectives in the context of family life, the ways that the problems are articulated and the theoretical frameworks that are used to understand the complex processes of family formation are both subtly and sometimes dramatically different and, as such, offer new perspectives on the issues raised in prior research on Caribbean families. Detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses of key sociodemographic changes in family life and the surrounding socioeconomic environment are consciously situated within the shifting historical contexts of the on-going Saban Diaspora and combine to query the nature of these sociodemographic shifts by asking:

Who changed or maintained their family building and/or migration behavior?
What changes took place and what circumstances surrounded these changes?
When did these changes occur?
Why did people choose specific life paths from the array of options available to them?
How do those individuals and others in the community view those decisions?

Due to an extensive history of anthropological work on Saba, it is possible to start answering these synthetic questions in novel ways by combining careful historical-demographic examination of these changes based on vital statistics data of births, marriages, and deaths (ca. 1856-present) with rich ethnographic and life-history interviews collected by multiple researchers over the past 40 years.

An analytical map

The structure of this volume begins by contextualizing the current research project within a range of intersecting literatures on Diaspora, Transnationalism, and family life in the Caribbean (Chapters 2-5), moves on to analyze the various changes and stabilities in the experiences of Saban family life over the past 150 years (Chapters 6-9), and concludes by placing the results of this study in dialogue with the relevant bodies of work identified at the outset and by presenting a roadmap for future research designed to be of value both to the academic community and to Sabans themselves (Chapter 10). Before entering into specific analyses of Saban family life, Chapters 2-5 provide an in-depth exploration of the specific frameworks posed by Diaspora and Transnationalism theorists and their relevance to the study of Saban family life (Chapter 2), an overview of the history of family research in the Caribbean and the place of Saban family studies within the various on-going strands of this wide-ranging academic discourse (Chapter 3), a discussion of the history of anthropological research on Saba and the influences that these inquires have had on the development of this project (Chapter 4), and, lastly, a break-down of both the different sources of data used in this analysis, including the structure and purpose of the 2003/2004 field project, and the analytical methods deployed to answer questions about Saban family formation practices (Chapter 5). After contextualizing this study of Saban families within the wider literature and defining the sources of data and analyses used to understand transformations and stabilities in Saban families, each of the four analytical chapters traces the emergence of historically-specific patterns of labor, migration, and family life within the Saban Diaspora through integrative analyses of the following general topics:

> Historical experiences of race, gender, and socioeconomic inequality in Saban society
> Emigration, immigration, and socioeconomic opportunity on Saba
> Marriage and the nuclear family
> Experiences of divorce and separation
> The rise of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage
> Non-marital childbearing in visiting and cohabiting relationships
> Interracial couples and biracial children
> Ethnic diversity in Saban families and in island life

The analytical exploration of family life on Saba begins with seafaring migration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Chapter 6), extends through the rise and fall of the Caribbean oil industry and the subsequent development of the welfare state on island (Chapter 7), and concludes with an examination of the deep socioeconomic and family-related changes that arose and continue to arise in the context of on-going educational and economic migration of Sabans, on-island development of the ecotourism industry, the establishment and growth of the Saba University School of Medicine, and the associated rapid increase in the proportion of foreign-born people now resident on island (Chapters 8, 9). Changes and stabilities in Saban family formation practices over time are traced throughout each of these historical periods by uncovering not only the ways that Sabans built their families under successive labor and migration regimes and the range of perspectives articulated around family life in each successive era but also through identifying the prominent themes of Saban family life that echo across the generations. These evolving connections between the past and present form a complex field of social action and attitudes that surround and give meaning to Saban family life today as themes that emerged through past social experiences and the influence of those social experiences on the development of Saban family life continually resurface in contemporary debates about movement, work, family, race, and gender in Saban society. The central goals for each analytical chapter are given below and will serve as a useful primer for navigating the detailed interconnected historical analyses that unfold in each section:

Chapter 6: Plying the high seas and holding down the fort: The socioeconomic worlds of Saban men, women, and their families during the period of seafaring migration (ca. 1870-1940)

- To examine the racialized and gendered experiences of socioeconomic opportunity on- and off-island with specific reference to:

    - Village- and population-level participation in and experiences of the seafaring industries

    - The impacts that elite Saban departures had on the economic lives of Sabans who remained on-island

    - The ways that migration and labor oriented resident and non-resident Sabans to the wider world (i.e. towards America, Europe, and the Caribbean)

- To deconstruct and complicate of persistent local narratives of white flight and black immobility during this period of time

- To examine the links among family forms and racialized, gendered, and classed patterns of migration and work by delineating the following relationships:

    - The place of marriage in Saban family life, women's life-long celibacy, and the social alternative of non-marital childbearing under conditions of heavy male migration to participate in the seafaring industries

    - The mutually constitutive relationships that formed among family life, labor experiences, and emergent gender ideologies in the black and white communities

    - The village- and population-level trends that not only paint a picture of Saba "as it was" but also provide the foundation for understanding how these histories have continued to shape Saba "as it is"

- To detail how the merging of migration and family building trends shaped the population composition of each village, created a racially segregated social environment with a majority black population on one side of the island and a majority white population on the other, and how this schism laid the groundwork for modern experiences of race and family life on Saba

Chapter 7: As one door closes, other doors open: Saban participation in the Caribbean oil industry (ca. 1917-1955) and the rise of the welfare state on Saba (post-1955)

- To trace the village- and population-level incorporation of black and white Sabans into the oil-refinery industries on Aruba and Curacao with special reference to:

    - Women's racialized labor practices on- and off-island

    - The relationship of these labor trends to gender ideologies from the previous and current periods

    - The continuities and changes in world-orientation that the movements and labor practices of Saban men and women produced

    - Changes in the overall class-structure of the white and black communities that increasingly left "whiteness" rather than economic status as a contested marker of social superiority in island life.

- To analyze the village- and population-level level economic impacts stemming from the decline of oil-refinery migration and the subsequent entrenchment of a welfare state on Saba with special reference to:

    - Social anxieties surrounding the decline of agriculture and the rise of government work

    - The accelerating loss of young Sabans to educational migration and high-skill off-island employment

- The incorporation of different kinds of Sabans in these transitions

- The diverse attitudes about work that emerged alongside these socioeconomic shifts

- To examine the relationships between divergent gendered and racialized labor practices and the widening gap between the marital family formation practices of white community and the increasingly non-marital family formation practices in the black community in the oil and post-oil periods. Sociodemographic analyses of the historical development of these relationships at the village- and population-level are used to understand:

- How family life became a marker of classed and racialized Saban identities over time and how family building practices became a relevant social terrain for understanding transformations and stabilities in gender ideologies in the black and white communities

- The variability in the black women's experiences of marital and non-marital childbearing in the oil and post-oil periods as a means to reclaim the dynamic historical aspects family building in the black community and to reject ahistorical treatments of these competing family building styles

Chapter 8: Working women, racialized realties, and foreign faces: Financial dependence and independence in a diversifying domestic economy

- To analyze the continuing race and gender-based inequalities embedded in structures of educational and economic opportunity on Saba and their relationship to long-term historical experiences of race and gender discrimination on- and off-island by drawing attention to:

- The continuities between past and present world-orientations, socioeconomic opportunities, and migration experiences among different groups of Sabans as well as emerging discontinuities with these historical legacies

- Myriad social changes that have come about as black and white women move into the workplace and as the black community asserts its often equivocal but growing political and economic power in Saban society

- To outline the rapid transformation of Saba from a sending to a receiving society in the modern global economy over the past 20 years by examining:

- The development of an expanding ecotourism industry that is owned largely by ex-pats, the establishment of the Saba University School of Medicine that hosts non-local students for extended periods of time, and the increasing demand for related services and construction labor that now draws migrants from all over the Caribbean to Saban shores

- The race, class, and national differences in these migrant streams to understand the socioeconomic relationships that different kinds of in-migrants form with the local communities and the ways that these relationships are tied both to current conditions and to the world-orientations forged in past periods of Saban migration

- The spectrum of Saban attitudes about this swell of new comers now in residence on their island

Chapter 9: Castles made of sand or stone?: Stabilities and instabilities in modern Saban families

- To track current sociodemographic trends and community views on marriage, divorce, cohabitation, and non-marital childbearing to look at overlaps and divergences in attitudes both within and between the black and white populations on Saba

- To identify the ways that historical discourses about and experiences of race and gender, forged in the Saban Diaspora, continue to influence Saban perspectives on family life

- To analyze how the current socioeconomic environment, characterized by social interactions with a large non-local population, on-going educational and economic migration of a substantial number of Sabans, and increased access to and consumption of a range of Caribbean, American, and European media, simultaneously promotes transformations and reifications of historically developed community beliefs about family life

- To see how interracial dating, marriage, and childbearing is a useful prism for understanding experiences of race in Saban society and to articulate how historically developed divergent family building practices and gender ideologies in the black and white communities have become racialized markers of social difference that emerge clearly in battles over black man/white woman childbearing relationships that exist outside the context of marriage

- To examine the role of in-migration in the construction of modern Saban family life by detailing:

    - The similarities and differences in the experiences of blended families and all-Saban families with special reference to the increasing prevalence of cohabitation in blended relationships and the higher proportion of interracial cohabitation in blended families

    - The ways that race and race-thinking are related to a recent rise in white Saban men marrying Colombian women as well as the racialized and gendered aspects of incorporating women from the Dominican Republic into Saban family life

    - The range of perspective that Sabans share about the explosion of different kinds of Saban/non-Saban blended relationships and families in their communities

Each analytical chapter builds on the knowledge gleaned from previous sections and traces how the relationships between family building and migration experiences in each successive period are interwoven with both the socioeconomic realties of the times and the intricate ways that historical experience and social norms, shaped in temporally distant socioeconomic environments, continually

resurface to structure important aspects of and attitudes about contemporary Saban families. Whether used to defend historically entrenched institutions of family life, like marriage and marital childbearing, or as evidence against the value of historically dominant modes of family life in modern island society, history matters in the context of Saba and, as such, this research repeatedly asserts that Saban family life, and family life more generally, cannot be adequately understood outside of its long-term historical context.

This general meditation on the importance and influence of history also extends to the ways that this work as a whole, and each of its constituent parts, engages with prior anthropological research conducted on-island and, specifically, the varied analyses of family life in both seafaring times and during the period of oil-refinery migration draw heavily on work done by Crane (1971, 1987) and Keur and Keur (1960). The integration of these large bodies of work into the current project was achieved not only by reevaluating their corpus of written work in relation to the questions posed by this project but also by reanalyzing the wealth of available raw demographic and ethnographic data generated by their successive waves of anthropological research on Saba. In particular, fresh qualitative analyses of the life histories collected by Crane and her colleagues in 1970 and the ethnographic sketches rendered by Keur and Keur a decade earlier are combined with detailed sociodemographic analyses of birth, marriage, death, and household composition data gathered by Crane (1971), Fry (1981), MacQueen (1989), and myself to produce novel interpretations of family life during times of social stability and rapid change during seafaring, oil, and post-oil times. Apart from enriching this extended analysis of Saban family life through expanding the range of available ethnographic and sociodemographic information, the integration of qualitative and quantitative data gathered by previous researchers and reanalyzed in the context of new ethnographic work highlights the value of meaningfully engaging with previously collected datasets to create new historically-grounded anthropological understandings of human experience. This approach urges anthropologists to view past research as a potential source of independent data that can be fully integrated in modern analyses and, in doing so, resists the common practice of relegating prior

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ethnographic endeavors to abbreviated paragraphs in a literature review or of simply viewing past research as a catalyst for "new" follow-up research.

In a broad sense, by seeking to understand the historical interconnectedness of family-related social phenomena in a specific local setting, this research advances the goal of developing more inclusive and diverse perspectives on Caribbean families than those offered in previous literatures that tended to focus almost exclusively on the "problem" of female-headed households in poor Black communities throughout the Caribbean. The range of family forms crafted by people from all sectors of society set in relation to processes of Diaspora should become a central theme of Caribbean family research, thus diverting targeted scrutiny of poor Black female-headed households towards more productive, comparative inquiries that look at a range of Caribbean family types and their specific historical formations. By expanding the frame to include all kinds of Saban families and by paying special attention to experiences of race, gender, and socioeconomic inequality within Saban society and the Saban Diaspora, this research looks to identify the many different family forms that exist on Saba, to articulate their connection to historical Diasporic processes, and to uncover the constellation of attitudes about Saban families expressed by a wide range of local people. Inclusion of all kinds of families from all walks of Saban life in this analysis will expand our understanding both of Saban families specifically and of Caribbean families more generally and will provide a space for us to listen closely to the many different perspectives on these issues voiced by Sabans, especially by Saban women themselves. This approach avoids the ad hoc targeting of "problematic" family forms present in much of the Caribbean family research by looking at how all family forms relate to issues of race, gender, socioeconomic inequality, and Diaspora in Saban society over the course of the last 150 years and how Sabans view these processes both within their own families and within the context of the surrounding community.

Return to the source: Imagining a living Saban Diaspora

Teary eyes meet, embraces are shared, handkerchiefs flutter, a loved one is gone. It is human to get caught up in the emotion of parting, to feel that pang of loss course through your veins and to wonder if time will ever dissolve that crippling hurt. This moment is powerful and sears the memory with that image of leaving. But to focus beyond this sliver of time is to see the greater drama unfold as life goes on. Expanding the field of view allows the totality of the Diaspora experience to come into focus. Emotive moments are stitched together with the sorrows, joys, and rhythms of daily life at home and abroad.

We can see the sailor pass from view over the ridge. We see him greet his fellow crewmen and set sail for America on a sturdy four-masted schooner. The seas are rough but he loves the smell and feel of the salt air filling his lungs. We see him walking on the streets of New York and gathering with fellow Sabans in the back office of a Richmond Hill merchant. They play cards and tell tall tales late into the night. We see his wife back on Saba. She scolds her oldest son for dirtying the kitchen with his muddy shoes. He knows that more is expected from the man of the house. She boils water for laundry. She thinks about the piece-work she'll do after the house is in order. We see her neighbor making the journey from The Bottom up to St. Johns. She cooks and cleans for an elderly woman who never had a family of her own. Her only son works at carrying loads from Ladder Bay to Windwardside. As he labors in the hot midday sun, he wonders if he would make more money by taking to the sea. More money will help him build that home for his Saban sweetheart. More money will make her his wife. More money will bring him children and grandchildren to love him and care for him when he is old. We see some Windwardside children playing in their yard. They're sucking on sweets their uncle brought home from Bermuda. Two young girls help deliver their mother's fresh baked bread to hungry customers. Coins dance in the pockets of their dresses. We see a small boy from Hells Gate trailing his father up to the family plot. He cuts armloads of grass to care for his goats and thinks about the bull that he'll get when he's older. He wants to be a farmer like his Daddy and his Granddaddy. We see the time pass as roads, cars, piers, and airports make their mark on the Saban landscape. We see secondary schoolchildren filled

with fear and excitement as they take in the sights, sounds, and smells of Curacao. They worry that they will not succeed in their new schools, so far from home. Papiamento sits heavy on their English-speaking tongues. We see men and women return from Aruba and Curacao after decades of work. Seamen who guided shallow-draft oil-tankers out of Lake Maracaibo; domestics who cleaned the homes of wealthy American ex-pats. Now they are old and their island has called them home. We see a Saba Comprehensive School graduate board a plane for college in Florida. She wants to return to her island but does not know what the future holds. Her mother and father sit in silence at the dining room table. The emptiness of her absence surrounds them. A phone rings, car keys jingle, family wraps them in comforting arms. We see men working on The Road in Hell's Gate and women busily filing paperwork at the Government Building in The Bottom. We see a plane touch down and unload another group of wide-eyed tourists and Med School students. The rugged beauty of the island overwhelms them as they scramble into waiting taxis. We see a young mother leaving for Sint Maarten with a heavy heart. Her toddler wails inconsolably in her auntie's lap. She promises to come back for her as soon as she's settled, as soon as she has enough money to get by. We see her working the WinAir counter at Princess Juliana airport. She flirts innocently with a handsome baggage handler from St. Vincent. He musters the courage to ask her out. She smiles and opens a new door. We see the world hum on, taking each private drama in stride. We see each spiral of life intersecting with others.

These scenes are familiar to all who have lived on the rock. They form a collective history of personal achievement and disappointment, success and failure, and all the in-betweens, narrated by those who lived it. They are part of the story that I hope to tell: the story of how Sabans and their families survived and thrived in an ever-changing world.
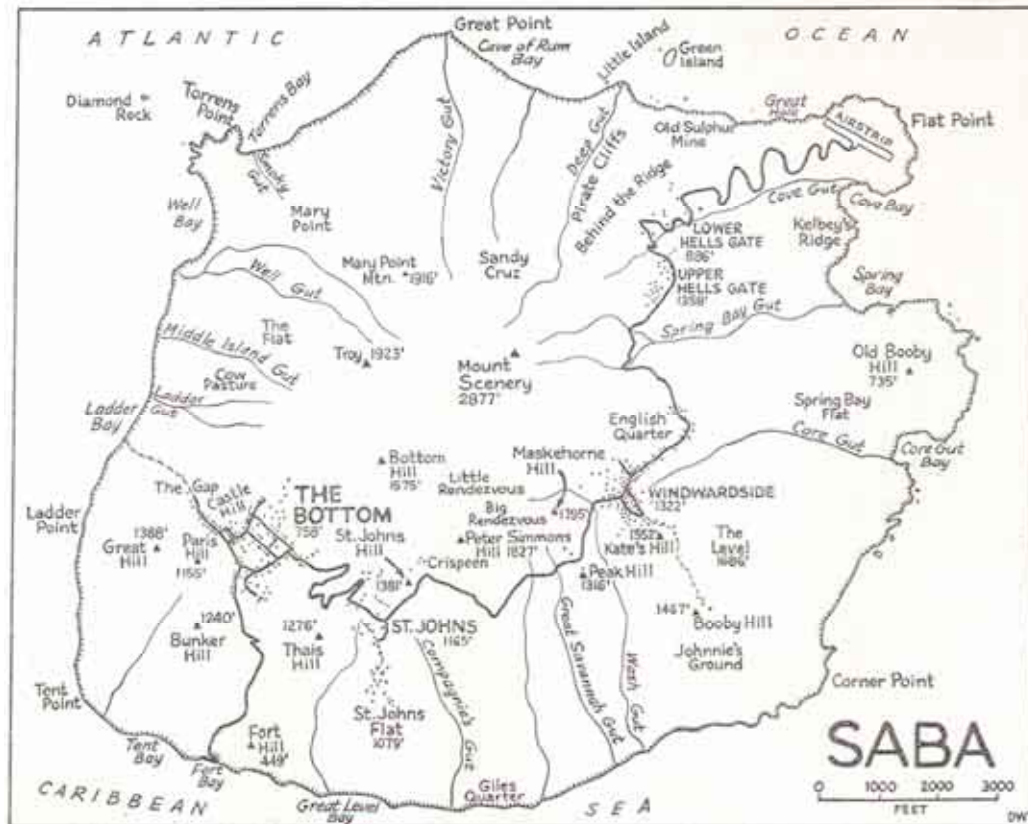
Figure 1: Island of Saba (Reprinted from Crane, 1971)

Figure 2: Location of Saba in the Antilles (Reprinted from Crane, 1971)

CHAPTER 2

THEORIZING DIASPORAS: COMPETING PERSPECTIVES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO SABAN FAMILY RESEARCH

Theory is always a detour on the way to something more important.

--Stuart Hall (1997a: 42)

With the increasing pressures and inequalities of modern Capitalism and the unabated violence and subjugation associated with deep-seated ethnic, tribal, religious, and racial hatreds, the concept of Diaspora has become a material reality for millions of peoples across the globe. Whether we focus on the African Diaspora, the Palestinian Conflict, the Irish Famine, or labor-oriented migration in the Caribbean, these Diasporic histories evoke feelings of deep sadness, pain, and loss. Despite these tragedies, Diasporas are not simply tales of destruction and exile, they are also stories of resistance, survival, and the reconstruction of individual lives connected to but different from the ones previously known (Brah, 1996; Clifford, 1994). Until quite recently, existing theories of population movements and their effects have been predominately based on economic arguments centering on the push-and-pull factors that drive migrants to leave their countries of origin (Lindstrom, 1996; MacLaughlin, 1994a,b; Massey et al.., 1993; Massey et al.., 1994; Stark and Taylor, 1989), on the social networks that facilitate the movement of people from one location to another (Boyd, 1989), or on issues of assimilation of migrants in their newly adopted homes (Heisler, 1992; Massey, 1995; Rumbaut, 1994, 1997) and most have not incorporated gender as an organizing principle of those processes (Pedraza, 1991; Watkins, 1993). This vast body of research has enhanced our understandings of key factors motivating migrants to move among various places or to adjust, usually conceptualized as a process of assimilation, to new sociocultural environments.

However, research that follows these traditional models of migration has been unable to adequately tackle issues of individual and collective *experiences* of leaving from, staying in, or returning to communities of origin and settlement, of the continually evolving, mutually constitutive relationships between home and away, or of the shifting dynamics of gender, race, ethnicity, and class in these experiences. These are the over-looked stories woven by intimate Diasporic experiences and their telling demands the use of theoretical perspectives that can capture the dynamics of complicated Diasporic lives.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, certain elements of migration scholarship, especially in anthropology and geography, began to look towards understanding what these experiences of movement, resettlement, and return meant in the lives of migrants and their home and host communities. Two complementary theoretical perspectives, those of Diaspora and Transnationalism, emerged in this process of exploration and continue to structure much of the academic debate about migration and experience in past and present lives. The field of Diaspora studies emerged at a time when a range of scholars began querying the limitations of understanding human experience within the rigid boundaries of discrete national histories. Diaspora scholars not only questioned the veracity of assuming the experiential prominence of specific nation-states in the lives of everyday people but also pointed out that most national histories were crafted through collective and concerted myth-making by social elites, with all of the silences of power that that entailed. From this perspective, well-worn state-level histories amounted to incomplete, and sometimes wildly inaccurate, understandings of a complex past deployed to maintain social stratifications based on race, gender, ethnicity, and class. Focusing on Diasporic connectivity allowed scholars to look beyond the confines of The Nation to see how alternative local, regional, and global histories retained relevance in people's lives and to reclaim a multi-scalar past hitherto marginalized or outright discarded in smoothed-over historical narratives of The Nation. Work in the closely related field of Transnationalism was initiated in the 1970s as a response to prevailing ideas about migrant lives that emphasized "assimilation" rather than the maintenance of shifting cross-border connections as the

primary experience of people living away from home. However, research on Transnationalism really exploded in the 1990s and reflected a growing interest in issues surrounding local experiences of globalization within the context of massive international migration, the reach and relevance of the nation-state in the lives of increasingly mobile citizens, and the ways that international exchanges of information through on-going social interactions or the dissemination of media (newspapers, T.V., radio, Internet, movies, etc.) across national borders created circuits of direct and indirect contact that shaped how transnational people and their multiple communities saw themselves and their place in the world. A limited discussion of each of these bodies of research will focus on the identification of the major principles active in each literature and the ways in which Diaspora and Transnational theorists have engaged with important social concerns regarding the dynamics of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. After outlining these streams of thought, elements from each of these perspectives will be appropriated and used to create a framework for analyzing changing Saban family forms within the long-term historical context of the Saban Diaspora.

A brief history of Diaspora scholarship

As pioneers in the field of Diaspora studies, Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy made a series of important theoretical contributions designed both to expand the analytical field of view beyond the straitjacket of nationalism and to destabilize blood-based nationalist sentiments through appealing to broader, highly complex, and nuanced histories that bound groups of people together through time and space. In response to American-based work that made unexamined universalist claims about "the black community" or "the African past", Paul Gilroy (1987, 1993 a,b) shifted the analytical focus towards understanding the varied histories of people within the "African Diaspora" and how these varied histories of dispersal and displacement oriented Black people towards each other and towards their shared African past. He argued that instead of writing from a position of assumed sameness that incorporated all Black people into a seamless shared history, it was necessary to define points of similarity and difference both to reveal a body of shared cultural traits that articulated directly with a

shared African cultural heritage and with the experience of enslavement and to bring to light the ways that local and regional histories intervened to produce novel forms of cultural expression that are not directly linked to these shared Diasporic experiences. In this way, Gilroy dislodged and reformulated Black Nationalist political projects that arose within specific local and regional histories but used the rhetoric of universality. He did so by shifting attention to a broader global history of Black people that could create a more inclusive basis for Afro-centric political movements across arbitrary geographical boundaries. By making these assertions, Gilroy mapped out a potent political project by insisting that seeing the sameness and difference was a necessary step towards identifying and becoming part of a wider, genuinely shared and politically charged, Black consciousness, although his most recent work argues against polarizing "race-thinking" as a legitimate basis of authentic democracy (Gilroy, 2000). Stuart Hall (1990, 1997a,b) turned his energies to the issue of identity, Black Caribbean identity specifically, and sought to de-center reified concepts of identity as a stationary and fixed either/or mode of existence. For Hall, identity creation is a contradictory yet fluid process that is structured through contentious and power-laden streams of social discourse and that is deeply interwoven with past and present historical experience at the local, regional, and global levels. While Gilroy mapped out a general framework for creating a deeper understanding of the African Diaspora, in its many formulations, Hall highlighted the value of using processes of identity formation as a key analytical concept to understand how diversity and similarity within the African Diaspora emerged over time and how these legacies continue to interject themselves into modern life. In combination, both of these authors complicated notions of Black identity by appealing to history, process, and hybridity rather than reification and assumed sameness as the foundation for examining a shared Black history that varied and continues to vary in important ways.

The influence of Gilroy and Hall in the area of Diaspora research cannot be overstated and their original postulates sparked the creation of a vast literature designed to support, refute, and expand their theoretical positions. Understanding social constructions of race within Diasporic contexts dominates much of the literature and many authors have uncovered the influence of history

and locality in they ways that Black people conceive of themselves and of their relationship to the African Diaspora more generally (James and Harris, 1993). While much of this research focuses on expressive culture like art, music, and literature as a vehicle for examining what constitutes a shared Black Diasporic consciousness (McGill, 2005; Wright, 2004), other research has focused on the lived daily experiences of Black people within specific Diasporic contexts and the influence of local and regional histories in constructing Diasporic lives. For example, Foner (1998) used a comparative framework to study the social experiences of West Indian migrants living in the U.S. and the U.K. By comparing and contrasting these local experiences, she was able to demonstrate that Blackness takes on different meanings depending on the history of both sending and receiving countries, that many West Indians find it difficult to navigate host societies that are riddled with racial hierarchies different than those experienced at home, and that these Diasporic experiences prompted immigrant people to assemble themselves into new blocks of solidarity with those they encounter and/or to draw new boundaries between themselves and others based on perceived social differences like race, ethnicity, and class. Waters (1999) provides further insight into the racialized conditions that West Indians face in coming the United States and uncovers a pattern of initial socioeconomic success in West Indian families that is rubbed out in successive generations as West Indian descendants become fully incorporated into the U.S. racial system. The emphasis on changes between the first and successive generations of West Indians reminds us that Diasporic processes occur within families and across groups intergenerationally and that identity is formed within specific local contexts and within specific historical frames. Rather than appealing to a romanticized and homogenized African past, Yelvington (2001: 234) locates the initial formation of Black identity within the historical context of a racialized colonialism by recognizing that "Africans who reached the New World did not compose, at least at the outset, groups". In reference to identity formation, he insists that processes of creolization (hybridization in the parlance of Hall) emerged from concrete local, although often broadly shared, circumstances brought about by European colonization of the Americas that bound together groups of people who would once have considered themselves to be very different from one another. In their

theoretical and ethnographic work, Gordon and Anderson (1999) coin the term "Diasporic identification" to indicate a certain form of identity construction whereby individuals and groups come to identify themselves and others as part of a Diasporic community as a means of both placing themselves in the world and, often, as a basis of local, regional, and global political action (Gordon, 1998). By re-emphasizing the need to understand identity formation within the Black Atlantic, first signaled by Gilroy and Hall, Gordon and Anderson continue to encourage other anthropologists to study local identity-formation practices within complex Diasporic contexts rather than to assume Diasporic experience by categorizing people based on non-indigenous pre-packaged notions of how they ought to feel, think, act, and relate to one another as predetermined members of specific Diasporas.

Class and gender have been central themes in Diaspora studies of Irish emigration to the US and Great Britain (Walter, 2001) but have not emerged fully in work on the African/Caribbean Diaspora even though many prominent black feminist authors have long decried the absence of gender-sensitive analyses in a range of literatures that address these varied Diasporic histories (Carby, 1987, 1998, 1999). Despite these general silences, some recent scholarship has turned its attention to these analytical deficiencies by attending to gender-specific intergenerational components of Diasporic experiences within the context of family life (Bao, 2005; Blunt, 2005; Chamberlain, 2006; Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001) and the changing forms and meanings of sexuality and their relationship to family formation practices across time and space (Gunning, Hunter, and Mitchell, 2004; Stolzoff, 2000; Wekker, 2006). In *Family Love in the Diaspora*, Chamberlain (2006) looks at the unfolding of family life through analysis of 150 life histories shared by 45 Caribbean families from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados who forged Diasporic ties to the United Kingdom throughout the tumultuous 20th century. By using three generations of family-centered narratives, Chamberlain reveals processes of intergenerational stabilities and transformations that emerge in the stories of grandmothers, mothers, and daughters but also looks at the ways that men are interwoven in these family histories, through direct interviews with men and through the eyes of women, and how

historical experiences of race and ethnicity influence the forms of family life. In the end, she locates the enduring strength of poorer black Caribbean families in the hands of women without reverting to exclusionary discourse about the absence and failure of men in family life or to negative stereotyping of Caribbean families as broken and dysfunctional because many fail to follow the Western nuclear model of how families "should be". Fluidity in the roles played by family members at different times and in different situations points to the adaptability and flexibility in Caribbean families and stems from the unique histories of slavery, on-going economic marginalization, and transnational migration that continue to influence and structure family experiences. In the end, the author forcefully argues that love, closeness, interdependence, and familial and cultural pride are all enduring features of a culturally distinctive woman-centered Creole form of Caribbean family life and that the negative rhetorics that continue to surround Caribbean families are rooted both in the historical legacies of racial and economic discrimination and in the clear lack of understanding of how Caribbean family forms continue to function in modern life. Another powerful example of locally specified gender- and class-sensitive Diaspora scholarship that references The Black Atlantic was carried out by Nassey-Brown (1998). In this impressive piece of work, the author sets out to look at the "politically, culturally, and sexually intimate relationships that unfolded between black Liverpool and black America over two historical moments: the post war period and the era defined by the US civil rights and Black Power movements" (Nassey-Brown, 1998: 292). The author coins the phrase "diasporic resources" to "capture the sense that black Liverpudlians actively appropriated particular aspects of 'black America' for particular reasons, to meet particular needs-but did so within and against power asymmetries, and with political consequences" (Nassey-Brown, 1998: 298). Gender dynamics both within the community and between the community and its American guests take center stage in the analysis as the author delves into the relationships that evolved between Black American soldiers stationed at a nearby U.S. military base and women from the local Black community. These interactions created new channels for ideas about being Black and American to flow into Liverpool and gave servicemen the opportunity to experience Blackness in a different national context. In turn,

these interactions created bonds of solidarity and fissures of disapproval and distrust between these communities with women's sexuality becoming the most contested terrain of these exchanges. After analyzing these relationships, Nassey-Brown also looks at the experiences of women who chose to move to the United States with their American husbands and focuses in on the reality of their lives versus the lives they imagined America would bring when they were living in the U.K. She does this to highlight the importance of viewing diasporic longings as more than just a return to the source of a mythologized origin (in this case, Africa) and foregrounds the need to understand how Disporic interactions create a range of Diasporic imaginings, longings, and experiences. This work echoes the call for Diasporic identification but the complexity and nuance of this piece highlights all of the best qualities present in Diaspora research and provides a very useful model for understanding the ways that local conditions, including attitudes and beliefs, are constructed within gendered, raced, classed, and "nationalized" Diasporic interactions.

What constitutes Diaspora Theory?

Although Diaspora theory does suffer from a lack of definitional clarity, the usefulness of this package of theoretical concepts can be measured against the quality of the research that has emerged from its propositions. In the social sciences generally, and in anthropology particularly, it is unlikely that Diaspora researchers will ever come to a common definition of their theoretical principles. This calls into question whether or not theoretical works within Diaspora research should be labeled "theory" at all since they are not able to generate testable hypotheses in the traditional scientific sense of the word. However, this narrow definition of theory comes from the tradition of the "hard" sciences and some periods and branches of anthropology and the social sciences more generally. Diaspora theory, as deployed here, is more of a heuristic device and, as such, could arguably be categorized as a group of mutually informed perspectives rather than a cohesive body of theory. However, taking a close look at the foundational texts reveals that they are laid out in a way that encourages researchers to examine the veracity of their claims, fill in missing pieces of the puzzle,

and add nuance to the original postulates. By tossing out a series of vague hypotheses, both Hall and

Gilroy opened a floodgate of practical research that has modified some facets of their original ideas

and upheld the validity of others. In this sense, they do act like theory and have been very successful

in generating dialogues among interested researchers. Ultimately, social theory needs to have

somewhat loose boundaries so researchers can stretch them out in the field and adjust their content

based on solid evidence generated by on the ground work.

Despite the intellectually energizing influences of Diaspora theory, definitional clarity has

eluded most Diaspora scholarship and when attempts are made to pin-down what does and does not

constitute Diaspora they tend to either feel too amorphous or too confining. Diffuse definitions

generally take a form similar to the following attempt offered by a leading scholar in the area of

Diaspora studies:

> …the term diaspora can be very general and all embracing. This is both its strength and
> weakness. Its purchase as a theoretical construct rests largely on its analytical reach; its
> explanatory power in dealing with the specific problematics associated with transnational
> movements of people, capital, commodities and cultural iconographies. (Brah: 1996:
> 196).

While its value may be that of heuristic device, most would agree that definition of what does and

does not constitute a Diaspora needs to be more fully articulated. On the other side of the spectrum,

much of the early work on Diaspora suffered from a preoccupation with narratives of dislocation from

a "homeland" rather than multi-location within a complex historically constituted field of Diasporic

relationships that spanned time and space. Falling into this line of thinking, Clifford (1994: 305)

suggests that Diasporas can be defined by a specific constellation of attributes, although he admits

that not all Diasporic people will identify with each identified feature. For his purposes, Diasporas

exhibit the following traits:

> …a history of dispersal, myths/memories of the homeland, alienation in the host (bad
> host?) country, desire for eventual return, ongoing support of the homeland, and a
> collective identity importantly defined by this relationship

By focusing almost exclusively on feelings of displacement and alienation of migrants in their host

countries, this definition omits the possibility of experiencing positive, liberating, and creative

experiences of living abroad, discussions about experiences of return, and the ways in which

Diasporic processes create experiences not only of migrants in their new surroundings, but also of

those they leave behind and those they encounter in their host countries. Although he touches on it

briefly as myths/memories of the homeland, much of the definitional attention still appears to be

given to those experiencing a painful primary displacement from their homeland. This is perhaps

unintended but runs the risk of ignoring the importance of constructing intergenerational Diasporic

experiences through shared social memory and contemporary myth-making among groups of people

temporally displaced from the initial population dispersion (Irish-American and African-American

identities are prime examples of this). Although incisive in some ways and lacking in others, the

definition offered above is a good foundation to begin building an even more inclusive and

interconnected definition of Diaspora through cobbling together definitional elements from a variety

of other theoretical texts on the subject.

When thinking about areas of theoretical consensus, Diaspora theorists would likely agree

that, within a Diaspora framework, notions of an economically driven linear journey from here to

there coupled with a progressive one-directional passive process of assimilation should be rejected in

favor of viewing migrants as active participants in the construction of "both/and ties to their countries

of origin and settlement" (Walter, 2001: 9). Migrants and their descendents, by their presence *and*

their absence, are seen as key social actors who shape the experience of 'others' at home and abroad

and, in particular, help redefine various layers and axes of otherness and sameness through their

evolving relationships with home, away, and the people they interact with in those social spaces.

Through these un-severed yet changing connections, those who leave, those who return, and those

who stay put remain in constant direct and indirect dialogue with one another as their collective

experiences are forged within an integrated, yet actively contested, field of multi-scalar Diasporic

processes that infuse Diasporic lives with meaning across time and space. In learning to live together

with difference Diaspora theorists further acknowledge that Diasporic processes are imbued with

power and are, thus, never enacted on an undifferentiated pool of immigrants, emigrants, those they

encounter and those they leave behind (Massey 1994, Brah 1996, Boyle and Halfacree 1999, Chua et al.. 2000, Escobar 2001, Etienne and Leacock 1980, Gray 2000, Mac Éinrí and Lambkin 2002, Rist 1997, Scott 1998). Within this acknowledgement, proponents of Diaspora research remain attentive to the fact that reasons for staying, leaving, and returning are always formed in unequal, highly gendered social, political, cultural, and economic environments that tend to actively constrain the lives of women, minorities, and the poor more than those of the privileged, dominant group/s.

Some Diaspora scholars urge us to imagine the realities of "home" and "away" intersecting in a third plane, a generative Diaspora Space that signals the "intersectionality of diaspora, border, and dis/location as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural, and psychic processes" (Brah, 1996: 181) and that "articulates or bends together both roots and routes to construct…alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identification outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference" (Clifford, 1994: 308). In this Diaspora Space notions of "insiders" and "outsiders" are problematized and reassembled, although not erased, as the evolving Diasporic relationships between migrants and the "natives" in both the sending and receiving communities take center stage. Diaspora Space can take on different meanings depending on the ways that researchers interpret the concept. Some formulations firmly ground Diaspora Space within the tangible realties of on-the-ground living and the social, economic, political, and cultural connections that Diasporic people create and maintain with one or more spatially disjunct communities. Others use it more as means to understand Diasporas as "imagined communities" of spatially dispersed people bound together through a history of common experience rather than direct daily interactions among migrants and their home and host communities. However, this imaginative space is not immaterial as it influences how people move in their social worlds and how they interpret and act on their experiences based on these Diasporic identities. Recent scholarship on Diaspora is making headway in merging these two different concepts of Diaspora Space by recognizing the ways that imagination, mental landscapes, and a sense of belonging despite the lack of direct personal

interaction intersect with the creativity of direct social interactions that create and give meaning to the currents of daily life.

Despite the lack of clear definition of what constitutes Diaspora or Diaspora Space, the key theoretical principles repeatedly asserted in these varied Diaspora literatures include an emphasis on understanding the malleable cultural, social, economic, and political connections among migrants, their native communities, and their adopted homes and an on-going sensitivity to and preoccupation with the flow of power and meaning in these complex relationships. Deploying these basic theoretical principles of Diaspora opens largely unexplored migration-generated social terrains of experience and emotion to anthropological inquiry and requires interested scholars to expand their analytical frames; topically, geographically, and temporally, to capture the deeply historical multifaceted nature of these Diasporic experiences. Furthermore, popularity of the word Diaspora, in its colloquial meaning, signals the potential of the theoretical concept of Diaspora to mesh with the experiences of many migrants' lives and, as such, provides an appropriate grassroots theoretical framework for considering the complexities of migration experiences in the past and present tense. In its breadth, Diaspora theory has a freedom and flexibility that has captured the imaginations of many scholars within and beyond anthropology and provides a very powerful all-encompassing framework for studying the lives of a growing number of people in our increasingly mobile world.

A brief history of Transnationalism scholarship

Transnationalism, as a field of scholarship, emerged in the late 1970s as a way to resist prevailing paradigms that focused on immigrant "assimilation" as the relevant mode of migrant experience rather than on-going interconnectivity among migrants, their home countries, and their adoptive communities (Sutton and Makiesky-Brown, 1975; Sutton and Chaney, 1987; Sutton, 1992). However, the field exploded in the 1990s and developed in tandem with emerging interests in both the forms and impacts of "globalization" in all sectors and levels of society. As the field developed, Transnationalism scholars tended to focus on how people became embedded in more than one society

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through movement and social interaction among those who left, those who returned, and those who stayed behind and devoted much of their energy to understanding how these relationships emerged with reference to The State in both sending and receiving societies. To this end, proponents of Transnationalism carried out a range of projects designed to delineate how nation-states continued to shape the actions and identities of transmigrants, how transnational connections varied with different class, gender, and generational statuses that positioned transmigrants within these relationships, how nation-states maneuvered to encompass and in some cases channel the transnational activities of their citizenry, and the nature of the differences among past and present patterns of transnational migration (Glick-Schiller, 2003: 102). Much of the early work on Transnationalism suffered the same imprecision and rose-colored-glasses view of the world as early over-the-top triumphalist work on globalization that tended to view the present as a new, radically different, and perhaps liberatory moment unconnected to a stationary, circumscribed, dogmatic past. However, on-the-ground research soon brought Transnationalism scholars back down into the dirty realities of daily life and refocused attention on how transnational lives were constructed through varied articulations between far from defunct nation-states, on the one hand, and shifting trans-border experiences of race, class, ethnicity, gender, family, and labor on the other.

Because Transnationalism research has been bound up with scholarship on globalization over the past 20 years, understanding the context of globalization research, its potentials and limitations, provides the relevant context for much of the academic discourse now swirling around Transnationalism scholarship (Itzigsohn et al.., 1999; Pessar, 1997; Smith and Guarnizo, 1998). Like Transnationalism, globalization still means different things to different people, but, for the purposes of this exposition, it can be defined as a trend towards increased post-WWII global interconnectedness characterized by an acceleration of time-space compression brought about through rapid development and use of advanced telecommunications and transportation systems. Capitalism still reigns as the dominant economic ideology but moved from a rigid Fordist model of accumulation based on the exploitation and maintenance of existing national labor pools toward a regime of

Flexible Accumulation characterized by liberalization of capital flows across international boundaries and increased use of flexible international labor based on movable low-wage and part-time jobs with little or no benefits (Harvey, 1989). Inherent in these processes is a profound unevenness in the ability of people to access these global interconnections or to secure good employment opportunities in tenuous work environments at home or, increasingly, abroad. Because of these constraints, participation in and benefit from globalizing processes is, by definition, unequal and sometimes equivocal. It is often marked by the trauma of disconnection or redlining of areas undesirable to Capitalist interests (Ferguson, 2002) and the struggle of indigenous people to incorporate modern technologies and ways of life without abandoning their traditional cultures (Michaels, 2002). To recognize power inequalities is not to say that first-world centers control the process entirely since globalization opens the lines for not only communication and negotiation between the developed, mostly Western, centers and the third-world margins but also amongst the margins themselves (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002). Within this general framework, Transnationalism research seeks to separate out transnational migrants as a distinct element of globalization, to fully define the circuits of commodities and knowledge exchange that they create in their home and host societies, and the ways that these circuits shape how different participants see themselves in their homes, in their multiple communities, and in the world more broadly.

Within the field of Transnationalism, there is no consensus on what constitutes a Transnational practice, but several authors have taken positions on the matter. In *Nations Unbound* , Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc (1994: 7) define Transnationalism a process by which "immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement", echoing the Diaspora literature, and propose using the concept of a "transnational social fields" that encompass the totality of immigrant activities and experiences that "cross geographic, cultural, and political borders". Transnational social fields are conceptualized not as free-floating spaces unconnected to specific localities, but as spaces that encompass life in multiple real-world localities and the transformative bridges that are built among them (Glick-Schiller, 2003),

a definition that very much parallels the more practical-minded conceptions of Diaspora Space. Itzigsohn et al. (1999:317) attempt to further define this transnational social field as "a field of social interactions and exchanges that transcend political and geographical boundaries of one nation and have become the relevant field of action and reference for a large number of [people] in their country of origin and in the broad diaspora that it has generated". Further, the authors add precision to the concept of social field by defining *broad transnational practices* that "refer to a series of material and symbolic practices in which people engage that only involve sporadic physical movement between the two countries, a low level of institutionalization, or just occasional personal involvement, but nevertheless includes both countries as reference point" and *narrow transnational practices* that "refer to those people involved in economic, political, social, or cultural practices that involve a regular movement within the geographic transnational field, a high level of institutionalization, or constant personal involvement" (Itzigsohn et al., 1999: 323). In defining these narrow and broad practices, Itzigsohn et al.. (1999) tend to side with the inclusive definitions of Transnationalism offered by Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc (1994) and reject the more economically-centered politicized arguments of scholars like Portes et al.. (1999) who see transnational practices as "a form of grass-roots alternative to the debasement of immigrant labor in the center of the world system" (Itzigsohn et al., 1999:318). The following discussion will survey the varied uses of the Transnationalism paradigm in the associated literature will assess the unique contributions of these scholars to issues of race, gender, ethnicity and class in global migration flows

Many Transnationalism scholars engage with issues surrounding the social construction of race, ethnicity, gender and class within and among transnational communities by focusing on how these flexible identities intersect with the position and power of associated nation-states. In *Terrains of Blood and Nation*, Glick-Schiller and Fouron (1999) explore "the ways in which the vision of Haiti as a transnational nation builds upon the experience, needs, and aspirations of both persons living in Haiti and those who have settled in the United States"(Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 1999: 340) and, through this exploration, ultimately express concern about the ways in which a fervent Haitian

national/transnational sentiment is being articulated around essentialist notions of blood/biology and descent. Much like Gilroy's critique of blood-based British nationalism, these ideas are recognized as similarly dangerous in the case of Haiti because they foster a sense of racial discrimination and national chauvinism that draws rigid insider/outsider boundaries around Haitian identity. These exclusionary nationalist practices stretch across national boundaries and, in a sense, expand rather than contract the reach of the Haitian nation-state on the hearts and minds of those who leave and those who stay behind while simultaneously diverting attention from social problems and economic crises at home by seeing the Diaspora as savior of the home country. In Glick-Schiller and Fouron's (2001) *Georges Woke Up Laughing*, the authors temper their concerns by showing how a passionate Haitian nationalism articulates with the desire to obtain "respect, dignity, and justice" for the Haitian people as members of a global community of nations. In this way, nationalism is recast "not as a way to assert dominance but as a way to ensure equality of people and nations…[as a way] to unite [Haitians] with people struggling around the world for a decent life" (Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 2001: 13). In combination, these works, produced by the same authors at different periods of time, show the complexity of relationships between various forms of nationalism and transnational processes—even within the same general context. Different collectivities within a shared transnational social field will likely not agree on the definition and meaning of, for example, Haitian nationalism in its transnational context, but uncovering these variations will help us better understand why people act like they do and say what they do in reference to these phenomena. The assumption of sameness of personal thought, experience, and action among people living in a given "nation" is, thus, expressly rejected within a transnational perspective, as it is within the bulk of Diaspora literature, but the ties that bind transnational people together are also seen as a potential basis for launching social justice movements within and beyond the confines of particular states.

Similar to Diaspora research, several Transnationalism scholars have targeted racialized identity formation within transnational social fields as an important topic of inquiry. In *Modern Blackness*, Thomas (2002) explores US-Jamaican connections as one of the many ways Jamaicans

and Americans formulate and reformulate the meaning of Blackness among people scattered by the

African Diaspora. In sorting through the power dynamics implicated in and the creativity of

processes of Black identity formation in Jamaica, Thomas (2002: 43, 45) indicates that:

> …contrary to the dominant image of the culturally bombarded and besieged Jamaican, powerless either to resist or critique that which is imposed from elsewhere—the image often proliferated by those who disparage the growing influence of the United States—youth assert that David could not only challenge Goliath but could also influence what Goliath listened to, how he dresses, what he liked… black Jamaicans are simultaneously critiquing, selectively appropriating, and creatively redefining those aspects of the dominant capitalist ethos [predominately emanating from the US] that they believe benefit themselves and their communities both materially and psychologically…within this context individuals do find ways to resignify dominant ideologies and practices in order to resituate themselves as powerful actors within their own transnational spheres.

The confluence of race, power, and capitalism intersect in an active process of identity formation

among African-descended people in Jamaica. This work is interestingly situated between the

Transnational and Diaspora literatures as it clearly draws on aspects of Transnationalism scholars'

preoccupation with the intersections of globalization, capitalist formations, and the nation-state and

the interest in Black identity formation that dominates much of the Diaspora literature. Although

transnational experiences of race and racial discrimination are often at the core of Transnational

projects, there has been far less comparative research on racialized identity formation in these

literatures as most researchers have opted to focus on the past and present socioeconomic conditions

that emerged in the context of local, regional, and global racisms rather than the points of similarity

and difference that constitute and complicate a shared racial identity on a global scale.

As in Diaspora research, gender was not deployed as a central organizing principle in most of

the early Transnationalism literature and gender bias was often clear in the disproportionate inclusion

of men as research participants (71 men and 38 women in Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 1999, see Ho,

1999 for an interesting exception). In the seminal volume, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on

Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nation* (Glick-Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992), this

omission is present even in the title of the text. Although the authors bemoan the lack of attention to

gender, only 2 of the 14 articles engage gender directly and one of these is an extended piece on the

lack of gender-sensitivity in studies of Transnationalism (Sutton, 1992). Given the great lengths that

nation-states go to in an effort to elevate feminine subservience as a national virtue and thus exert control over proper and improper female, the general lack of early interest in gender in Transnationalist literatures is quite puzzling. However, since its inception as a new field of study, a small group of Transnationalism scholars has worked tirelessly to bring gender into their research agendas and to highlight the importance of considering gender and its interactions with other social axes, like race and class, as constitutive elements of transnational experiences (Donato et al.., 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler, 2003).

Early gender-work within a Transnational frame simply aimed to remedy the lack of gender analysis by including women as a focus of study but more recent scholarship has tackled gender issues in a relational and situational way by looking at how men and women develop fluid gender identities and ideologies over time and how they build their relationships with one another and with the diverse communities that constitute their social worlds (Pessar and Mahler, 2003). Given the privileged position of The State in Transnationalism literature, gender studies have now begun to interrogate the relationships between gender ideologies and the ways that The State exercises power across national borders (Goldring, 2001; Pessar, 2001). In Caribbean studies, the work of Fouron and Glick-Schiller (2001) shows how entrenched state- and citizen-level patriarchal structures can be simultaneously challenged and supported through complex negotiations of gender hierarchies within transnational social fields. Haitian women are generally afforded a very low social status in their home country but are able to elevate their status among friends and family at home through sending remittance monies earned through laboring abroad. However, these remittance monies buttress the Haitian state by cushioning citizens from economic hardships brought about by the clear mismanagement of the local economy that, in turn, allows for the continuing domination of the country by traditional, sometimes corrupt, male elites. From their privileged positions, these elites continue to marginalize women from centers of Haitian political power and to bar women from accessing high-status, high-pay jobs at home despite the maneuverings of burgeoning feminist organizations spearheaded by change-minded returnee women.

Gendered studies of Transnationalism have also interrogated the ways that migrants and their spouses interact with one another across borders and how sexuality becomes a part of marital and non-marital gendered interactions in transnational circuits of love, desire, and social imagination. In tracking evolving relationships between spouses separated by migration, Richman (2005; cited in Pessar and Mahler, 2003: 824-25) examines how the circulation of audiotapes between Haitian migrants and their families at home enact gendered dramas between husbands and wives that play out on very public stages and that have serious consequences for the survival of women and children who remain in Haiti. When accused of infidelity and extra-marital pregnancy on a publicly played cassette tape, a Haitian wife and mother was summarily expelled from her migrant husband's family compound and almost entirely cut off from his already sporadic remittances. After a second round of accusations, one of the husband's aunts intervened by suggesting that the pregnancy in question had been temporarily "arrested" while the wife experienced the emotional trauma of her husband's departure and the financial hardships that stemmed from his failure to send adequate support. Blame shifted to the husband which simultaneously allowed him to save face in the community by reasserting his proprietary rights over his wife's sexuality and shamed him by implying that his failure to support his family may have forced his wife into trading sexual favors for cash or other commodities. As in the above case, sexuality becomes a contested terrain between husbands and wives separated by transnational migration and suspicions of infidelity fire the imaginations of migrants and their partners. In her study of Dominican transnational communities, Georges (1992) notes that fears and public and private denunciations commonly act as effective disciplinary measures wielded against women who stay at home and serve to confine many women to traditionally female-gendered spaces and activities within the home community. Conversely, women who hear whispers about their husband's infidelities often take an active interest in becoming migrants themselves in a bid to keep an eye on their roaming spouses or repeatedly insist that their partners return to the watchful confines of village life. Working outside the context of marital relationships, Brennan (2004) looks at the ways that the sex tourism industry in the north-coast Dominican town of Sosúa

brings together the competing desires of Dominican and Haitian sex workers who trade their bodies in the hopes of securing socioeconomic advancement and mostly European white male clients who venture to this locale to live out inexpensive racialized sexual fantasies with "hot" Caribbean women. Brennan shows how sex-industry workers engage in "performing love" not only to secure immediate economic rewards through direct payment for sexual services but also to establish longer-term relationships that resulted in the transfer of further economic resources over a certain period of time or that, in rare cases, resulted in marriage with European partners and escape from dire social and economic situations back home. By playing up their own sexuality to tap into transnationally-constructed male sexual desires, these women consciously contrasted themselves with their "cold" European counterparts and angled to position themselves as attractive long-term sexual-emotional alternatives for male clients who were seen as potential tickets to a better life. However, unlike men's sexual desires, women's socioeconomic fantasies of being whisked off to faraway European locales were seldom fulfilled as white male Europeans continued to hold almost all of the power in these relationships and dictated their generally circumscribed terms across time and space.

A final burgeoning area of Transnational scholarship that uses gender as a central theme targets the many ways that movement and labor experiences shift how men and women interact with one another within and across different social contexts and how elements of family life now play out in transnational frames (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003; Espiritu, 2003). In *Visa for a Dream*, Pessar (1995) takes up the issue of gender in her analysis of Dominican transnational migration and draws attention to the relative gender equity that women enjoy in US-based households compared the dominance of the Patriarchy they encounter navigating life in the Dominican Republic. In *Going Home: Class, Gender, and Household Transformation Among Dominican Return Migrants*, Guarnizo (1997) picks up this research thread and alerts us to the gendered socioeconomic inequalities that are involved in the process and experience of returning home. He suggests that Dominican migrants are considered to be foreigners in the Dominican Republic and in the United States and, as such, are actively marginalized by an insecure traditional elite at home and by racial/ethnic prejudice when

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they are away. Women are doubly marginalized upon return to the Dominican Republic because the liberties achieved through participation in the US labor market and subsequent renegotiations of intrahousehold gender dynamics are wiped out in the hyper-masculinized space of the Dominican Republic. Women resist this reversion to patriarchal gender norms in many ways and are known to actively initiate re-migration to the United States more often than men. By looking at these processes through the lens of discrimination in both the sending and receiving communities and by allowing for race, gender and class specificity in his analysis, this is an important contribution to the field of transnational studies, and, like the Diaspora work of Nassey-Brown (1998), provides a useful model for conducting similar research. Although gains in social status, personal autonomy, and gender equality may be equivocal, situational, and, in some cases, non-existent when women migrate with husbands and to establish new personal and working lives abroad, several studies have shown that labor experiences and economic power can translate into bargaining power within marital relationships and may spark the development of "companionate" marriages where husbands and wives share equal status within the home (Hirsch, 1999, 2003). Changing ideas about the nature of marriage are transmitted through a range of transnational connections and the institution of marriage, itself, is opened to critique and transformation in both the native communities of migrants and their adoptive homes. Through perspectives, insights, and experiences gained through these transnational connections, migrant and non-migrant women are able to imagine and actively work towards creating family lives within an ethic of gender equality that was virtually unknown in most traditional marital and other male-female relationships, and, thereby, fundamentally transform the dynamics of power within their homes and in their communities. Like marriage, motherhood is also being shaped by the experience of women migrants who seek to redefine the meanings of "good" mothering to reflect the realities of prolonged physical separation from children back home (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila, 1997). Motherhood marked by physical absence, far-away labor, and direct remittance support disrupts traditional ideas about the place of women as stationary day-to-day caretakers in their family lives and, in doing so, both diversifies the range of mothering alternatives for women and lays claim

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to areas of family life once dominated by economically powerful mobile men. However, guilt over not being able to fulfill the traditional mandates of motherhood and longing for missing children puts migrant mothers in a constant state of inner turmoil while economic conditions and a desire to maintain new-found social freedoms sometimes prevent a speedy return home and reversion to expected social norms.

What constitutes Transnationalism theory?

The definitions offered for Transnationalism are similar to those proffered in Diaspora scholarship and it is likely that researchers in both areas have benefited from the insights of their peers. Although proceeding on largely separate tracks, it is clear both that there has been and is a sharing of ideas between these literatures based on the continuities, language, and general thrust of resulting research agendas. In particular, both offer strong critiques of older assimilation models of immigrant incorporation by showing that migrant lives can be multi-sited and often span one or more international borders. Both research agendas are also politically charged even if their political projects are not entirely overlapping. Recent incarnations of Transnationalism literature, like Diaspora literature, temper the perspectives of social theorists who overstate, and perhaps over-celebrate, the hybridization processes of globalization (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998) and complicate models of immigration that conceptualize migrants as "uprooted people who leave behind home and country to transplant themselves in a new terrain" (Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 2001:3; see also Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc, 1994; Pessar, 1997). Unlike most research on Diaspora that focuses on flows of expressive culture, like music, literature, and dance, that can be identified as cultural property of The African Diaspora and that form the basis for a pan-African identity and political movement, the strength of the literature on Transnationalism lies in its focus on the daily *experiences* of transnational migration, the connection of these experiences to the nation-state, and the enduring, yet malleable, relationships that transnational migrants forge between their "home" state and their "away" state (Kearney, 1995). Far from proving the legitimacy of certain globalizers'

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claims about the homogenizing supra-national effects of globalization, much of the Transnational literature has been founded on a fundamental critique of globalization theories that posit the demise of the nation-state as an outcome of increasing global interconnectedness that produces "hybrid" identities not loyal to any geographical locale (Smith and Guarnizo, 1998). Instead, Transnationalism scholars have repeatedly demonstrated that nation-states are not becoming obsolete entities but that they are continually reinventing themselves and recapturing the imaginations and energies of their citizenry at home and abroad (Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 1999: 342). Like Diaspora research, race has captured the imagination of many Transnationalism scholars and has produced interesting research on the relationships between race and nation and processes of racial identification among transnational peoples, particularly among those who are part of the larger, if ill-defined, African Diaspora. Attention has also been paid to social inequalities and power differentials embedded in gendered transnational processes and the ways that gender intersects with race, ethnicity, class, and nationality in trans-border lives. Despite these clear strengths, in looking across the landscape of Transnational literatures, several problem areas also arise.

In many Diasporic contexts, the broader concept of tying together multiple localities in Diaspora theory holds more appeal than the ad hoc assumption that the nation-state will play a significant role in shaping these inter- and intra-local experiences. For example, Saba is not a nation-state, it is still a colonial dependency of the Netherlands. Colonial status, partial or complete, is still part of the reality of many Caribbean peoples and makes them inappropriate for study within a transnational frame unless people in the Diaspora have nationalist aspirations for their homeland. It is troubling that focus on nation-states as the relevant unit of analysis appears, at least on the surface, to eliminate much of the Caribbean area from study and to seriously limit the exploration of colonial histories that influenced and continue to influence the development of society and nationhood in the Caribbean. Where did Caribbean nations come from and what can be learned by adding this pre-nation time depth to our analyses? It is difficult to know what has been omitted, neglected, and overlooked by assuming this centrality before getting to know the contours of our collaborators' lives

or the local and regional historical experiences of their societies (Slocum and Thomas, 2003). It is also too easy to slip into discussions of "The State" as if it is an entity unto itself rather than a complex assembly of competing desires among actors with differential access to the reigns of power. The State doesn't do anything and can't be easily boiled down to the interests of unspecified "elites" who operate outside the stream of history. More needs to be done to unmask State power by identifying how state institutions evolved, whose specific interests they served, what counter-discourses helped shape these institutions or reify them through opposition, how those relationships have changed over time, and how current day transmigrants are part of this deep historical legacy. Although many Transnationalism scholars are now moving away from emphasizing The State in the research due to these and other analytical limitations, the genesis of Transnationalism and the literatures that it created are still tightly linked with a moment of intense interest in nation-states, nationalism, and globalization. Movement away from these themes seems to diminish some of the uniqueness of this research and to blur the lines between Transnational and Diaspora scholarship to the point where one wonders whether there is a real difference at all.

When considering the similarities differences between the Diaspora and Transnationalism literatures, both share the core belief that movement matters and that lives are not bounded by national territories but each literature focuses on a certain suite of characteristics within this broad area of theoretical agreement. In this sense, the differences are not as much theoretical as they are thematic with Diaspora scholarship dwelling on the overlaps and divergences in long-term racialized identity formation primarily within the African Diaspora and with Transnationalism scholarship dwelling mostly on the mass-movements of people generated by recent processes of globalization and the transnational connections forged by people who are socially, economically, and/or politically integrated in more than one nation-state. While both are interested in identity formation in groups of people who are not tied materially or psychologically to a single location, revealing these processes in the Diaspora literature is strongly linked to a desire to understand what binds Black people together across the globe and is tied into political projects that posit a shared Black consciousness, forged

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through a history of forced dispersal and oppression, as the foundation for pan-African social movements. While some authors have used identity formation within the context of Diaspora to study other historical situations, particularly Irish and Jewish history that share different but similarly traumatic pasts, the overwhelming preoccupation with The African Diaspora in this literature has thematically confined a large segment of this work to recovering different knowledges about a faraway African past and to recognizing and reviving cultural similarities that signify strength, survival, solidarity, and proud social difference among African-descended peoples. Because the Transnationalism literature has a different genealogy, their equally passionate calls for social justice, sometimes articulated in the modern language of Human Rights rather than cultural or racial "belonging", tend to reference recent globalizing forces rather than globally shared long-term history as the source of the "problem" and, because of this, have been a little more inclusive in the who, what, where, and whys of their research agendas even if the temporal scope is quite limited. Ultimately, this allowed Transnationalism scholars to explore a greater range of ethnic, racial, and gender identities within transnational contexts although most of this work has been confined geographically to the Americas, particularly the United States, and to people not socially defined as being "white".

As suggested by the basic differences in the thematic content and political underpinnings of these projects, temporal and geographic scales divide these literatures in important ways and these differing scales and general themes created divergent aesthetics in these related bodies of work. In most cases, Diaspora scholars pursue long-term historically rich projects that go for chronological and spatial breadth over depth while Transnationalism researchers are more likely to treat long-term history superficially and to focus in on the past few decades as the relevant context for understanding Transnational practices that connect a single sending and a single receiving community. Both literatures would benefit from moving among these different scales with more regularity and with more precision. These analytical movements among different times and places will help clarify locational and temporal uniqueness currently lacking in many Diaspora studies and the historical

similarities and divergences in past and present Transnational lives as means to sort through long-term and short-term processes afoot in transnational social fields (Glick-Schiller, 2003; Pessar and Mahler, 2003). Importantly, variances in subject matter and the temporal and geographic scales used to formulate research projects have produced very different aesthetics in these literatures with Diaspora work tending to be a little more abstract, ethereal, and romanticized, despite its reflections on historical violence and the meanings of deep personal and social loss, and Transnationalism work tending to be a little more in-the-trenches and interested in understanding the complex daily lives as a potential means of both revealing and possibly alleviating modern structures of socioeconomic inequality at home and abroad. Bringing together Diaspora scholars' emphasis on the creative and material aspects of mental landscapes, collective identities forged in long-term historical processes, and the ways that expressive culture intertwines with Diasporic experiences with the detailed examination of current real-world socioeconomic conditions that stem from processes of globalization and the ways that movement shapes complex racialized, nationalized, classed, and gendered identities present in the Transnationalism literature will add both breadth and depth to the study of migrant lives and the families and multiple communities that they connect with over time.

Because the differences that separate the literatures on Diaspora and Transnationalism do not hinge on irreconcilable theoretical differences, future work on the connections among mobile people and their home and host communities would benefit from a merging of these perspectives rather than a continued division of labor and a deepening of the divides between each of these scholarly camps. Within this largely shared theoretical framework, new migration scholarship should reference the thematic content and analytical practices present in both of these bodies of work by bringing together the broad scope of a living, differentially shared and experienced history present in so much of the Diaspora literature with the locational and temporal specificity and emphasis on understanding the experiences of daily life across a range of social situations that drives much of the work of Transnationalism scholars. Integrating the long arch of history and the complex and diverse influences it continues to exert on the present tense with the immediacy and specificity of current,

sometimes radically different socioeconomic conditions, will help to build better understandings of multi-sited lives that are and have been shaped by both the "then" and the "now" of historical circumstance.

Something more important: studying Saban families within the context of Diaspora and Transnationalism theory scholarship

Given that the Diasporic and Transational processes outlined above are widespread, accelerating, interlinked, yet understudied global phenomena, there is an urgent need for us to more fully understand their historical and contemporary forms and people's varied experiences of them (Nonini and Ong, 1997; Olwig and Hastrup, 1997; Ong, 1996, 1999; O'Toole, 1996, 1997). The causes of fairness and justice also call us to engage with the inequalities that underlie these phenomena, especially those linked to gender, race, ethnicity, and class. Caribbean research has vast potential for contributing both to theoretical and practical debates within and between these literatures and to a deepening understanding of Caribbean lives. This potential stems from the fact that the Caribbean has been shaped by capitalist practices, including those defined as "globalization", and has a complex history of colonialism, post-emancipation nation-building, high levels of internal and external migration, locally specific although broadly identifiable practices of racial identity formation in the midst of local, regional, and global racial discrimination, and patterns of gender domination and resistance. Recognition of that potential is clearly signaled by the diversity and range of the Diaspora and Transnationalism literatures that use Caribbean contexts as their foci. However, the complexity of Caribbean societies means that no one body of theory or one approach to structuring research will be able to develop a full understanding of the processes of social change and stability across Caribbean contexts. Because of this, the value of theories and perspectives delineated here lies in both their ability to focus us on central issues encountered in Diasporic contexts and in the ways that these issues are fleshed-out and diversified by synergies and divergences identified in subsequent fieldwork. Much like its propositions about migrant experiences, these theories and perspectives are not either/or (either wholly right or wholly wrong) but are both/and (both correct and incomplete).

They are useful because they resonate with the experiences of real people in the Caribbean and

elsewhere and because they spark innovative social science research that hopes to capture the realities

of those experiences. Within this general flexibility, scholars in this area do tend to agree on a certain

set of general propositions even if these postulates are more thematic than testable. In surveying the

literature, the following cohesive set of distinguishing theoretical tenets characterizes the majority of

scholarly work in this area:

> **Theme 1, Movement and Experience:** Diaspora theorists and Transnationalism scholars insist that the varied and sometimes unpredictable experiences of mobile people are of central importance in shaping the forms and flows of life in both their communities of origin and in their newly adopted homes (Foner; 1998; Gilroy; 1993; Grasmuck and Pessar, 1991; Hall 1990; Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996).
>
> **Theme 2, Diasporic Processes as Social Interaction:** Focus is placed on the complex social, economic, political and cultural *processes* that tie together multiple locations across time and space. Diasporic processes are conceptualized as emerging from diverse social interactions actively created and experienced by individuals and groups embedded in specific and historically shaped Diasporas. These social interactions take many forms and run the spectrum from consensus to conflict as people articulate diverse perspectives on the Diasporic past and how the present and future should unfold within certain Diasporic locales (Yelvington, 2001; Gordon, 1998; Massey 1994; Pessar, 1997).
>
> **Theme 3, Experience Over Abstraction:** By consciously and concretely link these processes to the physical movements of people and the social interactions and experiences that stem from these movements, theoretical abstractions like "the rational economic actor" are rejected as adequate explanations of human experience. Instead, emphasis is placed on listening to and learning from real-life people who live their daily lives within specific Diasporic or Transnational realities (Brah, 1996; Clifford; 1994; Gordon and Anderson, 1999; Nassey-Brown, 1998).
>
> **Theme 4, Social Inequality:** Most theoretical perspectives of Diaspora and Transnationalism and, by extension, Diaspora- and Transnationalism-centered fieldwork directly engages issues of power and their links to historical experiences of race, class, ethnicity and gender (Boyle and Halfacree, 1999; Chua et al.., 2000; Gray, 2000; Mac Éinrí and Lambkin, 2002; MacLaughlin, 1997).

These central themes are valuable for thinking creatively and holistically about the lives of Caribbean

people in general and, specifically, about Sabans who are caught up in and actively producing the

relationships that this tiny island has with the rest of the world. The research presented here is guided

by these principles and will add to our knowledge of Diaspora by examining if and how population

movements intersect with racially segmented changes in local patterns of family formation on the

island of Saba in the Netherlands Antilles. This general thematic orientation informed every stage of

the research process and can be seen in the emphasis placed on the importance of immigration and emigration in the lives and families of Sabans, the social interactions that promote the exchange of ideas about family and ways of life among all those connected through the Saban Diaspora, the careful ethnographic attention paid to how Sabans articulate and give voice to these experiences, and the many layers of social difference and inequality that shape family and community life on Saba. Although these four general themes permeate this research, specific concepts gleaned from the literature and certain silences identified in this review have also affected the course of this project.

From Diaspora theory, the notion of identity formation (Hall, 1990, 1997 a,b), particularly Diasporic identification (Gordon and Anderson, 1999), and the historical construction of Diasporic resources that can facilitate shifts and stabilities in identities over time (Nassey-Brown, 1998) are particularly energizing in the Saban context. The points about Diasporic identification raised by Gordon and Anderson (1999) have relevance in understanding contact among Black people within the Saban Diaspora but can also be used to understand the experiences of White Sabans. The larger question posed is: Are families and their formation part of the process of Diasporic and racial identification? For example, we can ask whether Black Sabans became "aware" of themselves as part of a wider community of Black people through their movements and, if so, how this identification might be manifested in the rise of family forms, particularly non-marital childbearing and cohabitation, within the Black Saban community. Of note, it is interesting that this potentiality is based on communication *within* the Caribbean itself rather than directly, although perhaps still indirectly, between the Caribbean and the US or Europe. We can also use these ideas to query the experience of Whiteness on Saba and in the wider world by asking whether connections between White Sabans and European-descended communities in Holland, the United States, and the Caribbean created or reinforced ideas about race and family life within this community. In acknowledging that Sabans from the black and white communities had different Diasporic experiences that led to different forms of Diasporic identification, it is also necessary to examine how these experiences developed and developed from different pools of Diasporic resources that accrued over time. While

Diasporic identification is an on-going process, Diasporic resources are the building blocks of that process that are creatively appropriated and deployed to craft Diasporic identities not only in the arena of family life but in island life more generally (Nassey-Brown, 1998). By delineating how Sabans viewed race in the past and how those perspectives changed or did not change over time, we can begin to understand if and how processes of family formation are bound up in the ways that Sabans express and understand difference signaled by race. Specifically, we can ask whether these boundaries emerged from divergent processes of Diasporic identification that drew on a different, if overlapping, pools of Diasporic resources gathered through the historical and contemporary journeys of black and white Sabans and the connections that they forged with the wider world. It is also important to move beyond binary thinking about race and to include experiences of people with blended racial and ethnic background by asking how people of biracial or multiracial descent negotiate these boundaries in their families and in their lives more generally or whether ethnicity is invoked as a relevant social marker in Saban family life. Questions like these extend and elaborate on the interests of identity formation, Diasporic identification, and Diasporic resources in the Diaspora literature by highlighting the relational and fluid aspects of racialized Diasporic interactions and by avoiding the reductive tendency to explore only the nature of Blackness in Diasporic contexts.

Another suite of understudied questions is also opened up by following the lead of new and exciting Transnationalism literature that centralizes gender and its intersections with other social axes like race, ethnicity, and class as constitutive elements of migration experiences (Donato et al.., 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler, 2003). On Saba, we can ask whether ideas about and experiences of gender change as Sabans move from their home localities, are influenced by other perspectives, and convey these new understandings to friends and family that remain geographically although not ideologically stationary. We can ask how power and history are implicated in the development of specific gender ideologies, query whose perspective dominates (becomes hegemonic) in certain times and places, and locate the complex processes through which people actively accept or reject, in part or in full, a range of competing gender ideologies. Since labor

has always been intimately tied to family life and gender identities within the family and in the wider community, we can query how changes in socioeconomic opportunity and labor patterns on Saba intersect with changes and stabilities in the way that women are seen and see themselves in family life and in Saban society. With so many men and women leaving Saban shores, it is also important to question how absence shapes gendered experiences of social life at home and whether migrant return is related to change in gender ideologies or whether it signals a reversion to traditional pre-migration gender norms. For example, did long-term male migrant absence liberate, constrain, or in any way alter Saban women's behavior at home? Have the meanings and experiences of family-related social institutions, like marriage, changed over time and is this related to shifting experiences of gender in Saban society? In the broadest sense, we need to ask how family forms and beliefs surrounding family life articulate with prevailing and alternative gender ideologies in Saban society and how these relationships reflect gender-based power in this context. For example, are images of strong motherhood in Saban society and expectations surrounding women's roles as mothers and partners both a source of empowerment and disempowerment for Saban women? Who might benefit from attempts to relegate women's family and social roles to an arena of powerless power centered in domestic spaces and restricted work environments? Intergenerational transmission of gender ideologies and associated family building practices are also ripe for study. On Saba, we can ask how family experiences in childhood facilitate or obstruct the intergenerational transfer of certain family building forms and how broader social and economic factors, like changing structures of economic opportunity or the influence of shifting community norms on family-building practices, intervene to disrupt or support the maintenance of certain family-building traditions across time.

The general orientation of Diaspora and Transnationalism scholarship combined with the specific interests of Diasporic identification and gender as a constitutive element of Diasporic experience structure each of the analytical chapters in this volume. Each chapter, outlined in the introduction and presented in full later in this text, deploys these theoretical and thematic issues to develop a complex picture of how Saban families assembled over time and how familial forms and

experiences became an integral part of Saban Diasporic experience. In the final analysis, the

Caribbean marks of a space where Diaspora and Transnationalism scholars can fruitfully work out

their thematic and analytical differences. Transnationalism scholars can nudge Diaspora scholars to

more fully consider the impacts of globalization, the nation, and nationalism in crafting the ties that

bind migrants to their countries of origin and destination while Diaspora scholars remind those

working within a Transnationalism framework that the nation isn't the only way that people create

their identities as issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and class are not over determined by the manifold

desires of competing nation-states. Since Saban families are products of Diasporic processes,

understanding their historical forms and flows through the principles and problematics of these

complementary theoretical perspectives and their thematic orientations will contribute substantially to

this on-going academic conversation. Perhaps most importantly, we can also inch closer to capturing

a likeness of Saban lives recognizable to the Sabans who lived them.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXTUALIZING SABAN FAMILIES: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CARIBBEAN FAMILIES AND CARIBBEAN FAMILY RESEARCH

The roots of research into Caribbean family forms run deep in the social sciences and, in large measure, reflect an on-going interest in the intersections between labor and gender in unfolding historical contexts. Caribbean family studies emerged as a hot-topic field after a series of labor disturbances on Jamaica and several other islands in the 1930s. Curiosity mixed with not a small dose of fear inspired the colonial powers to investigate the reasons for the unrest. In response to this query, the Moyne Commission conducted rudimentary fieldwork and analysis that ultimately cited loose Black family structure and the resulting lack of social cohesion and stability in Black families as the main cause of widespread labor unrest. The results of this research held little in the way of explanatory power regarding the form and function of Caribbean families, but did reflect a fundamental belief in the nuclear family as the basic building-block of the nation-state and the desire to "re-institute" the nuclear family among lower status Black people as an effective means of nation-building and labor control.

Unsatisfied with these general conclusions, a series of researchers headed into the field in hopes of contesting these early findings and came up with a wide range of explanations for the existence of large numbers of female-headed Black households (the main "deviant" concern for those wedded to the idea of a nuclear family structure) and came to a broad range of explanations that pointed to African origins, plantation slavery, and/or current socioeconomic conditions as the prime movers of family "disintegration". Although the various authors looked on prevailing conditions with sympathy, even with empathy and outrage, this phase of Caribbean family research continued to

identify the family as corrupted and broken through a series of unfortunate historical and current circumstances. Research in the 1960s continued this general trend, but couched findings in terms of social deviance and alienation from proper family forms due to alienation from any access to social or economic power in elite society. Debates ensued over whether lower class people of African descent aspired to the nuclear family ideal but were barred from achieving it or whether alternative family forms such as cohabitation and visiting relationships were actually accepted values in these segments of society.

Moving into the 1970s and 1980s, family studies began to put a more positive adaptationist spin on female-headed households and their links to extended kin networks. These family systems were seen as creative and flexible adaptations to the grinding conditions of slavery and continuing socioeconomic marginalization in the post-emancipation period. History and social networks became viewed as crucial parts of understanding current family forms and, perhaps for the first time, researchers really began to take a look at how families operated within the larger social system by highlighting not the dysfunction but the function of family structure in its broader social context. Caribbean family studies and labor issues have remained tightly bound to this day with inquiry into the feminization of poverty, the effects of globalization, and the ways that families form and operate in these contexts taking center stage in a large segment of current anthropological and sociological literature.

Reflecting on this history of family research provides a vehicle to assess the successes and failures of past social science work while simultaneously providing a potential roadmap for continuing anthropological inquiry in this area. The old adage applies: How can we know where we're going if we don't know where we've been? The following discussion will sketch the historical development of Caribbean family studies beginning after the labor disputes in the 1930s and extending into the present day. It will articulate the intellectual heritage of Caribbean family studies through presentation of central concepts that defined each period, resulting critiques, and the research that these critiques subsequently generated. Within this historical perspective we will be able to see

the development of academic ideas about the family, the place of gender in family contexts, and the importance of labor in reifying, contesting, and/or transforming these gender ideologies. Ultimately, this history will be used to contextualize the study of Saban families by positioning past and present Saban family research within this larger intellectual tradition.

Early Caribbean family studies (1930s and 1940s)

Early research on "The Caribbean Family" followed in the wake of wide spread labor unrest in the British colonies of the region and was initiated through the aegis of the West Indian Royal Commission as assembled by the British Parliament in 1938. The mission of this research team was to survey the social and economic conditions of the region and to present recommendations for action to the British Parliament. The activities of the Commission culminated in the production of a preliminary report on West Indian labor conditions in 1939 and a more extensive analysis offered by the Moyne Report in 1945 (West India Royal Commission, 1939,1945). Although completed in 1940 and partially implemented at that time, public release of the Moyne Report's sharp criticisms of the British colonial rule in the Caribbean were suppressed until WWII ended in 1945. This was done because many politicians thought these criticisms would be too unsettling in a time of war and could provide German propagandists with a fresh well of embarrassing incendiary materials to draw on. The Commission found living conditions in the region to be unacceptably squalid and made a series of recommendations designed to relieve poverty, unemployment, and political oppression. Sugar plantations received special condemnation for their unsafe working conditions, labor exploitation (low pay, long hours, child labor), and repression of labor organizations. In sum, the Commission recommended moves that would elevate the general standard of living in the colonies, mainly through increased regulation and taxation of corrupt industries, and would lead to greater political participation of colonial subjects. This is a surprisingly liberal agenda even if results have been mixed at best. Unfortunately, in many ways, family research in the context of the Moyne Commission can be viewed as a reactionary element in an otherwise liberal research enterprise.

The use of the term "The Caribbean Family" in this early research is clearly a misnomer as interest was focused almost exclusively on the family practices of lower status Blacks living within these colonial territories. Family structure among this particular group of people was interpreted through the lens of familial instability brought about through generally low marriage rates, especially in early adulthood, resulting high illegitimacy rates, and the presence of many single-occupant and female-headed households that often included women, their children, and their grandchildren. This direct affront to Western nuclear-family sensibilities was looked upon with shock and moral outrage. The practice of engaging in one or more visiting relationship, where men live in separate households from their romantic partners and their children, and the incidence of non-marital cohabitation were especially condemned. These arrangements were thought to reflect an ethic of promiscuity insulting to British standards of sexual decorum and to leave families vulnerable to the effects of disruption and dispersal. Researchers and the public alike vociferously decried the plight of children who, as a result of relationship dissolutions, found themselves growing up in single-parent female-headed households, sometimes containing extended kin, or living periodically or permanently with grandmothers, aunts, or other extended family members. The latter situation was found to arise when a non-resident mother attempted to solidify a relationship with a man who did not father the child or children in question, as men were generally unwilling to have other men's children in their homes, or when the mother migrated out of the village or off island to find work to support herself and her family. The results of this research sparked action on the ground and culminated in the largely unsuccessful Mass Marriage Movement on Jamaica that attempted to press unmarried couples to consecrate and solidify their commitments by legalizing their unions.

In the 1940s TS Simey was dispatched to the West Indies to further family research in an effort to figure out why the Mass Marriage Movement had been a miserable failure on all counts. His mission was also tightly connected to the colonial interests of the British nation-state as his socioeconomic survey provided a basis for making recommendations to the Colonial Development and Welfare Agency. At the time, a heated debate existed between Frazier (1939) and Herskovits

(1941) as to the ultimate roots of Caribbean and US African-descended family forms and expressive culture. Frazier argued that contemporary family and cultural patterns were an outgrowth of the conditions of slavery and post-slavery socioeconomic marginalization while Herskovits argued that these same characteristics should be viewed as the remnants of disrupted West African polygynous traditions.   In Welfare Planning in the West Indies (1946) Simey, like most other social scientists of the day, follows the work of Frazier (1939) in asserting that the conditions of slavery, both social and economic, disallowed the formation of acceptably strong nuclear families and, as such, that the disorganization of Caribbean family life resulted from historical and current processes of socioeconomic inequality. His classification of Caribbean family types clearly reflects his own social bias as he constructs the four following categories:

Christian: Patriarchal, based on legal marriage, associated with the higher classes

Faithful Concubinage: Patriarchal without legal sanction, characterized by long-standing consensual habitations, associated with the lower classes

Companionate Unions: Gender roles not clearly defined, characterized by consensual habitations of less than three years duration, associated with the lower classes

Disintegrate Families: Consisting of women and their children or grandchildren, results from disruptions to Faithful Concubinage and Companionate Unions

Ultimately, he concluded that family disorganization went hand in had with general cultural disorganization in that "the West Indian was forcibly divorced from his African culture and has not been able to establish himself securely as an inheritor of the "western" way of life" (Simey, 1946: 18). These assertions/interpretations are founded on very scant on-the-ground evidence, totally neglect the well known and documented pattern of visiting unions in the area, and are probably more valuably seen as a lesson in the ways that one's own cultural background intervenes in social science research. As evidence of this, Simey's sweeping conclusions belie his obvious if unstated belief that Western heritage, founded on extreme patriarchal dominance and the cult of female domesticity, finds true expression in the Western nuclear family and that the nuclear family, therefore, provides people with the only means to live a morally upright life. Also embedded in this ideology, and more explicit in his work, is the belief that these proper and dignified nuclear family units form the backbone of

stable and prosperous nation-states and that their assembling is, therefore, is a matter of national interest. Instead of asking why the realities of Caribbean life produced the family forms of interest and why these family forms remained entrenched (useful?) despite the good efforts of colonial powers to show the natives the light, the producers of the Moyne Report and later work by Simey did not take seriously enough the perspectives of the people they studied and, as such, failed to produce knowledge that had any real explanatory power.

Caribbean family studies in the age of high modernity (1950s and 1960s)

The debate between Frazier and Herskovits continued both to structure discourse about the Caribbean family and encourage further Caribbean family research into the 1950s and 1960s. Following Simey (1946), in *Family and Colour in Jamaica* Fernando Henriques (1953) also took the view that current family forms among lower class Jamaicans stemmed from the history of slavery and that general disorganization within lower status Black families was the pitiable outcome of long-term grinding poverty and sociopolitical disenfranchisement. However, like Simey, Henriques ignored the prevalence of visiting unions and the social connections and experiences they enacted in the lives of Caribbean men and women. Given that these types of unions were and are the most common form of sexual union in Jamaican society and that they are almost universally practiced in early adulthood, the omission of these important lifecourse events calls into question these early interpretations of family formation because the effects of these early experiences on later family formation processes remained undefined. At the request of the Colonial Social Science Research Center, Edith Clarke, an anthropologist, and Madeline Kerr, a social psychologist, both entered the field to study community life and the manifold forms of socialization in the rural populace. According to Clarke, "the object of the Survey was to obtain factual information on family and social life in a selected number of villages" (Clarke, 1966:v). This position stressed the need for systematic, in-depth on the ground information about the lives of people who were being studied and scrutinized by generally disapproving colonial eyes. This perspective comprised a partial break from the work of Frazier in

that it was less interested in historicity and historical roots than in current context. It sought to locate the determinants of family structure within the entire social structure of the wider society by emphasizing the lack of economic opportunity for men and the incidence of male absenteeism as essential for the development of current "mating systems" (Otterbein, 1965). This move, although important, did subvert the power of history in crafting present conditions and tended to fall into the ahistorical trap of synchronic rather than diachronic analysis that typified this period of social science research. Contemporaneous with the work of Clarke, RT. Smith (1956) began investigation of Caribbean family forms among Guianese Blacks. Similar research strategies were employed as both constructed their datasets through a household census of three socioeconomically differentiated communities in order to stress the influence of *prevailing* (i.e. not historical) socioeconomic conditions on the production of household organization and diversity.

In his early work R.T. Smith centered his research on the guiding belief that the household was the natural unit of family organization and that common law unions and legal marriage functioned in socially identical ways. Much to the chagrin of Western readers, Smith proposed that Caribbean men were marginalized ineffective members within the family (as a result of their general societal marginalization) and that children derived nothing of social or economic value from their fathers. As such, it did not matter whether or not husband-fathers lived in nuclear households or whether their children knew them at all. Thus emerged the concept of matrifocality as a descriptive term for households that were dominated by women as mothers and grandmothers. As children grew up, daughters also increasingly assumed these central roles within the context of family life (Smith, 1996). Smith identified a cyclical pattern of household growth and decline with most households beginning as domestic nuclear families and, thereafter transitioning to a matrifocal household usually comprised of short matrilines of mother, daughter, and daughter's children with or without the presence of men. Visiting relationships comprised the height of male marginalization from the family and, as such, did not even fall within the purview of family studies. The development of this matrifocal family pattern among the lower classes is theorized as a reflection of "ascriptively

stratified societies" characterized by racial/class discrimination that fosters low levels of male social mobility, restricted public roles for men, and a general absence of managerial functions, political responsibilities, and status differentiation among men in these lower status communities.

What emerges through Smith's early analyses is the belief that the household is the relevant unit for studying the family, a position later refuted by network analysis that focuses on connections among households (Stack, 1974), and that the socioeconomic marginalization of men is to blame for the deterioration of Caribbean family life from the nuclear, patriarchal ideal. Interpretations of the data are also founded on a notion of external social constraints and pay little or no attention to explanations offered by local residents. The rejection of internal status differentiation based on married vs. unmarried cohabiting couples (a status also conflated with age since marriage is deemed the most appropriate status for men and women in the middle age categories), age, and gender is evidence of the lack of attention paid to the nuances of daily life or to how locals constructed and experienced their relationships with one another. All causative agents were external and furthered the oppression of men by not allowing them the means to achieve the norm of the patriarchal Western nuclear family. Local status differentiation, values, attitudes and beliefs, especially those that contested Black positions within the social hierarchy, were irrelevant as were, in large measure, anthropological perspectives founded on these ideas. His position on the conjectured universality of these processes (i.e. that they should be found among marginalized lower class people world wide) was later complicated by research on the East Indian families of Guiana (Smith, 1959; Smith and Jayawardena, 1959) because, given similar socioeconomic constraints, these families were characterized by patriarchal, patrifocal family organization. Appeals to ethnicity and culture to explain this pattern among East Indians but to wider social constraints for African-descended people denied the independent (interdependent) histories and cultures of Black people and, therefore, proved ultimately unconvincing as a totalizing "theory" of Caribbean family formation processes either within and beyond the black community.

Working in the same time period, in *My Mother Who Fathered Me*, Edith Clarke (1966) approached the question of Caribbean family formation from a much more localized anthropological perspective. Interpretations were still male-focused as variation in types of conjugal relationships was interpreted as a result of differences in and differential performance of the roles of men as fathers and husbands. The three communities she studied all differed in their mating strategies and these differences were reflected in community level variations in domestic organization marked by differences in the incidence of household types, size, stability, generation depth, and conjugal base. The fragmentation of families still comprised the central concern of Clarke's work, but her main contribution was in making the connection between kinds of conjugal relationships and the influences that these relationships have on the creation, transformation, and stability of households. Interpretive emphasis is placed on how these local patterns create local community organization and local ways of life rather than on external economic constraints enforced by colonial society. Economic constraints are but one relevant, although not determining, factor in family formation processes in the Caribbean and other contexts. In her exposition, higher average income in Sugar Town is associated with a lower ratio of domestic nuclear families, marital instability, and individual isolation than the more economically depressed community of Mocca. Mocca and the higher status community of Orange Grove are characterized, in their different ways, as integrated societies that drawn on tight kinship networks and comparatively stable marital and non-marital unions for their integration. Sugar Town is seen as a messy conglomerate of strangers whose only connection lies in their labor affiliation with the local sugar plantation and whose community disintegration is marked by the prevalence of female-headed households. Clearly, economic circumstances intervene, but they are localized and are responded to in locally specific ways that include considerations of class, gender, age, familial position, and race. Work by MG. Smith (1962, 1965) also followed these sorts of themes in arguing that Caribbean society was based on a kind of cultural pluralism and that this heterogeneity precluded the development of gatekeeping concepts like the matrifocal family, rigid gender roles, or households to provide all encompassing explanations of Caribbean family structure and forms (Trouillot, 1992:

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25). Despite the contributions of Clarke's work that emphasize the importance of local conditions, her interpretations, like those of RT Smith, centralize ideas of community and household disorganization and disintegration as a result of varying degrees of male marginalization from family and social life and largely fail to see the importance of social networks and connections among households as relevant analytical frames.

As an outgrowth of the research of RT Smith and Edith Clarke, authors in the mid-sixties began to look towards patterns of migration, extra-residential (i.e. visiting) unions, and attitudes as important pieces of this analytical puzzle. Nancy Solien (1961) and Peter Kunstadter (1963) made the claim that Caribbean family systems evolved as a means of coping with male absenteeism brought about by participation in migration-based economies. Imbalanced sex ratios, where women significantly outnumber men, coupled with adaptations to a wage-labor migratory economy that perpetually marginalizes Black men were seen as the prime movers in developing modern Caribbean family patterns in lower class society. Following this research, KF Otterbein (1965) showed that imbalanced sex ratios based on higher levels of male migration tended to be associated with higher proportions of consensual unions and female-headed households. Although lacking explanatory power (for example, why would this pattern develop in some local contexts with imbalanced sex ratios and not in others?), it highlighted the importance of considering migration and incorporation into larger labor systems as influential in family formation processes.

Referencing the importance of hitherto neglected visiting unions and the socioeconomic support that men provide women and children, Stycos and Back (1964) reported that over 85% of women in their sample who were engaged in visiting relationships secured economic aid from their partners and that many women also received economic support from their own kin and from the kin of the child's father. Transformation of the woman's marital status from visiting union partner to cohabiting/married partner or dissolution of the visiting relationship decreased the support received from previous lovers and their kin. One third of current partners and two-thirds of visiting partners over the age of 40 contributed to the support of previously produced non-marital children with at least

half of all 40+ men lending some economic support to their extramarital children. These authors highlighted an important fact about Caribbean family life by revealing that male economic contributions cannot be boiled down to a simple present/absent equation and, thereby, debunking the notion that the forms and effects of male absenteeism were uniform within and across Caribbean societies. Paternal and spousal economic support is highly situational and depends on the nature of the relationship that a man shared with a given woman, the circumstances surrounding the birth of children, and the ways that the relationships between mothers and fathers unfolded over time. Importantly, questions about male involvement in the lives of their children were reframed by this analytical shift and recast as dynamic elements in family life in need of further systematic examination.

Touched on by Clarke, attitudes towards marriage, cohabiting unions, and visiting relationships also became a hot topic in the 1960s. The bulk of this debate can be characterized by the banter between Goode (1960, 1961), Blake (1961) and Rodman (1966, 1971). Goode and Blake argued that cohabiting unions were not part of the normative value system of lower class African-descended people and that their failure to achieve the societal norm of marriage spoke to their general cultural malaise and anomie as marginalized members of society. Rodman countered this claim by showing that, in fact, both marriage and cohabiting unions were normative values in lower class Black society and that lower class people tended to stretch their values to include cohabitation as an alternative to legal marriage. Men were more flexible than women in accepting the normative value of cohabitation and the acceptance of this norm for both men and women was inversely correlated with socioeconomic status. Collectively, this body of research generated in the 1960s opened the door for later work on the relationships among migration, social networks, and values in Caribbean family formation processes.

Caribbean family studies turn to social networks, cultural adaptationist paradigms, and history (1970s and early 1980s)

The next phase of family research in the Caribbean focused on the historical development of social networks in African-descended communities and the varying scales at which these networks operated in daily life. Emphasis was placed on network connections as adaptations to the unfavorable socioeconomic environments of slavery and post-emancipation Black Caribbean life in the lower classes and this emphasis provided an open critique of previous studies that used only the household as their unit of analysis. The language of social dysfunction and disintegration was replaced with recognition that these social systems provided unique and creative ways for lower class Black communities to survive in the face of continuing socioeconomic marginalization and discrimination. The first glimmers of feminist perspectives on the issue of female-headed households and the concept of the matrifocal family also began to emerge at this time, although these themes were only richly developed and elaborated in more recent literatures.

Two prime examples of networks oriented research exist in the work produced by Dirks' (1972) piece entitled *Networks, Groups, and Adaptation in an Afro-Caribbean Community* and Olwig's (1981) study entitled *Women, "Martifocality" and Systems of Exchange: An Ethnohistorical Study of the Afro-American Family on St, John, Danish West Indies*. Dirks opens his piece with a critique of those who characterize Caribbean society as "weak, fragmentary, ineffectual, and loosely organized" since a networks model of societal interaction easily disproves these assertions. Two levels of social networks operate in tandem to allow for a "double pronged adaptation" to expected and unexpected economic fluctuations and social circumstances. The first component is the group-level set of institutionalized relationships, like those exercised through the church, state, or local government, and the second is a more flexible, perhaps more shifting and ephemeral, individual-level network of relationships forged with family and friends. Following the lead of male-centered social analysis, Dirks analyzes the reasons why male migrants place such importance on maintaining close familial connections on-island and concludes that they engage in this connectivity in order to secure land after they return home. Interestingly it is noted that women migrants tend to let their local connections lapse and are less likely to return to the island due to marriage with non-local men and

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engagement in domestic service, both of which solidify off-island rather than on-island ties. Corporate groups that transcend the individual (church, state, etc.) also effectively channel resources with this channeling depending on the relationships forged between people in positions of power and the rest of society. Networks at both the group and individual levels operate simultaneously as resources that the individual and community can tap in times of need.

Olwig (1981) approached the question of matrifocality from an ethnohistorical perspective and tackles the problem of illegitimacy without reference to disorganization or the marginalization of men in African-descended communities. Quite the contrary, Olwig convincingly demonstrates that highly integrated systems of extended family networks developed under conditions of slavery and continued to be important in the post-emancipation period. Additionally, she takes a clear feminist position on the issue of men's marginality by demonstrating both that relative female strength does not correlate with a weak or unimportant male position and, thereby focuses the debate not on the plight of men but on how and why women have become so independent of them. The author traces the historical development of contemporary African-descended lower status family forms by looking at the shift from viewing female slaves simply as laborers to that of reproducers after the abolishment of the transatlantic slave trade and at the structure of plantation life itself. Plantation life, in most cases, demanded the physical separation of conjugal partners who tended to visit each other on weekends but maintain separate households, usually on different plantations, which led to the atomization of households into small units containing 1.9-3 people. However, this atomization did not imply isolation as elaborate networks of friends and families were relied on for day-to-day survival. Since children were considered to be the property of their mother's owner, the importance of the mother and her nearby kin was elevated within this social system and responsibility for child raising was dispersed throughout a network of nearby and distant kin and friends. Men were far from marginal members in this process even though they had little input in the day-to-day running of their partner's households. Men were intense participants in their own local systems of exchanges and played the role of uncle, brother, grandfather, neighbor and friend while still contributing what they

could to the maintenance of their own partners and children. Perpetuation of this system under conditions of socioeconomic stress and high rates of both male and female emigration means that reliance on these networks provides an historically developed flexible adaptation to current circumstances.

By focusing on networks and, at least in the case of Olwig, integrating gender (the culturally constructed relationships that men and women engage in /contest in the wider society) as an organizing principle provided a valuable critique of earlier studies that elevated the importance of isolated households and the social position of men in their explanations of Caribbean family forms. Even in the wake of these critiques, households still remain prominent in much of the recent literature on the family and women are often still conceptualized as oddly stationary domestic dwellers even though this is not an accurate description of their lives either in the past or in the present. However, increased interest in the intersection of the local, regional, and global in processes of globalization, the "feminization of poverty", and the involvement of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in migration and family building processes have opened up a wide range of approaches to the study of Caribbean families in modern contexts.

Caribbean family studies diversify (mid 1980s-present)

As in the past, movement characterizes life in the Caribbean, but who moves, why they move, and the effects of those movements have changed over time and have implications for the restructuring of racial, ethnic, class-based, and, in particular, gendered relationships in our globalizing world. As an example of changing gender relations, the pattern of Saban migration suggests increasing opportunities for women in the labor force both at home and abroad and is associated with major transformations in family building processes. While domesticity may have characterized the lives of some Saban women, namely those of European descent, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this is clearly no longer the case. Class and race have also become issues in family studies as a means to fill-in our knowledge about middle and upper class family formation processes or

family formation processes among other ethnic/racial groups, particularly those of the White population (Smith, 1988). Recent, although perhaps insufficient, attention has been given to families not located in the lower classes of the English-speaking Black Caribbean and the prior invisibility of other family forms, particularly those of the European-descended population is likely related to their use as the gold standard against which all other non-conforming family forms should be judged. Emphasis on the family has been more diffuse in recent times, with family issues emerging in the context of broader discussions about globalization, gender, migration, labor, race, and ethnicity. The following discussion will primarily address issues of labor, gender, and family by illustrating the key themes by reference to relevant bodies of research.

Globalization

In *The Anthropology of Globalization* Inda and Rosaldo (2002:2) define globalization as "the intensification of global interconnectedness, suggesting a world full of movement and mixture, contact and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange…it is of a world where borders and boundaries have become increasingly porous, allowing more and more peoples and cultures to be cast into intense and immediate contact with each other." In critiquing much of the celebratory research that plagues the field of globalization (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1992,1996), scholars have begun to wonder if the upbeat-tone of globalization literature reflects the specific experiences of privileged, mostly Western academics who may well experience globalization as an unmitigated success. Generalizing about experiences from such myopic perspectives is dangerous and willfully fails to capture the broad range of experiences created by globalization processes (Friedman, 2000). This critique makes it clear that there are other aspects of globalization that demand our attention:

> They speak of an intensely interconnected world-one where the rapid flows of capital, people, goods, images, and ideologies draw more and more of the globe into webs of interconnection, compressing our sense of time and space, and making the world feel smaller and distances shorter. This is the world of globalization…[but] globalization is a rather uneven process…[and] while the world may be full of complex mobilities and interconnections, there are also quite a number of people and places whose experience is marginal to or excluded from these movements and links. Indeed, not everyone and

everyplace participates equally in the circuits of interconnection that traverse the globe. And this, too, is the world of globalization (Inda and Rosaldo 2002: 4).

As an antidote to the prevalence of high-level theorizing and premature praise or disdain for globalizing processes, these authors restore the place of anthropology in the debate based on its conjunctural concern with the:

> …articulation of the global and the local, that is, with how globalizing processes exist with their accumulated – that is to say historical – cultures and ways of life…[and its ability to] focus at once on the large-scale processes (or flows of subjects and objects) through which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and on how subjects respond to these processes in culturally specific ways (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002:4-5).

In rejecting globalization as a homogenizing and totalizing process, the authors illuminate the creative aspects of intercultural dialogues while recognizing the inherent power differentials that enter such discussions. Ultimately, mobile global capitalism may not care what social, economic, or political structures combine in a certain locale as long as productivity is stable and high, but this "truism" masks important processes of negotiation and compromise that exist in specific localities of capitalist production (Freeman, 2000). It is these local responses and the ways in which the margins talk back that has been the driving force behind much of the literature on gender, labor, development and globalization. In a very real sense, shifting family forms can be read as intersections of dialogues *between* third world people, particularly Black people throughout the Caribbean, and as an effective response to the interpenetration of first world market ideologies, labor demands, and ideas about achieving success through consumerism, although notions of gender equity and human rights could put a more positive spin on this exchange.

Labor and gender

The intersections of labor and gender have been extensively studied over the past 20 years and changes in these relationships are implicated in changing forms of and experiences in Caribbean families (Mohammed and Shepherd, 1986. Mohammed, 2002). In general, the news is not particularly bright for women caught up in the throes of global capitalist production. Survival, as a hallmark of Caribbean women's lives, still tends to be a daily struggle for lower class women of all

racial and ethnic groups. Education is one arena where women tend to excel over their male peers, but even enhanced qualifications do not secure women equal treatment in the workplace and many women are still funneled into educational tracks that emphasize proper female studies in the humanities rather than in the male-dominated sciences (Ellis, 2003: 15). Unemployment rates also tend to be higher for women than for men despite better educational attainment and under qualified men are more likely to secure positions they did not earn than their female counterparts. Managerial and supervisory positions are disproportionately held by men, regardless of qualification, and women are underrepresented in decision-making positions in both corporate or government institutions. These general social conditions led one author to forcefully assert that:

> The lingering perception that Caribbean women are strong, powerful, independent people
> who single-handedly care for their families both minimizes the effects of ethnicity, class,
> age, social and marital status, and education in producing the conditions and realties of
> women's lives and obscures the fact that most Caribbean societies are patriarchal and
> male-dominated (Ellis, 2003: 17).

The contrast between this image of matrifocal power within low-status Caribbean families and the reality that these families are among the poorest and most vulnerable in the region (over ½ of all poor households are headed by women) leads one to question the social value of a position of powerless power. Who benefits from this image and its perpetuation in Caribbean society? Biologized notions about female nurturing and action-oriented aggressiveness in men serve to justify this gender hierarchy and tend to absolve men of responsibilities for their families based on the idea that "children are women's work". Rather than seeing men as marginalized by strong matriarchies, Ellis turns that analysis on its head by suggesting that these myths free men from being responsible partners and fathers, thus ensuring the marginalization of women in Caribbean society, especially among the poor.

In thinking through the power differences signaled by Matriarchy versus matrifocality, Ho (1999:38) sees Caribbean women as "reluctant matriarchs" whose independence and strength is a matter of necessity in societies where matrifocality, as embodied in matrifocal family structures, does

not translate into women being socially empowered or dominant in any meaningful way. Echoing

this sentiment, Mohammed (2002:22, 24) states that:

> The concept of the matriarch has come to represent a homogenous face of Caribbean womanhood, and in so doing silences the complex social, economic, ethnic, and inter- and intra-group activities which comprise matrifocal representations…The Caribbean has never been a matriarchal region, by virtue of its matrifocality. The centrality of women in their capacity as mothers within kinship structures does not necessarily translate into similar institutional or ideological centrality.

In light of these realizations, how can the male economic restriction and marginalization model so

popular in earlier family studies bear any convincing explanatory power when women are both more

restricted in their employment opportunities and saddled with the responsibility of raising children

often without the aid of her partner/s (although family often intercedes here)? Believing that women

are alright, if not better off, without male support is, in itself a gendered fiction that masks female

poverty by highlighting the plight of men in the world economy while absolving them of financial

responsibility to their families whether they are married to their partners or not. Dependence on

networks of kin and friends for support alleviates the burdens that women face, but using the

existence of these support systems as a pretext for male irresponsibility appears suspect at best. In

many instances poor Caribbean women have multiple male partners, some of higher status, who they

trade sexual favors with in the hopes of securing enough money to support their families (Ho, 1999).

This appears to be an essentially exploitative relationship where gender norms allow men to shirk

their responsibilities with little social sanction while still exercising control over women and their

bodies through the control of resources.

This perspective, however, needs to be tempered with the reality that many poor men really

do have few or no resources to give and that this inadequacy takes a toll on their feelings about

themselves and their place in society. There is some evidence that men among the younger

generations are beginning to contribute more to the lives of their partners and children, a trend that is

read as a backlash against their own relationships with their fathers (Ellis, 2003: 151). Increased

attention to "masculinity" has also burst forth in recent social science research, although the

reemergence of the "male marginalization" theory has again, somewhat suspiciously, been used as a means to downplay feminist critiques of Caribbean labor and family formation processes (Barrow, 1998; Ellis, 2003). Based on the literatures explored above, analysis of the situation of the Caribbean family among lower-status people can be fruitfully made from feminist perspectives that openly address the intersection of power and gender in male-dominated Caribbean societies. Like many passionate positions, these perspectives probably suffer from a lack of subtlety and nuance, but are startling in their inversions of received wisdom about gendered power within the context of the family and society and probably contain a large element of truth.

In the face of these daunting odds, many women choose or are forced to enter the workplace which prompted Safa (1995b:1) to argue that the "concept of the male breadwinner is becoming a myth as women worldwide become increasingly important contributors to the household economy" and that these changes reflect "many changes that have taken place as a result of the new international division of labor". The relocation of many manufacturing jobs from the industrialized nations of Europe and the US came about as competition from Asia steadily made the high costs of labor in industrialized nations unbearable from the corporate perspective. High labor demand industries, like garment manufacture, were among the first to relocate in developing contexts and the debt-crunch of developing nations in the post-1980 period accelerated these processes as those countries bargained to find ways to pay off loans from foreign banks and multilateral lenders like the World Bank. In the face of rising debt and increasing capitalist penetration of local markets, budget crunches have forced many governments to retreat from former welfare state policies and import substitution schemes that provided sustenance, support, and protection for an economically ailing population. Furthermore, competition to attract foreign investment has led to unwarranted concessions in worker's rights, protection, and fair-wage policies. With the elimination of state responsibility, even more pressure was placed on households to pick up the slack and this duty largely fell to women who were seen as good workers for the low-wage, high labor intensity jobs "provided" by the international movement of capitalist production (Deere et al., 1990:51). Fertility declines that reduced domestic

responsibilities, increased educational opportunities for women, and increased urbanization collectively created an environment where women were more easily incorporated into this restructured labor system. In sum, this global feminization of labor has been characterized by increasing female labor force participation, decreasing male labor force participation, weakened workers rights, safety, and power, and steep increases in overall poverty rates (Safa, 1995:2).

Increases in female labor force participation have sparked heated debates over the effects on women's status with the central questions being "Does wage labor merely exploit women as a source of cheap labor and add to the burden of their domestic chores? Or does wage labor give women greater autonomy and raise their consciousness regarding gender subordination?" (Safa, 1995:37). The myth of the male breadwinner provides the logic for marginalizing women's paid employment because women's salaries are "deemed supplementary to the primary breadwinner" (Safa 1995: 37) regardless of the reality of specific situations. Patriarchy and capitalism intersect with and reinforce each other by sanctioning previously existing gender hierarchies that can be mobilized to benefit the increasing encroachment and penetration of capitalist practices. In conjunction, they explicitly and tacitly send the message that women are inferior, their labor is inferior and supplementary, and, as such, should not be respected by commanding a living wage. These interactions occur at the level of the family where women are usually given full responsibility for domestic duties, at the level of the workplace where women are forced into low paying/low prestige jobs, and at the level of the state where women are legally often restricted from owning property or earning a decent wage by, for example, outlawing labor unions in high female participation industries (Safa, 1995: 39).

Despite the forces aligned against them, female labor force participation has increased women's "gender consciousness" and "bargaining power" within the household and has helped to "redefine their role within the home and to challenge the myth of the male breadwinner" in the wake of structural readjustments that produced declining male economic power in the global economy (Safa, 1995:58). Of particular note for family studies, married women in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Puerto Rico report increases in their decision-making power within the home and relate

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these changes directly to labor force participation. For unmarried and divorced women, particularly those at the fringes of the economy, the unwillingness or inability of "marginal" men to contribute to their households has shifted attitudes away from looking for security in a man and towards self-sufficiency, although this process is filled with sometimes unsatisfactory economic and personal trade-offs. Expectations about male contributions and their familial obligations may also be changing as an effect of these restructured gender relationships that flowed, at least partially, from restructured global economic relationships over the past 50 years. Heightened expectations of male-female relationships based on growing notions of gender equality may make the reality of the situation even less appealing and encourage women to shy away from permanently binding themselves to a single, perhaps unreliable, man. From a less positive perspective, some evidence is this study suggests that "consensual unions may also make poor women feel more vulnerable and heighten their fears of challenging male authority" especially when kin and friend networks provide inadequate support (Safa, 1995:180). Changes at the level of the workplace and state are less apparent as gender bias and inequality are deeply rooted in these labor practices. In conclusion, Safa states that " it is apparent from the results of this study that paid employment only empowers women under certain specific conditions, which vary with state policy, access to resources, and the nature of the household economy" (Safa, 1995:182).

In an earlier piece of research that queried the relationships among gender, labor, and family, Bolles (1983) looked at the effects of IMF structural adjustments on the lives of urban industrial workers and their households. The author traces how the productive (market-place) and reproductive (domestic activities, childrearing, housework, etc.) "operate under deteriorating transnational economic conditions predicated by Jamaica's shift of position in the global marketplace" (Bolles, 1983: 139). The author finds that stable union households are characterized by nuclear family structure that may include a few extended kin and by the participation of at least two household members in the wage-earning sector. In visiting unions, there are more people, particularly extended kin, present in the household and the female household head is usually alone in participating in the

labor market although a number of household members engage in informal economic activities like petty vending, casual manual labor, etc. Economic survival is dependent on a wide range of economic activities, formal and informal, and represents a strategy designed to minimize economic risk and capitalize on opportunity. Differences in the division of household labor are also apparent with stable unions having the women be responsible for most domestic duties while "visiting" households spread the burden of domestic duties among household residents, thus freeing the "primary breadwinner" from additional responsibilities (Bolles, 1983: 148-149). Outside the home, household members engaged in a wide range of reciprocal relationships as workers in certain industries acquired necessary goods (bread, baby formula) from their workplaces in order to exchange them with network members. Additional research on female-headed households (Massiah, 1983, Barrow, 1996) identified relationships between these households and the wider society by identifying the following facts about Caribbean households:

> Male headship rates are lower than in almost any regional area of the world and female headship rates are among the highest in the world

> Male-headed households have higher incomes than female-headed households and the latter are more often impoverished

> Female household heads are much more likely to derive income from informal activities, or if employed, tend to congregate in low paying jobs in assembly-type manufacturing and informatics

> Female household heads are less well educated than their male counterparts in the overall society

> Female-headed households tend to be larger than male-headed households

> The composition of male-headed households is different from female-headed households, with the former characterized by smaller nuclear clusters and the latter by larger extended and non-related clusters

The focus on disadvantage and adaptation reflect an on-going interest in these kinds of research perspectives in the Caribbean family literature as projects like these continue to reveal important information about the internal workings of female-headed households, their connection to each other, and to the wider society.

The previous sections have described female workers as largely stationary beings who venture into local labor markets, but what of women who migrate to secure work and the impact that that mobility has on their families? In a study of Caribbean women migrants from who sought work as domestics on Aruba, Aymer (1997) provides an insightful analysis of the constraints and choices that migrant women make while balancing the need to secure the economic means of survival for their children and the desire to give daily love and emotional support to their children and extended families through physical presence in their families. Her collaborators entered domestic service on Aruba at a time when family migration of non-Dutch single women and their children was not allowed and when pregnancy was deemed to be a "deportable" offense for visiting workers who did not retain the rights of Dutch citizenship. Because of these constraints, women migrants who felt compelled to try to make a better life through their paid off-island domestic labor made arrangements for their children to stay with family and friends back home in the hopes that sacrificing physical closeness would generate economic stability for dependents who remained behind. Although separation meant that personal intimacy and close daily contact was not often possible, Aymer found that these women strongly believed that they were taking care of their families in the best way that they could despite their physical absence. This is a far different pattern from the relationship between male migration and family support where men are often physically, emotionally, and economically absentee. Furthermore, she found that this kind of migration and childrearing pattern had the tendency to become intergenerational as young women continued to leave their children with their mothers or other extended kin in order to find work to support their collective survival. Migrant remittances often not only provide the means of stringing together the necessities of life but also served as a badge of status and family pride in the communities migrant women left behind and became clear evidence that the absentee woman was, indeed, fulfilling her new role as economic provider for the family (Aymer, 1997: 95-96). Interestingly, the author noted that deciding to marry often cut women off from their network of female kin and friends and was either seen as irresponsible based on the belief that the man could not adequately support her or as a new economic position to be

jealous of even if the newly married woman suffered infidelity and/or battering at the hands of her partner. Many women expressed outright disdain for the idea of marriage and suggested that the benefits of relying on one man did not generally outweigh the costs of over reliance on a single man and the ceding of personal autonomy and power over their own lives and the lives of their children (Aymer, 1997: 109-110, see also Stack, 1974 for a similar dynamic in African-American communities). Working from the propositions of The Myth of the Male Breadwinner, taking on the historically male dominated role of absentee provider has interesting implications for changing gender ideologies in their home communities and in the wider Caribbean. Is there a *Myth of the Male Breadwinner as Absentee Migrant* and an associated *Myth of the Stationary Women*? Future research should begin to tease out how gender norms, gender ideologies, and Caribbean families have been shaped not only by male, but also by female migration choices and experiences.

Women's mobility in the current global system of labor is often strongly tied to gendered perceptions of the proper domains of female work that places a premium on women's traditional roles as caretakers of the young and old, domestic laborers, and sexual servants. Global flows of female migration hinge on these interrelated industries and confine many migrant women to low-pay, low-status, highly exploitative jobs in faraway places. Ehrenreich and Hochschild (2003) document these experiences in the lives of a wide range of immigrant women and illustrate the ways that the socioeconomic situations within and between developed and developing nations create a supply and demand loop where women are the commodity of interest. Women from impoverished nations are increasingly imported to fulfill socioeconomic roles abandoned by many educated, upwardly mobile career-oriented women in First World counties. This juxtaposition creates a social space where the tensions of class, race, and gender collide in the construction of mistress and maid relationships between First and Third World women. Women involved in these complex relationships view "the other" with suspicion, jealousy, and admiration for the images of womanhood their labor and lifestyle projects as maids embody traditional images of feminine domesticity through their caring for children and their maintenance of households and mistresses embody the potential of women to break from

this mold and become powerful socioeconomic forces outside of the home. The contours of family life are shaped through these relationships as both women of means and women without try to manage the demands of work and the demands of family in their busy "modern" lives.

Sexual exploitation through human trafficking and forced and unforced participation in the growing global sex industry has also touched women's lives in important ways (Brennan, 2004; International Organization for Migration, 2005; Kempadoo, 1998, 1999, 2004). These burgeoning industries capitalize on an ingrained cross-cultural sense of male sexual privilege and the propensity of many men to objectify women as sexual objects who are, or should be, ready and willing to satisfy their sexual fantasies. Growth in the sex industry throughout the Caribbean is startling but the transfer of sexual favors for cash has a deep-rooted history in the region and is sometimes even supported at the level of The State. In the Netherlands Antilles, prostitution is a legal industry that is licensed through the government and the brothels on St. Maarten and Curacao are widely known and frequently used by local and non-local men alike (Kempadoo, 1999). Women who are brought into these situations in the Antilles and elsewhere are valued for their perceived desire to cater to men's every need and this "hotness" of desire is contrasted with the "coldness" of modern women from Europe, the U.S., or in other regional and global home societies (Brennan, 2004). Racialized fantasies are also often enacted through these exchanges where white men indulge in sexual exploits with non-white women that have few, if any, strings attached. However, physical appearance is important to local men as well and women from Colombia and the Dominican Republic are valued for their light skin complexion that contrasts with the darker skin tones of most local women (Brennan, 2004; Kempadoo, 1999). Although women are clearly disadvantaged in these situations, they cannot be characterized as helpless as they, too, work towards fulfilling their fantasies of marriage and escape from poverty through "performances of love" that are consciously designed to attract long-term commitments from wealthier clients (Brennan, 2004). The rise in the purchase of mail-order brides who are seen as untainted by the deleterious effects of independent modern womanhood and the occasional movement from the role of sexual partner for pay to the status of wife

indicate a level of agency afforded to some women who opt to sell themselves in the hopes of obtaining a better future. Even though most of these long-term relationships are marked by clear inequalities in socioeconomic power and a lack of genuine emotional commitment, family life is being formed around these contractual arrangements and their presence and intricacies provide insights into the contestation of creative and fluid gender roles in both sending and receiving societies.

Crafting identities: State level policies and women's labor force participation

The state is not merely the bearer of bad economic tidings in women's lives it is an institution that "continuously contests, challenges, and manipulates the gender identities of women to serve state interests while simultaneously wishing to hold intact the fundamental belief in women as second-class citizens" (Barriteau, 2001:24). Within Caribbean gender systems women are often used as scapegoats to assign responsibility for the destruction of families, high divorce rates, perceived male economic and social marginalization, and the comparatively poor academic performance of boys and men (Barrow, 1998; Barriteau, 2001: 46). Reactionary rhetoric of this sort is unrelated to the reality of either men's or women's lives and emerges from power shifts in modern economic life brought about through contestation of these gender systems. Women moved from the restrictive gender systems of the early parts of the 20th century into a period of increased economic opportunity, often through migration, in the post WWII period. From 1970 onward, the Caribbean has been experiencing a gender backlash associated with a period of intense and devastating economic restructuring. Increasingly vocal male vitriol underscored by increases in domestic violence against women have developed as an outgrowth of this historical period while nation-states have been pressed to liberalize marriage laws and legislate fairness measures in wage earning between men and women. Transforming gender norms has not been a fully liberative process for women or for men, but continued negotiations of the boundaries between the two will likely continue to be a hallmark of Caribbean, and perhaps global, social relations for the foreseeable future.

The relationship between development and the state is key here as beliefs about cultural elements, including gender ideologies, as impediments to progress have erroneously targeted female-headed households as "the problem" rather than viewing 20 years of damaging IMF policy as the predominate source of widespread poverty in the Caribbean. Development policies do not usually "develop" women because they neglect the central roles played by them. This oversight or flat out denial of women's importance in Caribbean societies can be seen in the unwarranted and disproportionate cutting of government administered social programs that directly effect the quality of life for women and their children. It is clear that gender should play a significant role in successful implementation of development strategies in the future as the relationships between women, development and the state are transformed yet again (Leo-Rhynie et al, 1997). Whether and when state policies take women and their lives seriously will have a lot to do with the future socioeconomic trajectory of each island and the Caribbean as a whole.

Despite interference from the state, through participation in a wide range of labor markets, women find alternative ways to create and recreate their own identities and, thus, their place/s in the world (Yelvington, 1995). Although most of the literature focuses on the feminization of low status, low paying jobs in the developing world, Freeman (2000, 2002) tries to uncover the ways that gender and class are created through the participation of women in a pink-collar data processing center on Barbados. In contrast to the idea of globalization as a normalizing process imposed from above, the author shows how, on the one hand, global capitalist enterprises use local cultures to further their goals but are, on the other hand, shaped by local culture, people, and environments since local people respond and adapt to the expectations of the workplace within the parameters of their own cultural norms and expectations. This negotiation between global capitalist desires and local culture can produce novel forms of cultural practice that transform both the worker and her society. In the case of these Barbadian women, participation in a pink-collar industry allows for the formation of alternative class identities that distinguish pink collar working women both from their working peers in lower-status industries and from women who still exclusively occupy the domestic sphere. This

marking of identity comes mainly in the form of the office itself, marked by humming computers, orderly cubicles, and air-conditioning, and through capitalist consumption (a victory for global capitalism) as women "dress the part" of the professional by wearing "business attire". Constructing this alternative class identity is not based on actual monetary differences, since these women don't generally make any more money than their factory-working counterparts, and conceals the fact that data processing jobs are very factory-like in their repetitive low-skill highly-supervised nature. The job atmospheres are also similar in that women provide the majority of the low-paid labor and are constantly monitored by male managers. Despite these similarities, women tend to prefer data processing work because of the image of professionalism it allows them to develop and deploy.

Apart from development policies and their local effects, the State also intervenes in family life through its control of legal processes in general and family-related law specifically. Due to a range of historical circumstances and state-level development policies, women do the best they can to achieve financial independence but often find themselves at least partially dependent on support garnered from men. This tension places a central importance on men as providers even if they cannot or will not be the primary or sole support for their partners and children. In the search for security, some Caribbean women will deliberately strike up relationships with higher status men who have at least the means if not the desire to aid them and their families. These liaisons have deep-rooted histories in the Caribbean and it is not uncommon for married high-status men to have relationships with other women and to father children outside of their marriages. In seeking out these kinds of relationships, poor women diversify their economic possibilities by creating social scenarios that allow them to appeal to more than one man for support based on current and former relationships formed with these men (Ho, 1999). However, not all men are equally capable of providing support and social expectations vary according to the status of the man in question.

These varying social expectations play themselves out in lower-court child support cases and give women the means of not only securing support but also publicly shaming men who have failed to live up to their responsibilities. In an ethnographic study of family court law on Antigua and

Barbuda, Lazarus-Black (1991) found that, contrary to popular belief, most poor women bring judicial cases not for money, which was always a minimal sum, but for social "justice". Whether or not a woman sought justice was situational and depended largely on the socioeconomic status of her child's father. A "big man" of financial means who still failed to give adequate support effectively ruptured the cultural expectations that defined relationships between men, women, and children. By shirking their culturally defined responsibilities, they became targets for social shaming through public pronouncement of their failure as fathers and men. The mere threat of this public event sometimes forced men to change their ways but many men continued to evade responsibility even after the court ordered child-support. With financial pay-offs uncertain, it is clear that many women used the court system as a social space to air grievances and to enact a social drama designed to bring wayward men back into their socially expected roles as partners and fathers.

In follow-up research, Lazarus-Black (1997) identified tensions in the Antiguan legal system not fully explored in her earlier work. The courts gave women an opportunity to voice their complaints while, at the same time, adjudicated those complaints in ways that reinforced existing class and gender hierarchies. Interactions with the legal system both empowered women to seek social justice, economic support, or other legal necessities (in one case, securing a husband's signature to get a child's passport) and confirmed the dominance of men in Antiguan society by allowing them both to negotiate unreasonably low child support payments and to exercise their own discretion in implementing these favorable court orders. The outcome of this gendered process usually meant that men were not required to bear an equal financial burden for their children and that they could opt to pay support either sporadically or not at all with no legal repercussions. In this way, deciding to take their cases to court produced mixed financial and social results for women as it often provided a forum for men to reaffirm their superior social status in these societies. You can take a man to court, but you can't make him pay.

Embedded inquiry: What relevance is this history of Caribbean family research to the study of Saban families?

This review of the literature on Caribbean family formation suggests that the search for origins and prime movers in the production of Caribbean family types is an unachievable, perhaps undesirable and uninformative, goal and that there are still many unanswered research questions ripe for anthropological inquiry. Despite the breadth of this literature and the depth of the confusion that emerged from it, increased focus on the *roles and experiences of women* in family formation processes and the links that these processes may have with gendered, racialized and classed processes of migration and globalization is clearly in order. As Ho (1999:45) states:

> Women are the protagonists in the drama of globalizing Caribbean kinship, which requires the active maintenance of circuits of exchange of goods, services, communication, travel, and personnel. This is not a new challenge for Caribbean women, who for centuries have been embedded in large kin-based support networks. Today's transnational structures are merely the postmodern versions of this tradition on a global scale.

By looking at women's lives and their families as a lens to see these broader processes unfold, we can come to understand the ways that these globalizing processes produce human experience and how those experiences interpenetrate the course of globalization. The voices of those intimately involved in this drama should be central to the knowledge produced about their situations. Therefore, learning how Caribbean people, particularly women, understand their lives and hearing how they articulate the problems that they face should be a primary goal. By paying close attention to how social difference structures these experiences, we can also move past the notion of a homogenized Caribbean woman and her universal experiences. We can see a young Black woman on Saba struggle with the pressure to conform to a post-marital life of quiet domesticity, an Indian woman from Trinidad who decides to enter the workplace much to her husband's dissatisfaction, or a white middle-aged divorcee on St. Barts who tries to juggle her financial and familial responsibilities with no help from her disapproving family or her violent ex-husband. Although we cannot capture these processes in their totality, we can move closer towards complete understanding by including human voices and diversity as a key components of Caribbean family studies.

General project orientations gleaned from the Caribbean Family Studies literature

Based on these propositions, expanding the field of view to include a range of family forms crafted by women from all sectors of society should become a general research practice and will help us work towards producing comparative inquiries that look at the breadth of Caribbean family types and their specific historical formations. It is important, from both a human and applied intervention perspective, to understand and intervene on behalf of the most socially burdened and fragile members of our local, regional, and global communities. This desire to make life better underpins much of the research on Caribbean families as they tend to look primarily at the situation of poor Black female-headed households and the day-to-day struggles that they face across a range of Caribbean societies. It is admirable in the extreme to want to make life better for the vulnerable, but focusing on a slice of society necessarily sacrifices breadth for depth of inquiry. In a very real way, depth on a single topic cannot be fully understood without exploring the connections that exist between the object of study and the wider frame in which it exists. For example, a comparative study of family forms and their relation to certain historical circumstances can not only allow us to compare and contrast different family-based responses to fluctuating socioeconomic environments but can also alert us to how families have adapted to their surroundings, what works, what doesn't work, and why. This is not to say that the exercise should be designed to find a mythical "perfect family form" but research of this kind can create a foundation of understanding that could allow for cooperative problem-oriented action developed through honest dialogue among researchers and local men, women, and families. By not predetermining what problems exist, the research process can become both more inclusive of the range of family-related issues in Caribbean societies and more attentive to the ways that the people themselves identify family-related problems and what they think should be done about them. Lastly, although numerical data is powerful in its bluntness, combining the cold hard numbers with the palpably emotional perspectives of the counted may also help to humanize Caribbean family research to reach the hearts and minds of decision-makers at the local, regional, and global levels.

This study of Saban family formation processes is situated within the context of both the Saban Diaspora and the increasing encroachment of globalization on the lives of Sabans at home and abroad. It tackles some of the themes articulated in prior research while adding new elements that address some family issues largely overlooked in the body of Caribbean family research. This project continues the thread of earlier work by looking at:

The relationships among family, migration, and socioeconomic conditions

The practice of non-marital childbearing and experiences in female-headed households

The continuing legacy of racial discrimination and its effects on Caribbean families

Gender inequality in family life and in the workplace

The role of men in the creation and support of their families

Women's experiences and perspectives on Caribbean family life

Within these echoes of past research, this study of Saban families varies in several important respects. These differences are related to the general propositions detailed above and include:

Focus on a range of family forms and their connections to experiences of Diaspora and globalization

Attention to the specific ways that Sabans articulate experiences of race and gender

Integration of racialized and gendered experiences as central organizing themes

Expanding analysis to include African-descended and European-descended families as well as biracial couples and their children in historical perspective

Inclusion of ethnic diversity and its influences on local family formation practices

Exploration of the institution of marriage, experiences of divorce, and the alternative of cohabitation

Understanding changing historical meanings of non-marital childbearing in cohabiting or visiting relationships

Using ethnographic data (1964, 2004) and demographic data (1856-present) to extend the time depth of these analyses

Highlighting variable perspectives on these issues articulated by a wide range of Saban women

By looking at these continuities and divergences, it is clear that this project is connected to the history of family research in the Caribbean in both theme and spirit while it also adds some important

nuances to the study of Caribbean families. It seeks to delineate the relationships among family forms and socioeconomic conditions but does so from an explicitly historical perspective. It is centered on the prominent themes of race and gender but explores these themes from the perspectives of local people. It looks at family formation practices like non-marital childbearing but also queries the nature of other family experiences like marriage and divorce in Saban society. It is problem-oriented but allows local people to identify and talk about family issues most relevant in their lives. It privileges the voices of women but includes all kinds of women and quite a few men in the discussion.

This research extends prior Caribbean family studies by including both diachronic and synchronic analyses of quantitative *and* qualitative information about Saban families. The integration of history to better understand current family forms is not new, but the detail of these analyses and the emphasis placed on uncovering *process of stability and change* in Saban family forms over a long period of time deploys a deep sense of the importance of history not explored in most prior Caribbean family research. Furthermore, the questions posed here do not focus on explaining the development or current experience of a single family form, like the "Black female-headed household", but instead focus attention on the range of family forms that developed over time, their connections to broader socioeconomic trends, and the ways that people from all parts of Saban life view family formation processes in their communities and in their own lives. As such, these historical analyses aim to be both integrative and inclusive in scope. They will not only take seriously the many different perspectives held by Sabans themselves but will also try to give them an open venue to speak about the challenges they face in their families and in their lives.

Specific research questions generated through an assessment of the Caribbean Families literature

Some questions posed during the course of this project are directly related to specific issues raised by several Caribbeanists as a result of their wide-ranging analyses of the varied relationships that exist among family formation processes, movement, and labor throughout the region. Gender in

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the context of family life is a major theme in this incarnation of family research on Saba and analysis of the intersections among historically constructed and reconstructed gender norms, families, and labor consume large sections of this text. When thinking about the position of women in their families and in the workplace, the questions posed by Safa (1995) become highly relevant. In an effort to evaluate and perhaps deconstruct the Myth of the Male Breadwinner, this research asks whether wage labor exploits vulnerable Saban women whose work is devalued as marginal and supplementary to the labor of their often absentee men or whether it gives them certain socioeconomic freedoms that convey a greater sense of autonomy and empowerment. Ultimately, Safa (1995) argues that women's experiences of wage labor are situational and that wage labor can carry elements of freedom and constraint in women's lives depending on the specific personal and historical circumstances that surround their movement into the world of paid labor. Based on this assertion, gender-sensitive analyses will track these relationships over the course of the past 150 years on Saba and will detail the experiences of men and women's labor on- and off island and the relationship of these experiences to past and present gender ideologies and issues of social empowerment in Saban society.

Questions about the nature of gender and labor in Caribbean societies articulate with issues surrounding the problem of "male absenteeism" in Caribbean cultures and the related dominance of matrifocal representations in Caribbean family life. Instead of conceptualizing Caribbean men as a social void in domestic spaces, researchers like Olwig (1981) and Stycos and Back (1964) queried the malleable roles that men and women play in their families and the relationship of these roles to historical patterns of labor and movement. This work adds to this general research agenda by asking why different kinds of Saban men take on different responsibilities in family life and how these responsibilities relate to the types of relationships that Saban men and women share with one another over time. Many feminist authors have also demonstrated how matrifocal representations tend to elevate the image of strong-family-centered womanhood as the primary locus of female power while simultaneously masking the fact that most Caribbean societies are still male-dominated both within

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and outside of the home (Ellis, 2003; Ho, 1999; Mohammed, 2002, Safa, 1995). In the case of Saba, this work will explore not only the historical relationships between women and their families with specific reference to matrifocal representations that site female power within the home but also the ways that shifting labor practices have altered or, in some cases, not altered these traditional images of womanhood and the ways that women negotiate the social pressures to conform to gendered expectations of family life and the increasing desire to achieve equality and shared responsibility with men in their homes and working lives. Additionally, matrifocal representations and the related sense that "children are women's work" will be explored as a means to understand the ways that these images and attitudes intersect with men's social power and how these intersections allow men to define the nature of their socioeconomic involvement with women and children within and outside of marital arrangements. Following Lazarus-Black (1991, 1997), specific attention will be paid to the ways that men and women exercise power in family life through heated battles over the roles that men and women are "supposed" to play in their families, the socioeconomic responsibilities that men have for their children after marital and non-marital childbearing relationships dissolve, and the ways that formal legal recognition of non-marital children and seeking child support through the Court of Guardianship relate to gendered power in Saban society. Lastly, as an extension of Brennan (2004), the recent rise in marital and non-marital relationships between white Saban men and imported Colombian brides and Saban men from both communities and in-migrant Santo Domingan women will be explored with reference to how these non-Saban women "perform love" to secure economic stability from Saban men who either can't entice a Saban woman to fall in love with them or who feel that Saban women are moving away from their hitherto traditional roles as domestic goddesses and sexually attentive mates. The racialized nature of some of these relationships, the messages that they send about the contested terrains of womanhood on-island, the ways that the competing "fantasies" of men and women involved in these unions are realized or unrealized in the unfolding of daily life, and the ways that Saban women read these relationships and their effects in Saban society are all thoroughly examined.

A final word

Like former research on Caribbean families, the strands of this project have academic and applied elements that reflect a sincere appreciation of and concern for Saba and her people. This work contains a deep hope that revealing some of the joys and difficult realities of Saban family life might ultimately lead to elevated community awareness of and public discussions about these issues. This awareness could, in turn, spark a desire among Sabans to celebrate the positive aspects of their families and to do the hard work it would take to meaningfully change areas of family life that remain problematic. Ultimately, Sabans must decide what is best for them and their island. This research can, at best, only facilitate that process but, in doing so, will add to the long and compassionate, if somewhat checkered, history of problem-oriented applied research on Caribbean families.

CHAPTER 4

INFLUENTIAL INQUIRIES: ANTHROPOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF SABAN LIFE AND THEIR RELATION TO THE CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECT

Anthropological research on Saba has a long history that spans the better part of the last half-century. This phase of research and my personal experiences on Saba have been and will continue to be situated within and shaped by this history. Over the intervening years five women, myself included, and one man have not only born witness to the changing ways of life on this tiny island, but have also produced representations of that life specific to the historical and anthropological moments that surrounded their research. How, then, has this history shaped the ways that I am able to see Saba and what contributions might I be able to make through my own addition to this substantial literature?

The "crisis of representation" has spurred anthropologists to produce many a treatise on textual experimentation, ethnographic authority, ethical constraints on who and what is represented, the demystification of field work, gender issues that emerge between researcher and participant, the development of friendships, and the sometimes unanticipated responsibilities we encounter "in the field" (Brettell, 1993; Grindal, 1995; Haraway, 1991; Lawless, 1991; Shaffir and Stebbins, 1991, Watson, 1999). It appeared that all the bases had been covered: from start to finish we had reflected on the processes by which we produce ethnographies (field work, analysis, "writing-up", and dealing with various responses to our work), but, in all the literature about ethnographies and in the ethnographies themselves, the history of anthropological research in specific areas is seldom given detailed attention. This is surprising given that most current research projects are always set in relation to, and thus influenced by, prior ethnographic knowledge generated by these historical chains

of anthropological inquiry. What, then, could we gain by including a deeper exploration of prior

ethnographic work?

An analysis of this type would give us the analytical space to reflect on the content of

previous work by looking at:

How content was shaped by historical expectations of how ethnographies *should* be
crafted

What is included (seen) or excluded (not seen/purposefully omitted) based on these
expectations

How ethnographic representations are generated by this selective process

How changing trends in anthropology reformulated expectations over time

How those changing intellectual trends situated ethnographic texts in relation to one
another

How current intellectual contexts within anthropology temper the ways that current
readers and researchers engage with and react to prior anthropological research

How this history of research along with changes in intellectual trends shape new research
projects

How archives are generated by former research endeavors and the problems and
potentials that arise with issues of access to and organization of previously collected
materials

The following discussion will tackle these issues in reference to five extant ethnographies that capture

both the historical specificities of certain aspects of Saban life and the historical shifts in the

intellectual climate of anthropology as a discipline.

In *Windward Children: A Study in Human Ecology of the Three Dutch Windward Islands in

the Caribbean*, a husband (ecologist) and wife (anthropologist) team sets out to investigate "two

important factors contributing to the present cultural complexes: the role of the natural environment

and the course of ethno-history" (Keur and Keur, 1960: 2). Their endeavor is ambitious in that their

goal is, clearly, to characterize this small region as a whole without losing site of the specificities of

local historical contexts on each of the Windward Islands (Saba, St. Eustatius/Statia, and St.

Maarten). The ethnography is divided into expected chapters on: geography and location, climatic

factors, physiography and settlement, history (in its various periods), judiciary and police, soils and

vegetation, agriculture and land use, livestock and animal husbandry, fisheries, industrial development, windward island economy, local and household economies, public health and health attitudes, population patterns, religion, magic, education, gender and childhood, social structure, personality types/character, and world orientation. This is a typical, if exceptionally thorough, lay out for ethnographies of this time in that the authors were attempting to "represent", as much as possible, the totality of existence on these three islands. The breadth of information covered is truly staggering and not likely to be reproduced in the context of current ethnographic practice. The compartmentalization of slices of life with little or no attempt made at interconnection among them is problematic but falls in line with the contemporaneous ethnographic practice that tried to capture real every-day life as a series of snapshots. Like the framing of any photo, we must wonder what was left out. What exists just beyond our view and what reasons lie, literally and figuratively, behind this representation of reality? We learn that development issues are one reason why research on Saba is timely and important, but these glimmers of connection to wider regional and global ideas about development are not followed up sufficiently in the text and one is left wondering, in a relatively unsettling way, whether this anthropological research was funded/produced as a means to assess development prospects in this collection of small Caribbean islands.

Despite the controlling input of norms in ethnographic practice, this body of work anticipates changing trends in anthropology in that its focus on the interactions between people and their environments would become a hot topic in the late 1960s/early 1970s and remains so to this day. It appears that they were ahead of the curve in this respect even though the integrated evaluation of environmental and ethnohistorical information leaves something to be desired. The research trajectories of population-environment studies, human behavioral ecology, and historical ecology are set within the context of this sort of earlier work in a diffuse if not direct way. Recognition of these contributions allows us to see that research histories do influence current thought and to appreciate that early research of this sort brought increasing attention to vital relationships between people and their environment and, in this way, shifted our frame to include the research agendas that populate

these emergent fields today. Apart from this broader contribution, the Keurs made some key

observations about changes in Saban life and their connection both to encompassing environmental

factors and to the political administration of this island.

The environment of Saba has shaped its destiny in important ways as an outcome of weather,

soil types, and general topography. All three of these combine to limit the agricultural potential of

Saba as only 17 percent of the total island area is arable to varying degrees. The social practice of

subdividing family plots as inheritance created a system where farmers had to travel long distances to

tend to each of their often widely separated fields. The authors also note that the lack of communal

farming impeded attempts to increase the efficiency of Saban farming although patterns of reciprocal

labor exchange were not uncommon. Although the scattering of plots can help to mitigate against

risk by having fields in varying environmental zones and/or in multiple locations that may experience

different microclimatic parameters, like variances in rainfall, the amount of time spent moving among

plots and the lack of sufficient available labor clearly limited the ways that Saban farmers could

exploit their holdings. Given these general parameters, large scale plantation based farming was

never an option on Saba and, as such the plantation systems that dominated other Caribbean islands

simply could not exist in this environment. This fact led to a very different pattern of social

development on this island when compared to its neighbors because it both minimized and modified

the practice of slavery and maintained a European-descended majority population on Saba until very

recently.

Based on historical accounts, Saban slave-owners often worked side by side with their slaves

in the field and class-based social stratification was not as extreme as that found among slaves,

indentured servants, less well-to-do but nevertheless "free" colonists, and the planter class on other

islands. The closeness of the interactions between slave owner and slave meant that a different kind

of relationship developed and that some of the worst abuses of plantation-based slavery were avoided

in most cases. This is not to say that equality was in any way the rule on Saba or that the experience

of slavery on Saba was not replete with physical and psychological violence. The racist attitudes that

still exist in the white population bear witness to a time when people of African-descent were thought to be less than people of European extraction and these distant times continue to shape the social experiences on this island almost 150 years after Emancipation. However, in places like St. Maarten and Statia where plantation economies dominated historical experience, there is a deep ambivalence about working the land that did not exist on Saba. Many of these African-descended islanders from St. Maarten and Statia likened this kind of work to the conditions and experience of slavery and shunned engaging in any labor associated with the land. Conversely, on Saba, people were found to be very connected to the land in both the African and European-descended communities. Working the land remained embedded in their sense of Saban identity and was not imbued with thoughts about the legacy of slavery on the island. The attitude towards farming was changing slightly at the time based on increasing out-migration of would-be farming men to work in the oil industries on Curacao and Aruba and the expansion of civil service jobs that tended to be less demanding and more fiscally rewarding and predictable than agricultural pursuits. Many formerly tilled fields lay dormant and production not only fell short of export levels reached in the past but became inadequate to feed the local population. These tensions in Saban farming practices, migration, and the welfare state are still working themselves out today and the Keurs' early identification of these issues provides a clear link to the roots of modern socioeconomic trends.

Two further areas of interest touched on by this seminal text involved the development of a Dutch-funded locally administered welfare state on Saba and the impact that race and gender inequalities had on Saban life. Because of their focus on development goals, the Keurs were especially critical of a range of social welfare programs that they felt sapped the creative energies and general work ethic of the Saban population. Why farm when you can work half as much for twice the money sweeping the road? Why get a job when the government will subsidize your living expenses and demand nothing in return? The authors blame this system for creating a dependent mentality that requires no sense of personal responsibility on the part of the local population. If something is wrong, the government isn't doing enough to fix it. If your finances are tight, the government is denying you

the life you deserve. While their commentary may be a little harsh, these general attitudes still pervade life on Saba and can be read as both a serious barrier to meaningful sustained private sector development on the island and as an impediment for those who want to lessen the population's dependence on direct or indirect government welfare. The sense of an independent agrarian past outlined above couple with the current state of government dependency brings many interesting cultural tensions into view and has erupted in clashes over a wide range of issues from animal husbandry practices to the prominence of American investment on the island. Politics are also involved here as the influence of family, race, the lack of education, and big-man mentalities inhibited the development of true democracies on the Dutch Windward islands. In assessing the effects of political sovereignty in these areas, outside observers of the time chalked these policies up as almost complete failures that served to heighten rather than alleviate community tensions and divisions. Political life on Saba is still problematic and carries some of the characteristics observed by the Keurs into the present day.

Race and gender are also explored in the text and provide an interesting point of comparison to sort out the ways that ideas and experiences of race and gender have changed or not changed over time. Racial inequality dominated Saban life in the 1950s and brazen displays of racism were commonly perpetrated by the European-descended majority. At the time, most white people simply believed that this was the natural order of things but there were beginning to be rumblings of dissatisfaction in the black community and among some of the more liberal-thinking white Sabans. Importantly, this was the time where the European-descended Saban population lost its majority on island due to the long-term effects of lower fertility rates and slightly higher migration rates during the period of sustained seafaring migration. This change created some unease among white Sabans as both African- and European-descended Sabans adjusted to this new reality. The civil rights movement in the United States and the growth of Black nationalism in the Caribbean also filtered into Saban life and both empowered black Sabans in certain ways and forced the white population to reevaluate some of its own views. Having insight into this time is invaluable and gives a point of

departure to see how perspectives and experiences of race on Saba have transformed in some aspects and remained entrenched in others. Gender is also explored with particular reference to work and family life on Saba. Saba lace-work was identified as an important source of revenue to supplement remittance monies from family members living abroad which put women's paid work into the discussion of the island's economy. When looking at family life, however, children and the home were thought to be the responsibility and general domain of women regardless of their economic contributions to the household. This early work provides an historical account of these dynamics and provides a way for us to understand the tensions that have arisen in family life on Saba over the past 50 years and their connections to ingrained ideas about what it means to be a man or woman in Saban families and in Saban society more broadly.

In evaluating the impact that *Windward Children* has had on my thinking about Saba, I must admit, somewhat sheepishly, that the organization and tone of this book led me, initially, to not give this research the credit that it deserved. I suppose that we are trained to see "new" as "better" despite the reverence for history that currently permeates our discipline. In re-evaluating my initial reaction, I am glad to have had this opportunity to analyze not only the historical construction and biases in the text itself, but also my own biases, as a reader positioned within a certain historical moment of anthropology. In moving past my initial reaction, although not escaping it entirely, I can better see the contributions as well as the shortcomings of this early research on Saba. Texts like this have a very masculine tone that is probably related to the pervasive contemporaneous belief that anthropology was a Science, with a capital S, and that anthropological texts should be written scientifically. This tone likely reflects a gender bias in pursuing Science in general and prompts me to wonder what other aspects of this research were shaped by issues of gender both in the field and during the process of analyzing the data and writing the ethnography (Lutz, 1995). Given the long history of female anthropologists working on Saba, I also wonder how these women felt about and negotiated these expectations. I am still somewhat disturbed by the veiled reference to development planning and am suspicious that this research may have been funded by those with ulterior motives.

This type of goal-oriented funding is not inherently bad, but clarity and transparency in this type of research is demanded by our current anthropological sensibilities. I'm pushed to wonder if Sabans knew the purposes and goals of this research and, if these goals were indeed development oriented, how did Sabans feel about their role in the process? Moving past this general critique of style, presentation, and motivation, many of the themes in my own research are directly related to the issues identified by the Keurs in the 1950s. Issues about agricultural and animal husbandry practices and Saban identity, community impacts of economic development policies, the influences of a large civil service and welfare programs on the Saban population, and the roles that race and gender play in Saban life experiences are all relevant in this current phase of research and their discussion in the context of 1950s Saba allows for analysis of these social trends and practices over time.

In *Educated to Emigrate: the Social Organization of Saba*, Julia G. Crane (1971) studied Saban society in general but paid particular attention to how migration shaped Saban life experiences under specific historical circumstances. Temporary and permanent male-dominated seafaring migration characterized the late parts of the 19th and early 20th century and led to extremely imbalanced sex ratios on Saba over that period. The image of Saba as an "Island of Women" emerged at this time as did other demographic features like high celibacy rates among European-descended Sabans and an increasing prevalence of non-marital childbearing for Sabans of African-descent. Migration patterns changed with the establishment of the oil refineries on Curacao (1917) and Aruba (1928) and, although men still dominated employment within the industry, women began to become increasingly incorporated into migration processes *as migrants* by capitalizing on employment opportunities in the emerging service sectors on these islands. In this way, Saba continued to lose population, but the sex ratios on island became more balanced over time. During Crane's time on the island, she noted an increasing importance of educationally related migration of Saban youth that reflected a growing sense that education was the means to a better life and that children usually defined "a better life" as a life away from Saba. This educational migration trend is still prevalent today and has sparked many concerns about "brain-drain" on Saba. Off-island

migration among less educated Sabans has become less common as the growth of the governmental sector in the post-oil refinery period, the establishment and expansion of the Saba University School of Medicine, and the flourishing of the local ecotourism industry have supplied many on-island jobs while off-island jobs are becoming more and more skills based and, thus, out of reach for most Sabans with low levels of formal education. In fact, the migration stream has now all but reversed on Saba with in-migration from surrounding islands gaining in importance as Saba has now transformed from a sending country to a receiving country in the flow of international migration. All of these migration trends and shifting socioeconomic opportunities have transformed Saban lives and families in historically unique ways and Crane's foundational research provided both a direction for my own project and a firm analytical base for me to extend and elaborate upon her initial findings.

Crane produced *Educated to Emigrate* eleven years after the Keur and Keur (1960) volume and, although different in many respects, it still retains some of the characteristics of this earlier ethnographic style in its segmentation of life into definable categories like village composition, government and politics, social life, and economic life. However, there is a new sense of historical depth present in this research that anticipates later trends in anthropology. In placing certain time periods in their rich and detailed historical contexts, Crane is able to connect her snapshots of Saban life together diachronically as she traces change in elements like "social life" over time. Her ethnography culminates in the explication of current problems with emigration and the lack of educational resources for young Sabans who are forced to go off-island for any level of secondary education. This problem-oriented research is clearly elaborated from the perspective of Sabans themselves, and thus lacks many of the ethical questions posed about the relationships between anthropological study and development agendas in *Windward Children*. Although the writing style is still very much entrenched in the anthropology as dry social science style, Crane's passion for Saba and Sabans leaks through, perhaps unintentionally, especially in the sections on children's educational outlooks and expectations for their futures.

Educated to Emigrate sits on the cusp of an explosion of theorizing about the purpose and practices of anthropology (as a "science" rooted in colonial structures) and, as such holds onto some of the older traditions in anthropology while simultaneously anticipating new trends in the discipline. Although the general writing style does not allow for the explicit insertion of her own experiences and feelings in the text, there are moments, especially in her discussion of children, when these emotions do surface. While the notion of such a break from "objectivity" would have likely horrified the likes of Keur and Keur, the insertion, however concealed at the time, of these perspectives was to become an essential part of current anthropological practice (navel-gazing aside). The inflection of history throughout the analysis also rides the crest of a new wave in anthropology that recognizes the importance of history in the shaping of the present and signals a move away from synchronic ethnographic representations to a more diachronic perspective on culture. Crane's work is also set in dialogue with current research that aims to understand the effects of globalization on the lives of people who inhabit specific localities. During Crane's time these globalizing processes were beginning to encroach on Saba, although penetration of Saba by various incarnations of capitalism in the Caribbean was nothing new, an important point to keep in mind for those taken, perhaps overtaken, with the idea of globalization as an entirely new phenomenon.

On my initial reading of this ethnography, I had similar feelings to those I had reading *Windward Children*, but I immediately appreciated and enjoyed the attention that Crane paid to the centrality of history in the development of current Saban cultural forms. This affinity very much reflects the intellectual climate of anthropology today and, it is true to say, that this context shapes the way I read both old and new anthropological work. Much of what I know about Saba and Saban history is derived directly from this work and the high quality of this ethnographic history and attention to detail suggests a real love for Saba and a burning desire to "get it right" not just for her own sake, but for the enjoyment and approval of her on-island friends. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to sort through some of Julia Crane's archives when I was on Saba in the summer of 2003. Contained in these archives were photographs she took of just about everybody on the island,

surveys and drawings completed by school-age children, and personal correspondences between Crane, her friends, and her advisor, Margaret Mead. By contrasting the generally "sciency" tone of the ethnography with the vibrant photographs and personal reflections about life on Saba, I was able to get closer to understanding the real relationships that Crane had to this special place. To this day, people know her name and remember her fondly and, upon arrival, one of my contacts promptly showed me a picture that Crane had snapped of him as a child and proclaimed that "I was her biggest fan!". In knowing these intimacies about her experiences, I wonder what her ethnographies might look like if written today and know that I can only hope to garner a tiny fraction of the respect and love that Sabans showed for her both during her "field work" and long after this small time in their lives had passed.

Following up on her dissertation research, Crane produced *Saba Silhouettes: Life Stories from a Caribbean Island* in 1987. *Saba Silhouettes* is not an ethnography in the traditional sense, but it is a collection of life histories that span the gendered, racial, and generational divides of Saban life. This book reveals what, in my opinion, were the true reasons for Crane's passion for Saba: the people. This format gave the author a space to finally reveal those people and relationship that were so important to her by letting Sabans speak of their lives and letting the world listen as they placed names and faces with the personal experiences etched in this text. I read this volume as both a response to and critique of burgeoning debates about the "crisis of representation" in anthropology and its emphasis on textual strategies that could capture "multivocality". Here, Crane partakes of the ability to share her friends and their lives with the world, a feat not necessarily possible within the science-driven generalizing form of anthropology of the earlier period. At the same time, she doesn't fret about how to represent Sabans because she believed (I think, anyway) that Sabans were perfectly capable of speaking for themselves even though some might not have been entirely happy with their own renditions. It is difficult to place this particular text within the stream of ethnographic research on Saba because it is quirky in its refusal to overlay any detailed interpretation on these life stories. In that sense, it is a perfect resource for my own research on Saba because I can begin to understand

the life choices and trajectories that combined to produce aggregate population trends on the island. *Saba Silhouettes* reminds me that people make processes and that any understanding of sociodemographic processes must ultimately rest on "individual" foundations. Crane was the first person to show me real every-day Sabans and, for this, I am grateful.

Given the prominence of the "individual" in current anthropological thought, the thought of this text appealed to me almost instantly. Reading the somewhat disjointed renditions of peoples lives is a bit more challenging, but, in my opinion, well worth the effort. On a more personal level, I think that the desire of Crane to present Sabans' life histories as an important contribution to Caribbean studies was very flattering to Sabans in general. One of the people I met on Saba, Brother Riley (see top right hand corner of the cover for his picture!), told me about his participation in this project with pride and was thrilled to receive his "papers" after his interview was transcribed (I later saw these copies). This personal interaction in the process of producing ethnographies and life history volumes is, perhaps, the most important element of anthropological practice. Julia Crane knew how to build and maintain relationships founded on genuine caring—this is one of the most important lessons I can learn from her.

Collectively, Julia Crane left behind a treasure of demographic, ethnographic, and life-history information that was incorporated willingly and thankfully into this research project but the fragmented nature of her archival legacy and issues of preservation and access proved to be a challenging aspect of integrating her carefully collected data into this project. While the exact nature and content of her data sources will be described in detail in the following chapter, it is important to note here that, upon her death in 2001, all of her field notes, household census files, and photographs were returned to Saba and became divided among various parties who each have their own vested interests in how, when, and to what purpose these materials might be used. Instead of creating a central, publicly accessible repository for her archive, bits and pieces are now distributed among several personal homes and government offices. Accessing these materials is dependent on securing permission from the various "owners" and rested on their individual judgments about the value and

dangers of the proposed use of the information. While local people should absolutely be able to exercise a significant level of control over data gathered in their communities, the current situation is problematic in that the materials, themselves, are in danger of being lost or damaged due to a lack of adequate centralized professional curation and in that access needs to be gained from multiple people who have their own, sometimes undisclosed, interests in the surviving information. For example, I was given access to Crane's 1964 household survey but was not allowed to incorporate her field notes and other files into my project because the holder of these documents deemed them to be potentially embarrassing to certain community members and, therefore, not appropriate for further study. Because the life histories were formally published, there were not issues of access related to those data, but the issues of preservation and access detailed above, while specific to this case, are common challenges that researchers must face when they try to tap into previously collected data sets and should be fully discussed as powerful factors that can influence to content and form of current anthropological research.

In *Changing Patterns of Marriage and Reproduction in a Depopulating Caribbean Society*, Peggy Ann Fry (1981) analyzed the demographic responses of European descended Sabans to rapid depopulation of the island beginning in the late 19th century and throughout most of the 20th century. Fry's project is part of a general trend towards interest in demographic anthropology in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s and a more general societal trend towards understanding the reasons behind events like "the demographic transition" in Europe as a means to bring about population control/reduction in developing contexts (Coale and Watkins, 1986). Although laced with some racist overtones and a devaluation of "third world" peoples, this movement towards understanding population-environment interactions and its interest in "sustainability" had deep intellectual merit. This was the age of fertility limitation efforts by the "first world" in the "third world" amid fears of overpopulation and resource depletion. Although Fry's work did not necessarily engage these topics, there is little doubt that general interest in demographic anthropology was heightened by these wider social debates.

Fry looked specifically at the question of how depopulation is related to changes in family formation processes by looking at marriage and fertility patterns primarily within the European-descended community on Saba ca. 1876-1976. She found that depopulation was connected to increasing celibacy rates due to imbalanced sex ratios emerging from sex-specific migration, decreasing ages at first marriage, decreasing ages at first birth (interestingly not coupled with increasing completed family sizes), no change in marital distance (marriages still occurred mainly within village populations rather than among village populations), low prevalence of non-marital births, and no change in interracial marriages. I am not clear as to how much Fry drew on Crane's work to formulate her own research agenda, but the ethnographic knowledge provided by Crane undoubtedly allowed Fry to identify Saba as a prime Caribbean location to test theories about the "European Mating Pattern" and population decline. However, my research flows from Fry's initial focus on the relationship between family forms and migration patterns but extends the analysis by adding time depth and by analyzing the total population of Saba rather than exclusively focusing on European-descended Sabans. Specifically, her lack of attention to the experiences of African-descended people on Saba led me to formulate a project that not only looks at changing family forms within both of these communities but also looks at the relationships that exist between the European and African descended populations on Saba and how those experiences have shaped Saban families in the past and present.

It is clear that without Fry's initial demographic work on Saba, I would not have been able to pursue this research project and that the constraints and opportunities embedded in the original form of the Saban Demographic Database have very much shaped the course of my own research. She spent many a long hour in Saba's dusty archives gathering relevant demographic data for her own analysis and, thankfully, birth, marriage and death records were deemed to be highly relevant. Through a fortuitous twist of fate, my advisor, Paul Leslie, retained a copy of the original database that he helped construct with these materials. The subsequent transfer of that database from the original tape files to a modern database and statistical program, SPSS, allowed research on Saban

family forms to continue. Much like the archives left by Crane, the preservation and subsequent retrieval and transformation of this information was an individual luck-imbued effort rather than an organized strategy for preserving vital and hard-earned data on Saba's population history. While chance and circumstance always play a role in research, anthropologists need to think concretely about the archival legacies that they want to leave future generations of researchers and to make issues of preservation and access central components in their research projects.

From a historical demography perspective, Fry's research is very exacting and produced clear information about Saban population trends. It is less successful at explaining those trends due to a lack of ethnographic data used to support theories about why people followed certain life course trajectories and how these trajectories were shaped by broader social experiences of race, gender, and class. The lack of "voices" in the ethnographic text is typical of this kind of research and reflects the general research ethos of the time. My work aims to elaborate on some of Fry's work by linking quantitative and qualitative data together in an effort to explain the cultural shifts that underlie these general trends and by looking at sociodemographic changes in the European population in reference to changes experienced in the African-descended community. Fry laid the groundwork for this sort of research and I will capitalize on this sturdy foundation. Unfortunately, I know nothing of her personal experiences on Saba or how these experiences did or did not translate into her ethnographic work

Building on previous research by Crane and Fry, in *Migration in Saba Island: An Historical Demographic Analysis of a Multigenerational Process* Kathleen M. MacQueen (1989) sets out to delineate historical patterns of migration on Saba through an analysis of passenger movement lists from the 1930s and a population register assembled post-WWII. Contrary to previous explanations of migration from Saba, MacQueen's analysis showed that African descended peoples were, on the whole, as mobile or more mobile than their European counterparts during this stretch of time. Of particular interest, in the earlier time period African descended men stayed away from the island for longer periods of time which probably reflected their poorer access to the "means of transportation"

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home. In the later time period women became much more mobile, particularly in the African descended population, which indicated increasing incorporation of women as laborers in migration circuits. MacQueen's research is set within the context of historical demography, but is situated differently than Fry's fertility-oriented work. *Migration in Saba Island* reflects a growing anthropological and societal interest in the ways that capitalist penetration has influenced the migration decisions and experiences of people in the so called developing world.

This ethnography, like *Educated to Emigrate*, is situated at a turning point in anthropological thought, in this case, about migration. The historicity present in *Migration in Saba Island* anticipates emerging literatures on Diaspora and the attention to the penetration of capitalist influences in Sabans' lives can be readily translated into the grand "globalization" debates of the current anthropological age. Some of the language in the text speaks to interest in Marxist perspectives that were popular in the 1980s while focus on the demographic aspects of the problem tend to overshadow the smaller ethnographic sections of the work. Positioned, as it is, between Marxist theory/quantitative historical demography and the Diaspora/Transnationalism/Globalization debates raging today, *Migration in Saba Island* is truly a product of its time. MacQueen's research, set in relation to earlier studies, has helped me to think through the migration processes affecting the island during different phases of capitalist penetration on Saba and to question the accuracy of local population histories (in this case the myth of white flight and comparative black immobility). Whole segments of this project are directly related to the findings presented in this ethnography and my attention to the importance of changing modes of capitalist penetration and the importance of gender and race in family formation and migration processes also stems from her research.

Migration in Saba Island strained the limits of my statistical abilities and was difficult reading in sections but, after many a sociology class, I have learned to appreciate this kind of rigorous quantitative approach to understanding human behavior. However, this is not to say that this work is sociological—in design and question formulation it is thoroughly anthropological. In talking with Kate MacQueen, I am constantly amazed that she has so many stories to illustrate points she makes

about Saban life and the ways that these lives are crafted in the context of changing migration patterns. Apart from the contributions that her dissertation made toward understanding Saban life and history, I find that the "knowledge" about Saba that I have gained through personal interactions with her have shaped my thoughts about Saba beyond her corpus of written work.

This rich lineage of migration and family-building anthropological research on Saba is intimately related to the central topics explored in this project. The published and archival legacies of these researchers allowed me to understand the historical complexity of Saba, to identify the potential influences that this history has had and continues to have on the evolving relationships between migration and family building processes on this island, and to craft my own research based on their findings and on the wealth of accessible raw data they generated during their time on Saba. By examining the intellectual and archival ethnohistory of anthropological research on Saba, I have been able to reflect not only on the works themselves and the interconnections among them, but also on the historical and, where possible, the personal conditions that influenced the form of each ethnographic contribution as well as the kinds of data each researcher left for future generations. By further situating myself, as an anthropologist working in a certain time and place, and my research in reference to this totality of ethnographic work on Saba, I feel that I am much more firmly and consciously placed within this history, and therefore, more appreciative of it, than I would be following a more standard analysis of prior research. Awareness of my place in this history has forced a re-evaluation of some materials I had previously marginalized and has allowed me to give credit where credit is due. It has also allowed me to reflect on the personal nature of ethnographic practice through contrasting the silences in several of these ethnographic texts with the passion for Saba that I know many of these researchers felt in their hearts. Through this, I can more fully appreciate the personal and professional constraints and potentials that these anthropologists faced and negotiated during their own time on and interactions with Saba and to meditate on my own analytical and archival contributions within this wider context. With all of the emphasis on the

importance of individuals, seeing the anthropologists who came before not as ethnographies but as

people may be the most valuable gift of this exercise.

CHAPTER 5

THE NUTS AND BOLTS: AVAILABLE DATA SOURCES, THE CURRENT FIELDWORK PROJECT, DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

Fundamentally, this ethnographic project is designed to further basic research in the area of Caribbean family studies, but does so by following, where possible, a participatory-model for developing research foci, carrying out fieldwork, and creating roadmaps for data analysis and interpretation (Bennett, 1996; Green and Mercer, 2001; Green et al., 1995; Hastrup and Elsass, 1990; Israel et al., 1998; MacQueen et al. 2001; Perez, 1997; Strauss et al., 2001). Participatory approaches in anthropology are of growing interest as anthropologists and community members work towards constructing research agendas that fulfill the requirements of academic rigor while giving the needs and desires of the community a central role in the research process. Before my first trip to Saba in the summer of 2003, I had formed a preliminary understanding of key demographic changes based on three years of on-going analysis of The Saba Demographic Database (described below). In talking informally with Sabans, I came to better understand the concerns that they shared about the sociodemographic changes that I had only been able to see on a relatively abstract level. By spending time on Saba, asking people about what they saw as the relevant issues surrounding sociodemographic change, observing community interactions, and keeping the lines of communication open as I developed the research goals and data-collection strategies of this project, I am hopeful that this research will be of value to both the academic and Saban communities and that it accurately reflects the concerns and desires of Saban people. Detailed descriptions of existing, updated, and newly created datasets available for use in this study are presented below, as is an extended discussion of my field experiences designing and implementing a participatory ethnographic

project on Saba during the summer of 2004. After describing the kinds of data used in this study, the section ends by presenting data management and data analysis techniques used to impose meaningful order on this unwieldy pool of data accrued over the past 40 years of Saban ethnographic research.

The Saban Demographic Database (ca. late 18th century-2004)

     To initiate the Saba Migration and Family Building Project I availed myself of the unique opportunity to reanalyze, and in some cases analyze for the first time, a truly extraordinary demographic dataset that captures Saban vital events from the late 18th century up to 2004. While pursuing doctorates in anthropology at Penn State University, Paul Leslie, now at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and Peggy A. Fry compiled the foundation of this historical demographic data set during a period of fieldwork in the late 1970's. Records consulted include Saba's Civil Registration of births (January 1876-July 1977), marriages (January 1871-July 1977), and deaths (January 1876-July 1977), Anglican Church records of baptisms, marriages, and burials (1865-1977) and the ongoing household census available for the year 1977. Some late 18th-early 19th century demographic information was collected during this phase of fieldwork but the general incompleteness of the records limits their utility. For this reason, all analyses presented here focus on demographic trends beginning in the late 19th century. Researchers gathered information on ancestry through ethnographic interviews and, as such, all race classifications are based on cultural assessment and individual experience. Additional fieldwork conducted by Kathleen M. MacQueen during 1985-1986 and by myself during the summers of 2003 and 2004 allowed for the complete coverage of Civil Registration records of births, deaths, and marriages for the 1978-2004 time period. During 2004 I also rechecked all of the paternal recognition and divorce data to make sure that these records were fully integrated into the database.

     Compulsory civil registration of vital events began in the 1870s and the completeness of the records increases in the more recent periods. In fact, linking the civil registration system to government benefits, like primary education, ensured the near-flawless recording of basic vital events

from the post WW-II period to the present day. The database does not cover Catholic Church records, as they were unavailable for study. In general, the Catholic Church records are of lesser quality and of lesser importance to islanders who were 90% Anglican until the early-mid 20th century. The importance of the Catholic Church on the island intersects with increases in the accuracy of Civil Registration records. Due to this intersection it is unlikely that the omission of Catholic Church records seriously compromises the completeness of the database since Catholic Church records would likely yield redundant and partial information for the most recent periods.

As the foundation for demographic analyses, Paul Leslie constructed a life history file that included information on an individual's birth, race, marriage, death, and general fertility profile through 1977. This basic dataset was retrieved from tape archives and transferred into SPSS. After transferring this original dataset into an updated database and statistical package, many new variables not included in the original data sets were created to facilitate analysis (ex: celibacy data, birth spacing data, age at marriage, age differences between the spouses, legitimacy data, age at first birth, derived migration status, etc.). In additional to their analytical utility, creating these variables allowed for a quality check of the data and error rates were found to be exceptionally low. After creating the architecture of the Saban Demographic Database with this primary data, the remaining 1978-2004 information was integrated into this existing database to detail important shifts in Saban demography over the past 25 years.

Julia Crane's 1964 Household Survey

After her death in 2001, all of Julia Crane's archives were given back to the Saban community and are now split among several different on-island sites. These archives included a vast photographic collection (slides), correspondences she had while living on Saba, surveys administered to school children, extensive field notes and a 1964 household survey catalogued on note cards. Crane's field notes and the household survey are in the possession of Mr. Will Johnson of The Level and the remaining materials are located at the Saba Tourism office in Windwardside. Mr. Johnson

gave permission to computerize the 1964 household survey during the summer of 2004 but was not willing to allow access to Crane's field notes for fear that the information they contained might be sensitive and embarrassing for certain members of the community. Each note card represented a single household member and included information on the household number, village location, racial classification (based on phenotypic differences identified as relevant by locals), sex, their relationship to other household members, their close-kin relationships to other Sabans living both on- and off-island, and their field/s of employment in the public, private, and domestic sectors of the economy. The census covered the entire population of Saba living on-island during 1964 and included a total of 1033 individuals. Given time constraints, it was not possible to record the details of the close-kin relationships but a record was made of how many relatives were currently living in various places around the world. All other information was incorporated into an SPSS database and many additional analytical categories were developed from this original data. To facilitate comparative analyses, the structure of the database is identical that of the 2004 Household Survey detailed below.

Life Histories from Crane's *Saba Silhouettes* (collected in 1970)

Conducting life-history interviews provides a powerful means to understand how certain attitudes and beliefs are both formed by and formative of life experience (Cole and Knowles, 2001; Giele and Elder, 1998; Hareven, 2000; Hatch and Wisniewski, 1995; Lawless, 1991; Linde, 1993; McCracken, 1988; Norrick, 2000; Ochs and Capps, 2001; Riessman, 1993; Sawin, 1999; Thompson, 2000; Weiss, 1994; Wengraf, 2001; Wortham, 2001). In the summer of 1970, Julia Crane and several of her students traveled to Saba and undertook an extensive life-history project. A total of 28 life histories from this project were eventually published in Crane's 1987 volume entitled *Saba Silhouettes: Life Stories from a Caribbean Island*. The life histories span a broad range of experience and cross-cut the landscape of age, gender, and race in Saban society. Because each life history is presented in its entirety without editing or comment, this volume holds great analytical potential for the current project. The life histories collected by Crane and her colleagues articulate with the

ethnographic and demographic information collected in the 1960s and form an important source of comparison for the demographic and ethnographic data collected in the summers of 2003 and 2004.

The 2004 Household Survey

During the 2004 fieldwork season, I was able to retrieve and computerize household records stored at the Saba Census Office. One function of the civil registration system is to track in and out migration from Saba through the maintenance of a household-centered computerized database. From this database it was possible to extract paper copies that detailed basic demographic information about each household member including their age, sex, marital status, place of birth, and relationship to other household members. The Dutch government does not collect information on race or ethnicity so these categories were derived from existing information in the Saba Demographic Database, field observations, and, in a limited number of cases where supplemental information was lacking, on place of origin (Haitians, for example, are largely of African-descent). Information in the paper records was computerized in an SPSS database and followed the same structure of the 1964 survey. These household surveys bookend a period of rapid demographic change on Saba and will be used to understand changes in family forms over the past 40 years.

Daily field notes from the 2003 and 2004 field seasons

Daily field notes provide a more nebulous and often idiosyncratic form of data about Saban families and Saban life. They were generated to capture my impressions of certain cultural features of island life and to reconstruct specific conversations that I had with people that I met and talked with throughout the day. Sometimes notes focused on certain community events, like Carnival, and others recorded snippets of information I gathered from people I caught rides with, met during lunch, or ran into walking around town. In this way, they are random but they do provide a supplemental source of information that I can use to better understand perspectives expressed in the informal and formal interviews described below. They also provided a space for me to evaluate my own reactions to certain situations and to sort through my own biases to get at how Sabans view the world. Many of

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the issues raised in each analytical chapter would not have been known to me without engaging in the flow of Saban life and recording each of these interactions as precisely as possible left me with a record of my time on Saba not reflected in other parts of the project.

Making this project participatory: Successes and failures in unstructured and structured ethnographic interviewing during the 2003 and 2004 field seasons

On-going quantitative demographic analysis of the Saban Demographic Database helped identify possible directions for the qualitative elements of the current ethnographic project. These preliminary quantitative analyses gave a general sense of important family-related changes impacting Sabans and their island. A three-week reconnaissance trip to Saba in the summer of 2003 allowed me to talk informally with Sabans about family-related issues and both confirmed the value of pursing topics identified by looking at quantitative trends and added new directions identified as relevant by Sabans themselves. This recursive relationship between quantitative and qualitative sources of information aided the development of a much more extensive research agenda implemented over the course of three months in the summer of 2004.

During the 2004 field season, qualitative data in the form of open-ended key community member interviews and semi-structured attitudinal/belief surveys were collected to flesh out the basic demographic patterns extracted from the Saban Demographic Database. I made the decision to focus this round of research on the specific experiences of Saban women in their families and in island life more generally. The emphasis on women should not be seen as an exclusion or omission of men since these connections were of central importance in the lives of many Saban women and, as such, the role of men on Saba and women's experiences with men were recurring themes. This decidedly woman-centered perspective is designed to establish that the poignant, often neglected voices of women are of central importance to any nuanced understanding of demographic shifts and leaves room for the incorporation of men's perspectives during the course of future research. These ethnographic interviews, in combination with Crane's life histories, will be used to interject personal

explanations, feelings and thoughts about why certain demographic changes came about and how they have impacted life on Saba.

In the summer of 2004 I entered the field with a basic but flexible research strategy that implemented a participatory ethos of research wherever possible. In the wake of the "crisis of representation" in anthropology, the ensuing debates on "ethnographic authority" and the flurry of confessionals about negative community reactions to traditional modes of anthropological research and writing, it is curious that models of participatory research have, for the most part, not taken root in either academic or applied anthropological practice. The reasons for this lack of incorporation are varied and have much to do with fears about negotiating control over project direction and with the amount of time, energy and money that participatory research consumes. As with any anthropological project, decisions must be made about research goals, data collection and management strategies, data analysis, data presentation, dissemination of project findings, and implementation of interventions based on results (at least in the case of applied anthropological research). Participation of the studied communities can occur at each phase of a research project and, for those truly concerned about giving communities a stake in the research process, community partners and researchers should work out a plan that details when, where, and to what extent "the community" will contribute to the shaping and conducting of specific research projects. The application of participatory models cannot follow a one-size-fits-all format because of budget/time constraints and the variable desires and "abilities" (this may be especially problematic regarding specialized data analysis) of communities to participate. The point here is not to assume either community needs, which should ultimately arise from discussions with the community itself, or the ways that communities will involve themselves in the research process. Before delving into the specific application of these ideas to the research at hand, it is necessary to outline the current debates surrounding participatory models of research in order set the current research agenda within this larger theoretical literature.

In *Can Public Health Researchers and Agencies Reconcile the Push from Funding Bodies and the Pull From Communities?*, Green and Mercer (2001) attempt to define participatory research in an effort to define what does and does not fall into this theoretical-methodological paradigm. The basic idea behind participatory research is one of empowerment and the belief that empowering communities to identify and act on local problems in partnership with more traditional "researcher" types will ultimately lead to better research and better research results (see Freire, 2000, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* for the roots of this approach and Bennett, 1996; Hastrup and Elsass, 1990; and Sillitoe, 1998 for more recent discussions). This idea of empowerment can sound a bit condescending, but, if research is approached with the genuine belief that the researcher, him or herself, can learn from local knowledge and, thereby improve the quality of research, this agenda can truly be seen as a partnership (of unequal power to be sure, but the nature of those inequalities can sometimes be surprising!). The first problem that arises is one of definition: What constitutes a community? Green and Mercer (2001) argue that the definition of community should be expanded to include not only lay residents of the local area but also public health departments and other local service agencies, local health practitioners, policymakers, and other community organizations that have a stake in the research and the research process (see also MacQueen et al., 2001 for a complex study of community definition) . At a minimum, these partners should be involved "at least in formulating research questions and interpreting and applying research findings and possibly also in selecting methods and analyzing data" (Green and Mercer, 2001:1926). They go on to question the upper and lower limits of participatory research through the following definition: "Maximum participation occurs when stakeholders remain active throughout the study-in the formulation of research questions, selection of methods, and analysis, interpretation, and application of findings. Minimally stakeholders should be involved at least at the front end of the study, in formulating research questions and at the back end, in interpreting and applying the findings" (Green and Mercer, 2001: 1927). Although Mercer and Green give us a solid roadmap for determining what is and what

is not participatory research, the actual implementation of a participatory research project is not explored.

In *Review of Community-Based Research: Assessing Partnership Approaches to Improve Public Health*, Israel et a. (1998) provide some direction for people interested in implementing a participatory research design, but who are unsure what, exactly, that would entail. From their perspective, research is approached as a "partnership" where partners are allowed the flexibility to "contribute their expertise to enhance understanding of a given phenomenon and to integrate the knowledge gained with action to benefit the community involved" (Israel et al. 1998: 173). Not to be outdone in the realm of definition, the authors offer the following eight "principles" of community-based research (Israel et al, 1998:178-180):

1. Recognizes community as a unit of identity.
2. Builds on strengths and resources within the community.
3. Facilitates collaborative partnerships in all phases of the research (problem definition, data collection, interpretation of results, and application of results to address community concerns).
4. Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners.
5. Promotes a co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities (learn from local theories and give skills to local community members).
6. Involves a cyclical and iterative process (partnership development and maintenance, community assessment, problem definition, development o f research methodology, data collection and analysis, interpretation of data, determination of action and policy implications, dissemination of results, action taking as appropriate, specification of learnings, establishment of mechanisms for sustainability).
7. Addresses health from both positive and ecological perspectives.
8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners.

After defining the key characteristics of participatory research, Israel et al. (1998:182) divide the remaining parts of their discussion into three broad categories: issues related to developing community research partnerships; methodological issues involved in community-based research; and broader social, political, economic, institutional, and cultural issues. For our purposes, both community research development and community-centered methodological concerns will be highlighted. When considering partnership development, establishment of trust and respect is a vital ingredient for implementing a successful research project and, to create and maintain trust and respect, one must keep attuned to issues of inequitable power distribution both within the community

itself and between the community and outside researchers. Sources of conflict might arise in negotiating how best to use precious time and resources based on differences in perspectives, priorities, assumptions, values, beliefs, language, different emphases on tasks vs. process, allocation of time and money, and definition of "community". To minimize these potential stumbling blocks, the authors suggest investing time in jointly developing operating norms, identifying common goals and objectives, practicing democratic principles in leadership, recruiting a community organizer(s), encouraging the active involvement of support staff/team, and identifying key community members. The establishment of Community Advisory Boards (CABs) may also help to alleviate tensions in the development of research partnerships by acting as liaisons between the community and external researchers, but the composition of such entities must be done carefully and with knowledge of how power inequalities embedded in CAB membership might alienate certain segments of the community (Strauss et al., 2001). Observations about methodological concerns revolve around questioning of the "scientific quality" of the research, funding difficulties that arise from the inability to fully articulate the research design and agenda before the research begins, and the difficulties of trying to balance research and action with time and financial constraints. Importantly, the authors list conducting educational forums, creating educational opportunities for local community members (specifically, giving them the tools to "become" researchers), and involving partners in the publishing process as key means to alleviate some of the methodological concerns that arise within the community.

Using the definitions of participatory research developed both by Green and Mercer (2001) and by Israel et al. (1998) and by taking to heart the pitfalls of this research model and suggestion for their avoidance, attempts, both successful and not so successful, were made to develop a participatory ethnographic project that tackled family issues of central concern to Sabans. Participatory strategies for Saban family research emerged through efforts in three main areas: solicitation of input from community leaders before entering the field, informal key community member interviews done prior to structured ethnographic interviews, and the incorporation of local women as project advisors and interviewers during the structured phase of ethnographic interviewing. Each of these points of

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collaboration posed their own challenges and understanding what worked and what didn't work will help develop the participatory model further in future on-island research.

Solicitation of input from community leaders before entering the field

Before entering the field in 2004, efforts were made to contact and solicit input from a variety of community members who might have had an interest in the form and direction of the ethnographic portion of this project. Communication through email was only possible in a handful of cases and the results of these contacts were nil. It is difficult to interpret silences like these so I shifted course and devised another contact strategy. After developing a list of key community members in consultation with several of my island contacts, I put together a packet of information on the project for approximately 20 different individuals. These information packets contained general information about this project, its connection with past research on the island, and a general personal introduction that shared a little information about my own background. These packets were sent in advance of my returning to the island in hopes that they would generate interest and discussion about up coming fieldwork. Again, these contacts did not result in any bi-directional communication but I felt that at least some islanders knew of the project and may have passed on this information to others. When I arrived on the island, I began to make phone contacts with the people on my list and found that most were willing to meet and talk with me but that none had taken the time to look at any of the project materials that I had sent several weeks prior. In the context of Saba, it appears that face-to-face contact rather than any form of written communication is necessary to secure community consultation.

Informal key community member interviews conducted prior to structured interviewing

Informal interviewing of key community members commenced just a few days after my arrival. Most people that I called seemed wary but willing to at least sit down with me to see what all the fuss was about. Once our discussions began, I found that most Sabans were warm, generous and extremely insightful about all of the issues I raised with them and were very helpful in pointing out

areas that I had missed in the initial development of project objectives. I found that people from the African-descended community tended to be more available and more open than those from the European-descended community and this bias is shown in the predominance of African-descended participants both in these informal interviews and in the structured parts of this research. I also found that certain political leaders consistently broke appointments with me for unknown reasons while others were very accepting, interested in what I was doing, and open to sharing their thoughts about where the research should go. These complexities made this phase of research difficult at times but the overwhelming impression was one of general openness and interest in this family study. A total of 17 people were interviewed during the first month of the project. This included two men and 15 women with eight coming from the European-descended community and nine from the African-descended community.

As informal interviewing progressed, I found that most of the project topics developed after my 2003 field research were highly relevant to Sabans. This confirmation meant that the survey I developed would be incisive enough to get at family related concerns that circulated in the community. In talking with this broad range of community members, I found that the omission of specific questions on drug and alcohol abuse and on domestic violence was problematic. Instead of adding a section on to an already extensive survey instrument, I decided to let these issues come up naturally within the flow of both informal and formal interviewing. This approach mitigated problems that might have arisen by asking these sensitive questions directly and allowed women to bring up substance abuse problems and violence if and when they deemed necessary. The second area of concern was that I had not adequately identified the full extent of increasing ethnic diversity of the island and the impacts that this diversity made on the Saban community. I had known about the influx of Colombian women in Hell's Gate, but the presence and influence of other ethnic communities only became apparent through these informal discussions. Questions about ethnicity arose in relation to my queries about the Colombian presence as women from other villages discussed the experiences they had with people of different ethnicities in their own communities (ex. Santo

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Domingans in The Bottom, Haitians in St. Johns). Knowledge about these interactions heightened

my sensitivity to those issues and allowed me to open up structured surveys to include these topics.

Overall, though, the outcome of these interviews confirmed the legitimacy of the structured interview

instrument and gave me a good idea of the range of ideas people had about family issues on Saba

before structured interviewing began.

Hiring and training local women to aid with the structured Attitudes and Beliefs survey

Hiring community members to assist in project design, recruitment, and data collection gives

the community a more active role in the research process and allows for the collection of more

information than would be possible with a single researcher. This community-based team approach

grew out a commitment to the participatory model of research and was designed not only to enhance

the quantity and quality of ethnographic materials gathered but also to empower community members

as integral parts of the entire research process while simultaneously giving them the ethnographic

tools to continue research of their own making after this project was completed. Five women, three

from the African-descended community and two from the European-descended community were

recruited to become anthropologists-in-training and took on various responsibilities for collecting

structured interview data through an Attitudes and Beliefs Survey instrument (Appendix 1).

Interviewers were trained using a hands-on approach that required several meetings to do the

following:

    To identify problem areas in the Attitudes and Beliefs draft survey
    To help modify of some project questions to fit local language use, understandings, and
        sensitivities
    To gain a high degree of familiarity with finalized project materials
    To complete mandatory ethics training before conducting interviews
    To learn recruitment strategies and to help identify potential project participants
    To conduct mock interviewing to get a feel for what it was like to ask and answer survey
        questions
    To do one or two assisted interviews before striking off independently
    To assume responsibility for interviewing 10 women from their home communities

As per IRB regulations, each field-worker received ethics training and showed proof of this ethics

training by completing the quizzes associated with the *Human Participant Protections Education for*

Research Teams modules developed by the U.S Department of Health and Human Services under the aegis of the National Institute of Health (ww.nih.gov). Given the general looseness of information in this community, this ethics training was of the highest importance as issues of privacy and confidentiality had to conform to ethical codes adhered to in the IRB process at UNC and in the discipline more generally (Marshall, 2003; Strauss et al. 2001). A high degree of importance was placed on issues of confidentiality and the informed consent process. Confidentiality is of prime concern in all settings, but in a place as small as Saba, where gossip is used as a mode of social control, it became even more relevant. All of the women involved with interview training immediately recognized the value of confidentiality and were willingly and ethically bound to keep all conversations and contacts with project participants private.

Apart from thorough ethics training, these local women had a much different relationship with research participants than I did as an outside researcher. This obviously shaped the kinds of responses they received during the recruitment process and the information they collected during the course of the interviews. Recruitment, in general, seemed to benefit from the personal connections that these women had with potential project participants and it was clear that my lack of familiarity with potential participants made the job of recruitment much more difficult when I struck out on my own. It is possible that the comfort level between these local women and research participants also allowed for a more free flow of information during the course of the interview, but the opposite may have also been true if participants were afraid of having sensitive information leaked or if they were uncomfortable being forthright about difficult topics with people from their own community. There is some evidence of this in interviews done by local women but it is unclear whether or not these particular project participants would have been more open with me or whether they were simply uncomfortable with the overall process. Although this is a problem not easily resolved, I strongly believe that encouraging fuller community participation in the project by hiring and training local women and using the familiarity among local team members and local people as a means to establish rapport proved beneficial to the project as a whole.

To get the process of recruitment started, the Saban Demographic Database was used to create a random sample of European- and African-descended women living in the villages of The Bottom, St. Johns, Windwardside, and Hells Gate (Zions Hill). These samples were reviewed by a total of five local women working with me on various aspects of the project and their knowledge was used to eliminate certain candidates based on factors such as mental state, general illness, and migration status. High migration rates across the island were reflected in the large proportion of non-resident Sabans pulled in these initial random samples. The case of St. Johns was particularly extreme in that almost all of the names on the original lists were of people no longer living on Saba. Multiple samples had to be pulled for each of the other villages until we had reasonably large lists of potential participants. Our goal was to recruit and to interview at least 10 women from each of these villages with the number of European- and African-descended women being proportional to the population composition of the village as a whole. This meant that, for example, we would try to recruit 7 women of European decent from Hell's Gate because the European-descended community comprised 70% of the total village population. The overall sample would, thus, reflect the composition of the island as a whole.

Each interviewer was given a project bag that included a randomized sample list to recruit participants from their village of responsibility, a tape recorder, tapes, external microphone, supporting items (batteries, pens, paperclips, clipboards etc.), a folder with standardized forms used to facilitate the note-taking process during the interview, forms to fill out their observations during the interview itself (time/place of interview, presence of other family members, interruptions, demeanor, etc.), and training as to the proper use of all these materials. Recruiting project participants and scheduling of interviews was the responsibility of the interviewers and the time and place of each interview was decided based on the participant's needs. Despite our best recruitment efforts, we fell short of our recruitment goals but did end up interviewing a total of 25 women in these structured interviews with 15 participants from the African-descended community and 10 from the European-descended community. The interviews were taped with the express permission of the interviewees.

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Only two women refused taping during the interview process but both approved note-taking. Given this small sample size, identification of interviewee characteristics by village is not appropriate as it may reveal identifying information.

Although a total of five women completed all of the preliminary training, only two conducted independent interviews, two helped with recruiting participants, and one dropped out of the project entirely due to lack of time and interest. Of the two interviewers, only one was consistently reliable and completed all of the tasks that were asked of her. She proved to be an excellent anthropologist-in-training and had a low-key interviewing style and personality that put her interviewees at ease. Another interviewer gave significant assistance with developing the final recruitment lists but only ended up recruiting and interviewing a single participant. Of the two remaining women, both were very helpful with recruiting women from two specific villages and one woman provided transportation to and from my home for participating women from her community because she felt strongly that they should be represented in this research. At the end of the interview process, local women had conducted 11 of the 25 structured interviews and I had conducted the remaining 14. At times, these relationships were very trying because the expectation of participation and production fell short of the reality of what we were able to accomplish. However, gaining experience about the trials of implementing participatory research did not dissuade me from recognizing its overall value. These women contributed their time and energy to this project in the ways that they saw fit and the quality of this research improved as a result of their input.

The quality of the interviews was very high and most of the participants seemed to enjoy having a space to voice their concerns freely and confidentially. Interviews lasted between 1.5 and 3.5 hours and covered a wide range of topics both included on the survey instrument and those that were relevant but not specifically addressed in the structured questionnaire. Flexibility was important as some women really wanted to talk about certain issues and not about others or to engage in unanticipated discussions about certain family problems. This sometimes made it difficult to get through the survey itself, but the reward of hearing Saban women speak as they wished was worth

managing these small stresses. After each section, women were asked whether they had anything more to share about the topic under consideration or to alert us to things that were missed in the formal questions. These open spaces produced a plethora of important information that would have been missed if interviewers were too rigid in applying survey questions. Sometimes interviews were intense and emotional as women talked about the struggles they faced in their own lives. Sometimes interviews were more observational as women chose not to speak directly about their own experiences but to share their general opinions about certain family practices. In this way, contributions were dependent on the comfort level, desires, and motivations of each individual participant.

In many cases, conclusion of the interview sparked a discussion about what each interviewee would take away from the experience and what her hopes were for the project as a whole. One woman felt that simply asking these kinds of questions would generate discussions among Saban women themselves because involvement in the interview process would get women thinking about family issues in different ways. By consciously considering their own thoughts and feelings about families, she felt that Saban women might express themselves more about the roles of women in family life and what could be done to improve the lives of Sabans within their families. Many women felt a real sense of accomplishment in completing their participation in the project and expressed genuine interest in the outcome of the study. Across the board, all participants hoped that the findings would ultimately help Sabans come together to support each other and help each other through difficult family situations. These intersecting desires will influence how each of these women relates to the work presented in this volume and how those perspectives are then used or not used to tackle family problems at all levels of Saban society.

What should we do with these hard-earned data?: Management and analysis of qualitative and quantitative materials

In the process of collecting data, it is important to have not only a methodological strategy but also a *management* strategy (MacQueen and Milstein, 1999; MacQueen, McLellan, and Milstein,

1998). What good is a mass of disorganized data? Because anthropology tends to rely, at least in part, in qualitative data, one key question in the process of data management is how much material is to be transcribed, what format will the transcription take, and how will transcript data be coded to facilitate analysis through specific Qualitative Data Analysis packages (McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig, 2003). Managing and analyzing quantitative data is equally demanding in that one must not only decide what structure and form best suits the purpose of each database but must also create a systematic way of entering, updating, and analyzing stored quantitative data. All of these mundane yet essential data collection and management strategies were considered in the formulation of the current research agenda.

In the field I had access to a laptop computer, SPSS, and the basic suite of Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, etc.). Given these resources, during non-interviewing time I was able to transcribe my notes from each of the17 informal interviews, record my reflections of the day in my Daily Field Notes file, continually update the Saban Demographic Database with new information from the Census Office, and create an electronic copy of Crane's 1964 Household Survey. These computational resources allowed me to manage my time effectively and to return with a good deal of my quantitative and qualitative data at least partially ready for analysis.

With the exception of Crane's life histories, all textual and audio data drawn from informal interviews, structured interviews, and daily field notes were entered into Atlas.ti and coded for thematic content. All segments were coded to fall into six general topics and then sorted into themes within each of these broad areas. General topics included:

Topic 1: Migration and Socioeconomic Opportunity
Topic 2: Childbearing, Childrearing and Family Types
Topic 3: Social Constructions of Gender
Topic 4: Experiences of Divorce
Topic 5: Social Constructions of Race and Ethnicity
Topic 6: Population Composition Changes

After this initial sorting, themes were identified within these broad categories in an attempt to identify

and articulate the range of perspectives held by Sabans from all walks of island life. For example,

these are some of the themes identified for each general topic:

Topic 1: Migration and Socioeconomic Opportunity
  The loss of highly educated Sabans to overseas labor markets
  Ecotourism as a source of non-governmental employment
  The influence of gender in local employment practices

Topic 2: Childbearing, Childrearing and Family Types
  Non-marital childbearing, experiences of women
  Marriage as a strong foundation for childrearing
  Cohabitation as an alternative to marital unions

Topic 3: Social Constructions of Gender
  Qualities that make a good man or a good women
  Responsibilities that men and women have for their children
  Gender inequality within Saban families and Saban society

Topic 4: Experiences of Divorce
  Women's experiences of divorce
  Community perceptions of divorce
  Child support issues after divorce

Topic 5: Social Constructions of Race and Ethnicity
  Meanings and experiences of race on Saba
  Interracial couples and bi-racial children
  Growing ethnic communities and their impact on Saban society

Topic 6: Population Composition Changes
  Political and social influences of transformed racial composition
  Political and social influences of growing non-local population
  Impacts of population growth and aging on island resources

The experiences and perspectives voiced in Crane's life histories were carefully manually

indexed by both these general categories and specific themes and are included throughout this text.

Computerization, although preferable for its analytical flexibility, was not practical due the enormous

amount of transcription time it would have entailed so only the sections deemed to be potentially

valuable for inclusion in this manuscript were manually transcribed from the original volume

(approximately 50 pages). It was also impossible to transcribe the mass of audio files into text files

given my limited time and financial resources but I found that coding audiotape in Atlas.ti was a

quick and easy solution to the transcription bind that paralyzes many anthropological projects. After

identifying themes and developing a standardized method of coding, I was able to extract and

transcribe smaller segments of these audio files for use in illustrating certain ideas about family life on Saba (approximately 150 pages).

Given the small sample size of the informal and formal interviews (42 people in total), the fear of exposing identifying information by presenting village level data, the range of social issues addressed and the complex array of responses, I decided not to run any statistical or spatial analyses on these qualitative data. Instead, I opted to try to capture a range of competing beliefs by including various voices in the text and, when possible, to identify widespread versus more contained beliefs based on my own interview experiences and my experiences working extensively with the primary qualitative data. Perhaps with additional ethnographic work it will be possible to become more specific about the distribution of certain beliefs and practices surrounding family life on Saba. As of right now, confidentiality of response outweighs the benefit of statistical analyses founded on datasets that are too small to generate reliable and accurate statistical models.

Due to availability and familiarity, SPSS was used to manage and analyze all of the quantitative demographic data presented in this text. Data entry, cleaning, and updating was a long and arduous process as was the creation of necessary variables to facilitate certain kinds of analysis. Quantitative analyses are drawn from three different sources of data: The Saban Demographic Database, Crane's 1964 Household Survey, and the 2004 Household Survey. The Saban demographic database records diachronic life history events associated with births, marriages and deaths while the household surveys capture what Saban households looked like in two specific years and contain the same basic categories of information to facilitate comparative analysis. I was able to create the form of both the 1964 and 2004 Household databases to fit my analytical needs, but the form of the Saban Demographic Database was previously designed. However, the architecture of the Saban Demographic Database did not prove to be problematic and required only addition of recent information and the creation of new variables derived from extant information.

Standard protocols were developed for integrating newly collected demographic data into the existing Saban Demographic database and each new birth/recognition, marriage/divorce, or death

record yielded information in need of updating for multiple people. For example, a birth record required the creation of an entirely new life history entry for the newborn and the addition of new life history elements for the parents. A marriage record contained information not only for the married couple but also for witnesses and for individuals who were divorced from either the bride or groom. A death record presented information about the deceased but also about the whereabouts of other family members, like parents or spouses, and often allowed for the inclusion of death information for family members who had passed away while living off island. Each type of record, therefore, had its own complexities and required standard procedures to ensure consistency across newly integrated data.

Information on race classifications and legitimacy was also updated using both ethnographic observations during my time in the field and Crane's classifications from the 1964 Household Census. Crane classified individuals based on local perceptions of race and used the categories of Black, Colored, and White in her household census. In many cases it was not possible to identify with certainty the unions that produced the self-identified biracial population on Saba but in many cases it was possible to see how families moved across these racial boundaries through time. Family lines moving from white to black, black to white, or maintaining a biracial identity can all be tracked using this updated information. Legitimacy data from Crane's survey were also used to identify marital and non-marital births to facilitate tracing patterns of childbearing styles through time. Of particular importance, Crane stressed that in most cases children born outside of marriage had knowledge about who their fathers were even if their fathers did not recognize them formally. The roles that these men played in their children's lives were variable but she alerted us to the fact that non-recognition did not mean that fathers were absent anymore than martial births ensured a reliable male presence. However, there is value in tracking these trends through time and incorporation of these legitimacy data with formal recognition data from the census office will give us a better idea of how men viewed their legal responsibilities to their children. The act of recognition is important from a legal perspective since it entitles children to their father's estate upon his death and the timing and

circumstances of recognition give us clues as to its meanings in Saban society. Incorporating these data into the existing Saban Demographic Database added to the completeness of racial and legitimacy information in the original database and will undoubtedly add to the accuracy of resulting analyses.

After all of the records were updated, it was necessary to create a suite of new variables to facilitate a broad range of demographic analyses used in this volume. These new categories were, by their nature, derivative in that they used primary data fields to calculate new kinds of demographic information. Some of these categories are more direct than others and some of the simply calculated variables include:

Age at first and subsequent marriages
  Ego birth year-Ego marriage year 1,2,3, etc.
Age difference between ego and partner
  Ego birth year-Spouse birth year
Age at first and subsequent births
  Ego birth year-Offspring 1,2,3, etc. birth year
Age at death
  Ego birth year-Ego death year
Ever married or divorced
  Marriage record present/absent; Divorce record present/absent
Ever had a child on island (identification of celibates/people with no legally identified children)
  Birth record present for 1 or more children
Ever born, married, or died on island
  Presence of ego birth, marriage or death record

Since no day or month information was captured for birth, marriage, and death records, these figures are subject to a significant amount of error. For example, if a mother was born on January 1st 1980 and had her first child on December 31st 2000, the age at birth calculated as outlined above would give the mother's age at birth at 20 years when, in reality, she was almost 21. For more detailed fertility and other demographic analyses it would be necessary to revise the database to include day and month information that is present on the original records. However, for the purposes of this project, these rough estimates were able to yield important information about gross trends in birth, marriage, and death over time. Other variables were more difficult to generate and protocols were developed to assign individuals into certain specified groups. For example, deriving migration status from the combination of these records was a complex process that involved the presence or absence

of certain vital events records (births, marriages, deaths), the individual's age in 2004, and his or her presence in the 1964 and 2004 household censuses. Sabans born on-island could be identified as to current migration status by sorting into the following categories:

> Permanent or temporary migrant, could be living
> > Not present in the 1964 and/or 2004 census, under age of 85, no death record
> Permanent migrant, likely or certainly dead
> > Not present in 1964 and/or 2004 census, over age of 85, no death record
> Return migrant
> > Not present in the 1964 census, present in 2004, born on Saba before 1964
> Resident with no record of long-term movement off Saba
> > Present in the 1964 and/or 2004 census
> In-migrant
> > No birth record or place of birth is not Saba, present in 1964 and/or 2004

Migrants and residents could be further sorted into the following categories based on the presence and timing of certain demographic events:

> Migration after marriage with no children
> > Marriage record, no birth records for children
> Migration after marriage, with children
> > Marriage record, one or more birth records for children
> Migration as single adult or in childhood
> > No marriage record, no birth records for children
> Migration after non-marital childbearing
> > No marriage record, one or more birth records for children
> Married permanent residents with children
> > Marriage record, one or more birth records for children
> Married permanent residents without children (reproductively active vs. non-active)
> > Marriage record, no birth records for children, age of wife 45 or less=active
> Single permanent resident with children
> > No marriage record, one or more birth records for children
> Single permanent resident without children (reproductively active vs. non-active)
> > No marriage record, no birth records for children, age of woman 45 or
> > less=active, age of man 85 or less=active

In-migrants could be then further divided into those with Saban heritage and those without Saban heritage based on knowledge of their parents' origins or, in some cases, the presence of a last name commonly held on Saba (Simmons, Hassell, etc.). Approximate timing of in-migration was estimated based on marriage records or their children's birth records that were registered in the Census Office. Deriving these migration statuses gave more specificity and historical depth to the migration trends presented in past research and will help us understand the current dynamics of migration on Saba.

While the Saban Demographic Database gives insights into long-term demographic changes over the past 200 years, the Household censuses of 1964 and 2004 give us snapshots of family size and composition in two specific years. These years bookend the period of intense anthropological study of Saba and represent both the beginning of modernization on Saba and the outcome of these modernization processes as reflected in current household structure. The primary data included age, sex, race, and nationality data on each household member. A suite of supplementary variables was derived from this initial data pool. For example, it was possible to identify not only single heads of household, marital unions and cohabitating unions, but also the racial and ethnic composition of the family itself. In this way, it was possible to derive variables for types of interracial and interethnic households on island and to identify Saban, non-Saban, and mixed Saban/non-Saban family groups. These derived variables allow us to ask whether certain family practices, like interracial cohabitation, have changed over time. Combining data gathered from each household also yielded aggregate statistics for the total island population at the time of the census. These aggregate data are used to show shifts in the racial, ethnic, age, and Saban vs. non-Saban composition of the population over time.

The range of demographic analyses employed in this research is expansive and dependent upon the specific topic being addressed. Methods are, therefore, varied but all follow standard demographic practice. Measures of fertility are those typically used across a range of studies and include an evaluation of Completed Family Sizes (an approximation of Total Fertility Rates) and the Age Specific Distribution of Births (an approximation of Age Specific Fertility Rates) for various cohorts of Saban women with reference to their marital status. Other analyses, for example, track the prevalence of interracial marriages and biracial children through time or the shifting population composition of Saba related to changes in the distribution of race, ethnicity, nationality, and age. Household level data show trends in family formation practices through comparisons of household size and composition for the years 1964 and 2004 and can answer questions about, for example, the changing value of marriage as reflected in the varying prevalence of cohabiting unions. Where

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necessary, explanation of specific analyses is given in the chapter where they appear but most are simple and transparent even to those with limited knowledge of demographic practice.

Methodologically, the unique combination of quantitative demographic data and qualitative ethnographic data is designed to produce powerful understandings of life on Saba during this 150 year period of rapid social and demographic change. In this way we can begin to move beyond creating a largely descriptive understanding of these demographic trends by attempting to merge the numerical data with data that targets the more elusive individual motivations, tensions, and beliefs that underlie these aggregate patterns. With thoughtful order now imposed on this vast data set, it is now possible to begin to answer some of the questions about Saban families and how they have both changed and remained the same over time.

CHAPTER 6

PLYING THE HIGH SEAS AND HOLDING DOWN THE FORT: THE SOCIOECONOMIC WORLDS OF SABAN MEN, WOMEN, AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING THE PERIOD OF SEAFARING MIGRATION (CA. 1870-1940)

Collectively, Sabans have experienced several waves of rapid socioeconomic change and associated migration pressures that have shaped their population over the past 150 years (Figure 6.1). Despite this shared history, the ways in which Sabans participated in, responded to, and experienced these transformations cannot be understood through essentialized generalizations about what life was like for nameless faceless Sabans living at home or abroad. However, moving from abstraction to genuine experience cannot be overly individualized either since it would be impossible to understand the complex meaning of these upheavals if we viewed them through a singular pair of eyes. From the seafaring migration that dominated the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to oil-industry labor migration of the mid 20th century, to the on-going educational and high-skill labor migration of Saban youth, to the rise of on-island economic development and the influx of non-local people that shapes modern Saban life, it is the intersections of individual thoughts, actions, and emotions that shed light on what life was truly like for different Sabans in different times and places. By respecting the view offered by each individual based on their lived experiences while assembling the range of perspectives articulated by uniquely situated Sabans, we can come to see clearly how the experiences of all of these interlinked historical moments have been and continue to be fragmented, and thus differentially experienced, along lines of race, gender, generation, class, and geography. This diversity of experience, in turn, both shapes the way that Sabans see themselves and their place their own local communities and island society as a whole and the ways that Sabans connect to and understand the world beyond this five square mile island. Nowhere is this fragmentation and

variability of experience more apparent or more relevant than in economic lives of Sabans and the relationships that evolved among economic opportunity, migration, and Saban family life.

Socioeconomic opportunity and migration decisions, work and movement, are closely intertwined on Saba and both have exerted different kinds of pressures on Saban families within shifting historical circumstances. An attempt to understand the intimate links among economic conditions, movement, and family life on Saba requires the development of an analytically powerful set of narratives about how Sabans from a range of backgrounds perceived and acted on economic opportunities structured by race, gender, generation, class, and village of residence. Reconstructing how this ambient socioeconomic environment unfolded over time allows us to recreate the stage on which specific family forms and attitudes about family life emerged, modified, or became entrenched over time among various groups of islanders. Because echoes of the past still permeate life on Saba, this exploration of socioeconomic change is explicitly historical and starts by taking a closer look at the seafaring legacy of Saba and the gendered and racialized narratives of Saban life that emerged during this time (Chapter 6). Attention will then turn to how participation in the Caribbean oil industry on Curacao and Aruba created a more even, although not in any sense level, economic playing field for those who set their sights on a life abroad, those who chose to stay, or those who returned home after living off-island (Chapter 7). Lastly, the links between the economic realities of modern Saban life in the post-oil period, the different motivations that underlie migration decisions of a range of Sabans, and the startling transformation of Saba from a sending to a receiving country in the global economy will be thoroughly examined (Chapters 8,9).

Analytically, the sociodemographic histories reconstructed in the next four chapters are patched together by taking full advantage of all available published and unpublished materials that had the potential to help explain the modes and meanings of Saban family life across a long stretch of time. The voices and perspectives of anthropologists who devoted time and care to studying Saba, particularly Crane (1971, 1987) and Keur and Keur (1960), are embedded throughout this volume both as a means to understand changes and stabilities in Saban life by contrasting old images of life

with new ones found in the most recent wave of research and as a means to reevaluate and, in some cases, modify some of the representations put forth in these texts. Crane's life histories and other old and new raw ethnographic data are subjected to extended textual analyses that assemble a wealth of experiences and opinions that, when set in dialogue with one another, collectively recall what life was like for different people living in different times. In particular, the life history quotations used in the next two chapters recall the specific conditions of life on- and off-island experienced by a wide range of Sabans as many community members migrated to participate in the seafaring industries and, later, in the Caribbean oil industries sited in Aruba and Curacao. Each speaker references his or her own experiences and the experiences of others during these times and quotations are assembled both temporally, as rooted in seafaring (Ch.6) or in oil refinery times (Ch.7), and topically, by various project themes, throughout the text. As a final element in creating these complex images of Saban life, a range of sociodemographic analyses was conducted to examine the links between migration and family change for different groups of Sabans and as a means to understand not only what people say and think about family life but also what they "do" from a demographic perspective. Sociodemographic analyses were run based on a cohort approach to understanding migration and family building behavior. Each 20-year cohort was linked to the period of time that cohort members came of age on Saba and decided either to migrate away from home or to stay on Saba to raise their families (Table 6.1). Although there are no rigid boundaries between the fertility and migration behavior of adjacent cohorts, this approach allows us to see what the bulk of Sabans were doing in each of the seafaring, oil refinery, and post-oil times and to identify similarities and differences in behavioral trends across time. These three wells of information (past published materials, new textual analysis of Crane's life histories and other old and new ethnographic data, and sociodemographic analysis of migration and family building strategies) are continuously tapped throughout this work and are used, in combination, to understand not only broad trends and majority opinions about Saban family life but also to understand emerging trends, alternative family building strategies, and the range of experiences and opinions that Sabans have about the role of family in their lives.

Although the terms African-descended, European-descended and biracial were used in the latest wave of field research, it was clear early on that these terms did not intersect with the words used by Sabans themselves and, in some cases, even caused confusion in interviewees. Local understandings of race and racial terminology tended to favor the use of the terms white and black to sort people into two different communities on Saba and many Sabans even assigned people of mixed decent into one group or the other. People from both communities also used the term colored to describe people of African-descent and, although the term was usually used to describe people with a darker skin tone, it was occasionally used to describe people of mixed African- and European-heritage. Along this line, an emerging biracial category did crop up in the minds of some Sabans, particularly those who had mixed heritage, and many people used words like brown or mulatto when asked about racial classifications on Saba. Because the Saban community seemed to favor using black and white as meaningful cultural categories of race, these terms will be used throughout the rest of the text. However, the lack of clear consensus about categorizing people with both black and white lineage remained problematic. Since almost everyone at the very least understood what was meant by the term biracial, this term will be used as a stand-in category while Sabans continue to work out their own language to define this small but socially important segment of their population. Since biracial people have always been a minority on Saba, it was sometimes not possible to analyze their migration patterns and family building responses in a statistically valid way and there are many places in the text where discussion only revolves around the black and white communities in the various villages. To remedy this lack of sociodemographic analysis, an extended section of Chapter 9 will explicitly tackle Saban understandings of race, experiences of racism, and the attitudes about and social experiences of biracial people in Saban society.

The development of a series of detailed population projections that tracked the growth and decline of the black, white, and biracial populations in each of the four main Saban villages became a central component of the sociodemographic analysis reported in this chapter and provides a foundation for understanding how the specific demographics of each village evolved and the ways

that these demographics shaped and continue to shape Saban life. Starting from an estimation of

Saban population size and structure in 1856 that was derived from several prior historical treatments,

population projections were produced by aggregating cohort-based estimations of the on-island

population in each of six 20-year cohorts. Each of these cohort estimations was achieved by linking

together the combined effects of key cohort-specific demographic variables like migration rates (how

many people stayed), fertility, infant mortality, and celibacy rates for non-migrating women (how

many women had children and how many surviving children did they have), in-migration of men and

women from off-island (elevation of fertility through addition of childbearing women), and the

internal migrations of Saban men and women from their home villages to other villages on-island

(how did these movements shape the local sending and receiving communities). Since celibacy is

defined differently across demographic projects, it is necessary to make clear that, for the purposes of

population projections and later discussion, celibates are defined as childless unmarried women,

infertile married women, and childless widows. However, childless unmarried women by far

comprise the largest share of this group and, as such, celibate proportions predominately reflect the

presence or absence of women who both never married and never had any children of their own.

Based on estimations of population produced in each cohort and estimations about how much of that

population remained on-island, it was possible to track changes in both population size and

composition over time by aggregating these 20 year cohort estimations into overlapping 60 year

blocks of time that roughly approximate the actual island population during certain historical periods.

Despite some of the fuzziness inherent in using historical demographic data, these projections are

very precise as they follow the shape of expected demographic trajectories and project the current

population size and composition with a high degree of accuracy (Tables 6.2-6.6). These projections

are then used to analyze how village-level population changes intersected with the socioeconomic

circumstances and family life that emerged at specific historical periods and how these historical

moments connect to one another. Common threads of experience are identified throughout this and

other chapters to show the ways that the past continues to shape modern Saban life even as Sabans

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negotiate new life challenges posed by current manifestations of Diasporic and globalizing processes now in force on their small island.

Although the people of Saba are not of one mind about these various histories or their meanings in Saban society, the general trend of the Saban economy is characterized by tensions that arise within local discourses of individual freedom and personal responsibility, local realities and global imaginations, private desires and public commitments, historically rooted cultural norms and "modern" sensibilities, and the native self and the foreign other. Within these tensions, we can see Saban society move towards greater economic self-sufficiency and independence for women while many men struggle with their increasingly equivocal economic role in their families and in society at large. We see increasing economic opportunities for African-descended people both on- and off-island despite living in an improving but in some ways persistent environment of race-based socioeconomic inequality. We bear witness to the abandonment of a self-sufficient agricultural lifestyle for the lure of a cash-based economy. We see the clash between a fiery spirit of gritty independence developed during a time of relative Saban isolation and the current reality of abject dependency on various sources of government largesse and a fickle global economy. We see a recent push towards economic development through foreign investment in both the tourism industry and the direct and indirect industries generated by the establishment of the Saba University School of Medicine while we sort through the ambivalent adjustment of Sabans to the permanent and transitory ethnic diversity brought forth by regional labor migration, the Medical School and its students, and various participants in the emerging ecotourism market. We see Sabans temper their enthusiasm for these development strategies by feeling both grateful for the opportunities they might bring to themselves and their fellow islanders and bitter about the unequal distribution of promised economic rewards. The voices and deeds of Sabans past and present remain to tell these tales of lives lived and lives lost within this scramble for economic survival and the impact that these struggles had on their social, cultural, and, ultimately, their personal family lives.

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The high period of Saban seafaring migration began in the late 19th century and tapered off with the advent of strong maritime unions, the tightening of labor laws, and the implementation of tighter U.S. immigration restrictions that began in the late 1920s. In the earliest periods, Saban men engaged in a pattern of temporary migration to shipping centers located along the eastern seaboard of the U.S. and throughout the Caribbean. If they were regionally based or could exercise some control over transportation or down time, sailing men could return home to their Saban wives and families every few months or at least once a year. Others flung further a field in Bermuda or the United States or those of lesser means often endured three or four years of separation from their loved ones on Saba. In later years, more and more sailing men moved their families closer to larger ports of call and small enclaves of Sabans took root in places like Richmond Hill on Long Island, New York, and the English-speaking territories of Barbados, Bermuda, and Demerara in present day Guyana. This is a time deeply embedded in the psyche of history conscious Sabans and many look back with pride on the bravery and accomplishments of the many young men who made their mark on the world through their mastery of the seas. Heroic images of gritty sea captains and their faithful island-bound Saban wives dominate these memories and project themselves into the collective consciousness of all Sabans. They are larger than life, things of lore surrounded by whispers of reality. This image-making binds Sabans together through a sense of shared history, but it masks important realities of what life was like for Sabans from all walks of life during this exciting but trying time.

Ultimately, this standard received history is problematic not for what it sees, but for what it fails to see. When we take a closer look at what Sabans said about these times and what their demographic history tells us, we can see not only these wealthy white captains but also the many men and boys, black and white, who struggled to scrape together a living working the dirty jobs of a sailing life. Those stoic island-bound women, married and unmarried, become the economic and social glue that keeps their communities together in the absence of their husbands, fathers, uncles, and brothers. They may eye the horizon for their sweetheart's return or wait for word from their long absent kin, but their lives are never on hold, never empty even in their personal loneliness. Children

are reared with tales of their absentee fathers. Boys are filled with dreams of saltwater freedom and girls with dreams of their own handsome sailors. And there are those who stayed put on their island home. They reap from the richness of Saban land like their father and their father's father and care for their families like their mother and their mother's mother. The island is their universe and the only home they care to know. And there are still others who wish to leave but have no means and no connections to help them strike out on their own. Desire and disappointment collide in bitter resignation.

Each of these images strings together a moving history of Saba during a time of great social and economic change. These adventures, both big and small, began to open tiny Saba and her people to the world that surrounded them. These regional ramblings transmitted knowledge of other ways of life and other opportunities to those at home while keeping those abroad anchored by a sense of their own history and place as Sabans in the world. Early emigrants inspired generations of Sabans to seek their fortunes off-island, to see the much talked about world with their own eyes, and to create and tell tales of their very own adventures. The paths they blazed also echo in the current orientation that many Sabans have towards different places in the world, particularly towards the United States, while the family and labor patterns of this time continue to resonate in the present. In particular, the long history of male absenteeism through international labor migration and the shifting modes of women's labor in the black and white communities shaped many of the current attitudes that Sabans have about the proper socioeconomic roles of men and women in their families and in island life more broadly. To dissect these historical links between past and present it is necessary to clearly delineate the nature of migration by determining who left, who stayed, and what effects these movements had on different groups of Saban people.

Saba as it was: Social life before the dawn of seafaring migration

Prior to the onset of sustained seafaring migration in the late 19th century, Saba could not be conceptualized as a whole in any meaningful way due to the extreme geographic and social separation

of the four main villages of The Bottom, St. Johns, Windwardside, and Hells Gate and the three outlying semi-dependent communities of Mary Point, Cow Pasture, and Middle Island. These settlements were physically connected to one another through a series of small step paths, however, the ruggedness and rapid changes in elevation along these paths made for long and arduous journeys despite the relatively short distances traveled. In a very real way, the extreme topography of the island severely curtailed movement among the settlements and allowed each community not only to develop its own character more or less in isolation but also to formulate decisive and often negative opinions about "those people" living on other places. Despite these self-contained narcissisms, geographic proximity and partially shared world-views did allow for more interaction between the adjacent communities of The Bottom and St. Johns versus Windwardside and Hells Gate and each of these groupings also stood in defiant opposition to the other.

In the early years of seafaring migration, The Bottom and St. Johns not only shared geographic closeness and the bonds of interaction that this brought, but the white community also shared a similar perspective on the world forged through their elite class identities based on their position within the seafaring industry (Crane, 1971, 1987; Keur and Keur 1960). The Bottom proper was the political capital of the island and, as such, traditionally harbored the bulk of elite white Saban families. These white families dominated island governance and generated much of their wealth through ownership of one or more sailing vessels. Black Sabans from The Bottom comprised about half of the population and lived in a peripheral section of town known as Below the Gap. Their homes clustered around the upper sections of the carved stone staircase that wound its way up from the landing point at Ladder Bay. Many black Sabans made their living carrying loads up from the bay to points across the island and many others provided domestic services for the genteel white elites of Saban high society. Others entered the sailing profession as both skilled and unskilled laborers aboard Saban ships. The largely agrarian black settlements of Cow Pasture and Middle Island lay north of Below the Gap and tended to ally themselves with this group of Bottom people. These small communities were established by free blacks during the time of slavery and, as such, its residents

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were more oriented towards farming, fishing, and other self-sufficient activities that were unrelated to the labor needs of the white community in The Bottom. Moving east from The Bottom across the southern part of the island, the next village encountered is the less populous but still substantial community of St. Johns. Like The Bottom, St. Johns also had an approximately equal proportion of both black and white inhabitants. Most of the black population lived on the slopes of St. Johns Flat in Lower St. Johns while the white families lived perched higher on the hillside either in Upper St. Johns or in the small conglomeration of houses in Crispeen. Although generally less wealthy than the whites of the Bottom, the white population of St. Johns was also heavily involved in the business of seafaring and many owned sailing vessels either in part or in full. Crispeen itself provided a clear view of sailing ships approaching from the east and residents signaled news of passing vessels to interested people in The Bottom. As in The Bottom, many black residents found work providing a variety of domestic, agricultural, and other services to the well off white segment of the population and many engaged in seafaring activities at the lower end of the pay scale.

The alliance of Windwardside and Hells Gate was forged by relative closeness but was also rooted in the soil, the dignity of working the land, and the independent spirit that came with living from the products of your own hands (Crane, 1971; Keur and Keur, 1960). The community of Windwardside is situated to the northeast of St. Johns and was second in size only to The Bottom. Its majority white population lived in the town center and its black residents aggregated in a northeast section of town called English Quarter. Here, too, white men were captains and seamen of various sorts but their wealth was generally less pronounced than the elites of The Bottom or St. Johns. Living from the land by farming and animal husbandry provided the primary means of subsistence for many Windwardside families, both black and white, and many black families found work in wealthier white households and washers, cooks, agricultural laborers, and skilled handymen. Curving back towards the north, on the northeast side of the island, lay the small and most isolated village of Hells Gate. The predominately white population lived on the steep slopes of Upper Hells Gate and the small black population lived further down the slope in Lower Hells Gate. This was the last of the

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main villages founded and remained extremely rural, poor, and exceptionally cut off from the mentally and physically distant well-to-do culture of The Bottom. The participation of Hells Gate people in the seafaring professions was more often than not confined to the lower ranks and most Hells Gate families settled into agricultural pursuits on their own native soil. The people of Hells Gate maintained some close connections with parts of Windwardside and the similarly poor white agricultural community of Mary Point on the northwest side of the island. These connections ran through the rural existence of these three communities and, in the white community, stood in opposition to the elite sensibilities of white Bottom and St. Johns people.

Based on these general characterizations of economic and social life prior to the rapid depopulation of the late 19th and early 20th century, it is clear to see that different groups of Sabans were oriented towards early seafaring migration in different ways. Race, gender, class, and village of residence all helped to determine whether a person had the economic means or social assent to leave, the terms leaving, the potential economic rewards that seafaring migration might bring, and the social consequences that seafaring migration brought to the households and villages that made up each Sabans' social world. Like most histories, we can assemble only fragments of the past and most of these fragments tend to favor preservation of elite experiences. Even in a place as small as Saba, this is true but the demographic trends carved from extant historical records and the personal memories of Sabans captured in their own life histories help to fill in the gaps of these historical silences. By looking at the population dynamics of each of the four main Saban villages we can see how modern day Saba emerged as both a result of varying migration trends and the attitudes that these trends instilled in the remaining resident population over time.

Seafaring migration and family life in The Bottom

Due to the powerful socioeconomic position of the white population in The Bottom, this was the first community to be faced with the challenges of extreme and racially uneven population loss. As opportunities for advancement in the seafaring trade grew for wealthy white Saban families, many

of these families abandoned their native soil for the promise of a more opulent life in other places. This exodus was such a dominant force of life that it led one of the few remaining white residents of to recount detailed stories of how the white people "cleared out" of The Bottom. Although their love for Saba never waned, white Sabans in this community came to see their island as a small place set outside the modern stream of economic activity associated with the hustle and bustle of larger port cities. Saba was not the Land of Opportunity enjoyed by their American neighbors or the place either to celebrate the riches of high society life or to secure a much-desired position in that social sphere. When the educational system suddenly moved from English to Dutch after 1910, several families left so their children could complete their studies in their native tongue. After this shift, Saba came to be seen not only as a place of relative economic deprivation and limitation but also one where the futures of children were circumscribed by an externally imposed Dutch educational system disconnected both from the English-speaking cultural history of Sabans and from the places they came to view as their tickets to a better life. The combination of these factors had a radical impact on family building strategies which, in turn, restructured both the size and composition of The Bottom (Figures 6.2-6.7).

Around the turn of the twentieth century the pattern of migration in The Bottom changed from the temporary movement of men to the movement of both single men and whole families and, as a result, the number of white Sabans in The Bottom declined at a feverish pace (Figures 6.2-6.7). Seafaring migration began to make its mark on this community early on as about 45% of women and 60% of men bid farewell to their native land forever in the waning decades of the 19th century (Figure 6.2, 6.3). These adventurers made their own way in the world and continued to provide a different model of life for those who remained on-island. Permanent migration rose to unprecedented levels as more and more white Sabans from The Bottom became incorporated into the flow of international seafaring migration. Ultimately, this culminated in the loss of about 70% of the female population and nearly 90% of the male population who came of age at the peak of Saban involvement in these industries during first few decades of the 20th century (Figure 6.2). Under conditions of temporary male migration, celibacy rates for resident white Saban women soared from around 40% in the early

seafaring period to over 80% at the height of seafaring migration as the departure of many wealthy

white men left upper class white women without an adequate supply of marital partners (Figure 6.4).

Early on, fertility stayed low for married couples because of long separations between sailing

husbands and island-bound wives and each white woman who stayed on-island to build her family

had an average of just under four surviving children. Later, as white families began to move off-

island as a unit, on-island fertility plunged dramatically to a low of just over one surviving child per

family (Figure 6.5). This reflects not only the impact of partner separation but also the experience of

infertility, spousal abandonment, and widowhood in a shrinking population of married or once-

married women. Commitment to the institution of marriage remained strong during this time as did

social sanctions against interracial partnerships. In combination, the force of these social values made

non-marital and interracial childbearing virtually unknown in the white female community and

uncommon for white men.

Because of all of these factors, social life in the white population of The Bottom consisted of

interactions among a large group of married, unmarried, and widowed women, young children, and a

small collection older retired men. Despite the lack of young men, the white community from The

Bottom continued to an express a joy for life that surfaced in their many parties and social occasions.

These events were remembered with much fondness by one of the remaining elderly white women

during Crane's time on-island:

> There was a lot of dancing but much of it was ladies with ladies and girls with girls, plus a few men dancing who were around. Through the men going, we had lots of old maids. Years ago the women would have to dance with women, there were so few men. It isn't so many years ago they had to, you know. Almost all the men were retired seamen. We had a lot of older men, and they would go out to social functions. The younger people would appreciate the older men at their social functions, but today it has changed. With our generation I would say we'd always appreciate the older people with us. We always had looked for the older people to come with us because they were very amusing people. They'd say things and they'd do things to amuse us, that kind of way. And we always loved elderly people with us. Today they don't want the older people with them. As far as we were concerned, we did not miss the young men too much until we got of an age for romance because the older men were fun. The men would go to parties and feel their liquor. You would see then taking each other home. But they were amusing—no bad language or anything. (Crane, 1987: 65-66)

The closeness of the young and old is apparent in these snippets of life and the absence of romantic interests did not detract from the exuberance of life until women began to feel their own hopes for a family slipping away. Even with the door closed on marriage and children, older single women continued to dance and laugh and enjoy life, as they had always done, even in the midst of their own personal sacrifices. Like celibate women, retired sailors, with families and without, played an integral part in social life as they danced, spun yarns, and drank the nights away surrounded by their captive audiences. The monotony of daily life was also occasionally punctuated with the excitement of men returning from the sea. The same older white woman from The Bottom vividly remembered the sorrows and joys of these times by saying:

> If three or four young men would come home on vacation, there were a lot of parties and great rushing around—especially if one wasn't married. The married men would have to be told which were their children when they came back. My uncle, when he would come back would say "Just show me the children, and I'll tell you which ones are mine." This was because they had unusual rounded fingernails in the family. You see, some people's nails are flat. He said he could tell his children by the height of the fingernail. That was only an old saying—he wanted to say something, I suppose. But most men wanted to know so they wouldn't make a terrible mistake. There was nobody to take pictures of the children. If you had told many of those old people about a camera, they would have wanted to know what you was talking about. They used to go away for so long, especially those that went to Bermuda and America. There was some that would go and leave their wives and come and meet the children three or four years old, so they didn't know anything about them. It was quite hard, you know, in those days. (Crane, 1987: 66)

During the early period of temporary male migration, male absenteeism became a way of life for a large segment of the white population both in The Bottom and elsewhere on-island. Fathering was defined by the ability of men to provide for their wives and children rather than by any direct involvement in their day-to-day lives. This is not to say that men were not integral components of their families or their mental and emotional landscapes, but only that their roles were distant and removed from the rhythms of family and village life. Interestingly, the distancing of men from the responsibilities of daily family life is still in effect in many Saban families which suggests that the historical experiences of male absenteeism continue to influence the ways that men position themselves within modern family life. It is also important to note that the preoccupation of the man with his children's fingernails not only points to a desire to show that he knows his children but also

sends the not so subtle message that he would also know if they were *not* his children. These fears of

female infidelity through long separations created a climate of extreme rigidity between the sexes in

the white community and established a double standard of sexuality that demanded female abstention

while it tolerated, although never sanctioned, male indiscretion. Even in the absence of their men,

women knew that the community was watching and that any misstep could result in permanent shame

for a deviant woman. These norms still circulate with varying intensity on-island today and, like the

roles that men play in their families, are likely connected to these historical circumstances and the

gender norms that evolved in response to this social environment.

After a while, this pattern of temporary male migration gave way to a pattern of family

migration and single male migration that ultimately wiped out the indigenous white population of The

Bottom. In reflecting on this change, the same older white woman from above recalls this shift in

The Bottom as one where:

> The young men would go and never come back to settle down. Even if they
> married a Saba girl they'd come home and get married and go; and they said the future of
> the children had to count, so that's why they didn't come back and settle down. But still
> not so on the Windwardside. They still kept coming and going; they seldom moved their
> wives over. But not the Bottom people. They'd clear out with the whole family. They'd
> come and marry them, go with the wife, come on the holidays. But the family had to stay
> to put the children's benefit for education. (Crane, 1987: 63)

Family migration reaffirmed the centrality of the nuclear family in white Saban culture while single

male migration further ingrained the image of men as active adventurers in the pursuit of economic

power and financial well being for their families. The theme of betterment through education also

becomes a continuous thread in the white population of Saba and even at this early date crops up as a

strong motivating factor for the migration of white Saban families. Ironically, these new forms of

migration founded on the strong Saban values of family togetherness, male adventurousness and

economic prowess, and the importance of education for success in life spelled the end for a certain

form of elite white society on-island. The decimation of the native white population was two fold in

that whites, as a whole, were leaving the island at an exceptionally high rate and that these departures

robbed the white population of most of its reproductive capacity. For white women who remained

on-island the chances of starting a family dwindled as Saba men from The Bottom both left the island in slightly higher proportions and often married women they met off-island. This led to an imbalanced sex ratio in the population as a whole because more women than men stayed on-island throughout this period. Apart from the color line, class issues also proved to be an obstacle for unmarried upper class white women as seen in the following recollections:

> The Bottom people did not marry Sabians. The Windwardside people would marry Sabians. I can't ever remember a boy from the Windwardside coming down here to get a girl to marry or the other way around. I don't remember any boys and girls born in The Bottom marrying to Windwardside. Sometimes the girls from Windwardside would come down and stay with me for a week or so, and I would go up and spend a week or so with them. The Windwardside people would come down and we would have dances and parties together. And quite a lot of the boys came down here to school. It is strange none of the Windwardside and Bottom people fell in love with each other. (Crane, 1987: 62)

Although this woman from The Bottom shows an element of confusion over why these relationships never developed, people in Windwardside insist that the ship owners and captains of The Bottom thought themselves to be a cut above and, therefore, would not allow their family members to marry down into the poorer white communities that inhabited the eastern side of the island (Crane, 1971: 55). Many of the unmarried women who remained also had no opportunity to migrate since they were delegated with the responsibility of caring for their elderly parents while their brothers and sisters ventured out into the world. Migration restrictions and prohibitions on both non-marital childbearing and interracial or interclass relationships consigned many elite white Saban women from The Bottom to a status of permanent celibacy. Without reproductively active adults creating on-island families, there was no way for white Sabans in The Bottom to replenish their numbers.

Eventually, these sociodemographic trends led to the development of remnant white population comprised of older male retirees from seafaring careers and a collection of aging high status women who had no opportunity to have their own families. Returning white men were respected members of the community and were often called on to share stories of their adventures or to give their worldly advice on a range of on-island issues. Their financial status coupled with their knowledge of life outside of Saba positioned them as active contributing members of Saban society

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and people from both the white and black community depended on their insights in various ways. While the status of men became defined by their mobility and off-island experiences, the status of women became defined by sedentism and an ethic of self-sacrifice within the context of their own families. Celibate women who remained to care for aging parents were elevated as symbols of female domesticity, family duty, and sexual purity. While their sisters may have enjoyed participation in life inside and outside the home while living away from Saba, for the white women who remained on-island life became very small. Maintaining respectability shed reflected glory on family members both at home and abroad and islanders held these women in high esteem with mixed emotions of both sadness and awe at their enormous personal sacrifices.

The process of population decline continued to diminish the proportion of white Sabans in The Bottom until the Government decided to relocate the small, remote, destitute population of Mary Point to an area of The Bottom designated as The Promised Land between 1933 and 1935. This influx of Mary Point people increased the proportion of white Sabans in The Bottom but changed the class structure of the white population from one of relative privilege to one of relative poverty. In describing life in Mary Point one former resident painted the following dire picture of their struggle for survival:

> There were many days in the old times you couldn't get even dried fish or pork or any of the things in Mary Point, where we had hard times. We would even live on tannia heads. The tannia heads were very, very bitter. There were times when you would be very glad to get a sweet potato to make it your whole meal-and maybe you would put lime juice on them to be able to eat them. Those who had no people in the family who could catch fish would come to your yard and work on the cleaning of the fish in the hopes that they would get a head or two. The people in Mary Point had it very hard indeed. In fact, they had to carry the clothes all the way to Wells Bay to wash and it was a terrible distance. That was in dry weather when the few cisterns they had would go dry. (Crane 1971: 26)

The image of both the worldly white seafaring man and the sacrificing white women did not continue in this transplanted population as fewer Mary Point men traveled the world and fewer Mary Point women lived on-island without forming their own families. Their ways of life were more aligned with the small outlying agrarian settlement of Hells Gate than the cosmopolitan air of the preexisting white population in The Bottom. In fact, several families from Mary Point had already relocated to

Hells Gate before government intervention and this clearly shows both the affinity that these communities had for one another and the clear disjunction between their ways of life and those of high Saban society. The residual population of ruling white elites of The Bottom ceased to exist by the middle of the 20th century as this village came to be dominated by black Sabans and a minority of relocated rural whites who did not share either the economic means, expansive worldview, or migration motivations or orientations of the original white inhabitants (Figures 6.6, 6.7).

The loss of resident white elites sent economic and social reverberations throughout the community and led to a period of increased economic hardship for those that were left behind. In the black community, employment in white households and in the service industries that supported these families declined as those with means set sail for foreign shores. This not only led to a dearth of economic opportunities for the black community as a whole, but also severed the indirect ties to the wider world that were mediated through their relationships with these elite white families. In particular, consumer goods and the power to purchase them declined for many black Sabans as did the number and strength of off-island contacts black Saban people had with places throughout the Caribbean or in the United States. In this economic climate, men and women cobbled together a package of mixed economic pursuits that included domestic work, small-scale production and sale of both consumable and durable goods, various types of skilled and unskilled manual labor, agricultural work, animal husbandry, and fishing.

This situation was not new for many black Sabans as economic stress in both slavery and post-slavery Saba helped to develop an economic world defined by an ethic of survival rooted in a patchwork of diverse labor practices and community interdependence. What one friend or family member needed, another may be in the position to give and, as the wheel of life turned, these generosities were more often than not repaid in kind. Importantly, women in the black community continued to engage in work outside the home as cooks, washerwomen, and caretakers as well as in cottage industries like baking, candy-making, and sewing that took place within the household itself. Economic need both within nuclear family units and within female-headed households that lacked

any substantial male economic contributions necessitated black women's participation in the labor force. In addition, the large number of children born into black families was both an economic boost and a burden. Older children helped their mothers and fathers with various economic tasks like running messages or cutting grass to feed livestock and, in their way, contributed to the economic health of the family. In situations where the sheer number of mouths to feed became overwhelming, it was not unusual to find children living either with extended family members or with older members of the white community who needed aid and company in the absence of their own kin. The relationships formed with members of the white community could sometimes bring substantial economic rewards as it was not unheard of for older white residents to will their properties to their younger black companions at the time of their death.

The abandonment of the island by white elites also reformulated the relationships that black Sabans had to the land. Prior to their departure, the legacy of slavery and racism on-island minimized the ability of many black families to own and cultivate their own land and developed a post-slavery system of land tenure defined through sharecropping relationships with white landowners. With the white families no longer present on-island, the relationship that poorer black people had with the land became unstable as rights to cultivation on absentee landowners properties became a more tenuous proposition. However, as it became clear that most white families would never return, this was also a time where black families with means seized the opportunity to purchase the homes and agricultural properties of white families who chose to sell their holdings across the color line. People from Below the Gap disbursed into empty homes throughout The Bottom proper and, in many cases, black Sabans came to inhabit the very properties of the white families that they and their ancestors had worked for across many generations. The communities of Cow Pasture and Middle Island, established as small free black enclaves during slavery times, suffered slow but sustained attrition from seafaring migration and the independent agrarian lifestyle that once flourished in these communities was unsustainable in the absence of a critical mass of farming men. Cow Pasture and Middle Island

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eventually disappeared entirely when the handful of remaining residents relocated to homes in The

Bottom.

This tension between burgeoning on-island economic opportunity and the loss of much of the

white-centered economic base began to propel black Sabans from The Bottom into the migration

process begun by their white peers. Although involved peripherally in the seafaring industry, initially

fewer black men had the opportunity or, perhaps, the desire or confidence to leave their island homes.

For black men and women, information about economic opportunities off-island was not as readily

available or reliable and those that chose to leave often did so under more tenuous terms than their

white counterparts. This sentiment is echoed in the reflections of an older black woman from The

Bottom as she says:

> Well, when I talked with people, I never heard much of a difference [in opportunities to migrate for black and white people]. You know, but in a kind of way, African people, colored people, they more went away, I would say, hoping to get a better living this way. But I feel that more white people left here more secure. And as I can remember they had people left from here and went away, and I heard them talking about it, they was well off in Saba, white people, but when it come to pass, school on Saba, that was years ago, become Dutch school, the people here didn't want it, their children to learn Dutch. And that's why they went to the other islands where they continued to get their studies in English. And when they get their studies in English they never come back. But they didn't leave from here to hope to do better elsewhere. They went secured, you know, to go to school or had a job set aside for them. But with the colored people, the African people, they left hoping to make a better future for themselves and their family who was left back here. (Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, 2004)

Migration in all of its forms always carried different risks for black Sabans and the conditions faced

off-island tended to be substantially less lucrative and substantially more dangerous than for white

Sabans who readily capitalized on the privileges of class and race in the outside world. However, in

the midst of a worsening economic situation on Saba, many black men and women still decided to

take the chance at finding a better life abroad and continuously drew new migrants into lives away

from Saba. In the early stages of seafaring migration, the black population lost approximately 25% of

its men and women but this jumped to almost 60% of women and 70% of men at the peak of

seafaring migration (Figure 6.2, 6.3). In trying to convey why these changes occurred and what

social impacts they had, the same woman from above continued her discussion of the on- and off-island conditions of life faced by black Sabans in The Bottom in the early 20th century as follows:

> You talkin' about the olden times, as far as I thought with many people in the olden times why they leave Saba is the difficult and hard times they had here. You know, had no work, no good facilities to live in, no housing, nothing that was well for the future. So that's why they make up their mind to try somewhere else. Well, you know, many of them, wherever they had maybe someone who went before, and they met with people that was willing to take someone else, then they would let people here know, well, I have a lady that is willing, if you're going you could come. And that's why many of them left and went to Santo Domingo and St. Thomas and USA. There they had cutting the cane and all that, and planting the cane, and the people was glad to go. And when you talk with those old people when they come back and it wasn't the matter that it was bad but it was very difficult. It wasn't an easy time but still it was better than home. You was able to get a little job no matter how small the pay was and you had some money that you could use and even sometimes that you would meet good people that you would work with and maybe they wouldn't give you money but they would give you clothes, you know, and you could ship them back home to your people to help out with the other family who you had left here. And it would help in one way or the other, maybe not financially but you would get material wise. (Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, 2004)

Discussing the specific schism between elite white Sabans engaged in the seafaring trades and those poor white and black Sabans who found themselves in the lower ranks, Crane (1971: 44) states that:

> Although we have discussed mainly the careers of men who achieved outstanding success, it should be noted that for most men, particularly those beginning to work their way up, sailing was not always an easy or economically rewarding occupation. Many Sabians who were crewmen in the early 1900s made only about 25 dollars per month, boatswains sometimes made about 90 dollars per month, and even chief mates made only about 120 dollars per month, by about the 1930s. These waged were not sufficient to permit the men to send very large sums back to their families in Saba or to visit them often.

Within this acknowledgement is the realization that many Sabans, particularly from the poorer black communities, could find themselves far from home with no immediate means to return if things went sour. For many black families in The Bottom, support from abroad may have been sporadic at best but the chance of economic betterment still spurred many to leave Saban shores. In recalling these times, an older black man from The Bottom shared his story of leaving and working his way up the sailing ranks as follows:

> I was about ten when I left school. I went away when I only had twelve. I went away from here; I went out sailin' on a small boat. I was so young when I went away. I was a young lil' boy trying to make a livin'. Anyway, I grew up to twelve years, and then I went away in a sailing boat. Well, you see, the captain of the boat, he asked me if I want to go with him for to sail as a cabin boy. My mother was agree with it. She say "Well, I can't help you, so you got to help yourself", yeah.

The captain give you a couple of dollars in the month, two dollars or a dollar and a half, that was all; and, well, you'd get your feed and your clothes always on the ship. Oh, I had to clean out the captain's room and give him his coffee and his meals, all like that so. Well, after I leave the sailin' boat, then I went on the steamboat, and I didn't come back round here till I had thirty two. Oh, that was nice. I used to work as a sailor then, a big sailor; wasn't a cabin boy no more then. I was a sailor at that time. Well, you know, eight dollars a month, that was all, eight dollars; but things was very cheap at the time, you know. (Crane, 1987: 117)

The difficulties of life in large female-headed households and the questionable rewards of taking to the sea are embedded in this personal narrative. The decision to leave was not based on any concrete desire to improve his status in life but rested heavily on the fact that his mother felt that she simply could not support her older children once they were of age to care for themselves. Survival rather than advancement is the underlying theme and motivation for departure in many of the stories told by black Sabans from The Bottom and across this island. Despite all of these uncertainties, whether from economic necessity or desire for a more affluent lifestyle, the rate of departure of black Sabans from The Bottom eventually caught up to and later surpassed that of the dwindling and rapidly aging white community.

Because of minimal participation in the early phases of seafaring migration and variations in attitudes about family formation practices, the black population in The Bottom did not initially suffer from the same reproductive constraints as the white community (Figures 6.4, 6.5). This relative reproductive freedom led to the expansion of the black population in both numbers and proportion of the total village population as black families continued to form and grow while the white population shrank and aged. In particular, the imbalanced sex ratio and prohibitions against non-marital and interracial and interclass childbearing that depressed the fertility of white families did not exist to the same degree in the black community either during the early stages of seafaring migration or at the height of the seafaring period. Although social sanctions against non-marital childbearing existed in the black community, it was by far more common for black women to have children without being married. Approximately 40% of all births during the period of seafaring migration were to unwed mothers and between 50-60% of black women had children outside of marriage at some point during

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their lifetimes. This type of reproductive flexibility helped to create a sustained period of growth in the black community since the proportion of celibate women never reached the same levels as in the white community. However, the high proportion of non-marital childbearing women coupled with a celibacy rate that grew from about 15% in the early years of seafaring migration to over 30% as seafaring migration took root suggest that two distinct childbearing models existed in the black community at this time (Figure 6.4). Because those who adhered to the ideal of marriage before childbearing were at a serious reproductive disadvantage to their less socially rigid peers, the social convention of marriage before childbearing necessarily weakened over time as more children were born into female-headed homes and began to model the behaviors that surrounded them. Reproductive flexibility and a lower rate of separation between partners meant that black families were able to maintain an average of just over four surviving children per family throughout this period while fertility dropped to well below replacement levels in the white population (Figure 6.5). Large families came with their own sets of economic challenges as many mothers and fathers struggled to make ends meet. Under these socioeconomic conditions, the ethic of elite white female domesticity, defined by confinement to and responsibility for the home and minimal contact beyond the immediate family, was not a tenable way of life for most black women. In this respect, the labor experiences of black women afforded them more movement in the community and more of a sense of economic independence and self-reliance than their wealthy white counterparts. This independence, however, was often coupled with economic uncertainty and all of the stresses that came with not knowing if or how you will be able to provide for your family day-to-day. Like their mothers, children were also expected to contribute where they could and became integrated into the world of work and responsibility at much younger ages than children from wealthier white households.

Because of the close relationships between black and white people in The Bottom, the lack of marriageable partners for women in the white community, and the historical practice of white men having children with black women, the biracial population in The Bottom has always been high relative to other villages. The social status and experiences of biracial people depended very much on

the race of the birth mother with the children of white mothers tending to integrate more with white society and children of black mothers moving more in the social world of black Sabans. However, once the number of biracial people reached a certain critical mass, it is possible that people of mixed descent began to form their own small enclaves within The Bottom and elsewhere on-island and sustained a substantial self-sustaining biracial population through intermarriage within this group. Although these trends will be discussed thoroughly in other chapters, it is interesting to note that the population history of people of mixed descent in The Bottom closely mirrors that of the black population in The Bottom. An early period of accelerated population growth and proportional increase is followed by a period of population decline that cross-cuts racial lines. This suggests that biracial people shared similar modes of migration, socioeconomic opportunity, and family building patterns with people from the black community although their social experiences in daily life may have been very different.

As the period of seafaring migration drew to a close in the early parts of the 20th century, the community of The Bottom had undergone an extreme shift in both the size and composition of its remaining population (Figures 6.6, 6.7). Over the period of seafaring migration the white population declined from around fifty percent of the combined population to about twenty percent just before the addition of Mary Point people in 1933. The early and sustained departure of white elites had left a small, aging and reproductively inactive population of wealthy whites, particularly celibate white women, that was eventually replaced by the in-migration of poor rural whites from the outlying agrarian settlement of Mary Point. By the close of this era, not only had the white population declined in relative size and proportion but it had also changed in terms of class and orientation to the outside world. The black population of The Bottom increased substantially both in overall numbers and in relative proportion during this time. Black people and people of mixed descent comprised a distinct majority with approximately 80 percent of the total population and continued to maintain a clear majority even after the movement of Mary Point people into an area of The Bottom designated as The Promised Land. This unique history of population change set the stage for later

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socioeconomic experiences of residents of The Bottom as it both intersects and diverges in important ways from the experiences of Saban people living elsewhere on the island.

Seafaring migration and family life in St. Johns

The integration of St. Johns people in the seafaring industry was a more circumscribed than that of the wealthier white citizens of The Bottom and this circumscription is reflected in the variation of migration trends in these two villages. The relative lack of a large white elite tended to level the playing field, in terms of migration potential, between the black and white communities in St. Johns. In the early seafaring period, most St. Johns residents, black and white, male and female, stayed put in their island homes. After migration off-island accelerated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was not the pronounced racial divide in migration rates witnessed in The Bottom. For this reason, it is inaccurate to suggest that "white people cleared out" of St. Johns leaving a sedentary black population in its wake. It is likely, however, that initial depopulation was characterized by the departure of wealthier citizens who were more heavily integrated into the seafaring trades and that these departures diminished the economic opportunities for those who remained on-island, shaped subsequent migration decisions, and influenced the family structures of black and white communities in different ways (Figures 6.8-6.13).

Although slower to develop, the white community of St. Johns experienced staggering migration rates like their peers in The Bottom and at the height of seafaring related migration 60% women and over 75% of men opted to leave their island home (Figures 6.8, 6.9). The transition from temporary male migration to the migration of whole families meant that the vast majority of the substantial white population on St. Johns disappeared within just a few decades. The mental maps of St. Johns people began to shift as they increasingly redlined Saba as a place that lacked economic and social opportunities that they craved for themselves and their children. As family after family took that leap of faith into the world outside Saba, the remaining white population failed to generate enough reproductive power to replenish itself, declined precipitously, and eventually developed an

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imbalanced sex ratio similar to that experienced in The Bottom (Figures 6.10-6.13). Celibate white women dotted the social landscape of St. Johns and became symbols of familial sacrifice much like the celibate white women of The Bottom. Familial duty to aging parents and social sanctions against non-marital and interracial childbearing consigned them to a life with no husband, male partner, or children of their own. The handful of returning seamen shared their experiences with those who remained and lit imaginations while doling out sage advice but they, too, were the last of a dying breed and became emblems of a departed past. Unlike in The Bottom, St. Johns whites were not replaced by in-migrating people from Mary Point which meant that the white population disappeared almost entirely by the middle of the 20th century.

The black community in St. Johns also experienced the pain of rapid depopulation and the loss of brothers, sisters, aunts, and uncles over an exceptionally short period of time in the early 20th century (Figures 6.8, 6.9). Although the proportion of migrants mirrored that found in the white community, the family-building responses of the remaining black population to these changes were very different. Black women had significantly lower celibacy rates in the early period of seafaring migration (6% vs. 24%) and larger completed family sizes (6.3 vs. 3.0) which meant that more black women were having children and that, on average, childbearing black women had more children than their white peers (Figures 6.10, 6.11). Celibacy rates rose to 14% in the black community and 33% in the white community as seafaring migration accelerated and both black and white women had about three surviving children during this time. As in The Bottom, decoupling marriage and childbearing in the black population of St. Johns removed a key cultural constraint operating against population maintenance and growth in the white community. In the heyday of seafaring migration, 65% of all births in the black population occurred outside of marriage and some 75% of women had children without being married at some point in their lives. This combination of factors meant that the black community was able to grow more rapidly in the earlier seafaring period and then decline at a slower rate than the white community even as more and more black community members left Saba forever. As in The Bottom, the slight elevation of celibacy rates throughout the period suggests that a segment

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of the black community adhered to the ideal of marriage before childbearing. However, this cultural norm soon became a minority position in the black community of St. Johns even though the desire for marriage later in life remained a definite social goal for most black women. The population as a whole came to consist almost entirely of black Sabans as people from the black and mixed-descent community comprised approximately 80 percent of the population by the early part of the 20th century and 90 percent of the population by the middle of the 20th century (Figures 6.12, 6.13).

For both poorer whites and blacks who stayed on Saba, economic life became even more challenging after the loss of economic opportunities formerly supplied by wealthy residents. Although most poor whites had access to family land for farming, the legacy of slavery and its impact on landownership meant that many poorer black families had uncertain rights to tilling the land of absentee landowners or simply had no land to work, owned or rented. With the departure of St. Johns elites, white families had more recourse to turn to the land for sustenance while many poor blacks had to find other ways to survive. Splicing together different kinds of domestic services, manual and skilled labor, and agricultural work became the norm for black men, women, and children as they did what they could to support their large families in a deteriorating economic climate. For some, migration became seen as the only way out and despite their thin knowledge of off-island life and opportunities and many struck out in the hopes of sending home money to support their immediate and extended families. Some who stayed were able to earn enough money to buy up vacant land and property once held by white families. Others came to own properties given to them by elderly white men and women that they had cared for over the course of many years. Like in The Bottom, the black community developed an ethic of survival and did what they could to help family and friends through these difficult times. Women and children were economically active in their homes and throughout their community and contributed substantially to the economic well being of their families. The range of black women's economic activities stood in stark contrast to the limited number of economic endeavors engaged in by the remnant population white women in the St. Johns community who tended to do paid work only within the home, if at all.

Perhaps surprisingly, the trend towards developing and maintaining a substantial biracial population identified in The Bottom is not present in St. Johns during the period of seafaring migration. This suggests that a different set of social relationships existed between the black and white population within St. Johns society and that the traditional relationships that created biracial people and/or the social environment that maintained a self-sustaining biracial community did not exist in this community. This may be related to the relatively small size of the elite white population who tended to be the ones who had owned slaves in the past and maintained a level of post-slavery proximity with the black community not present among lower status whites. The growth of the biracial community in the later part of the 20th century may reflect a change in these restrictive constraints on the development of a biracial population but could also reflect the disproportionate impact that a handful of interracial relationships had in a small community rather than any significant change in attitudes about interracial childbearing and the status of biracial people in the community.

As seafaring migration tapered off, the size and composition of St. Johns would have been unrecognizable to prior generations of Sabans. A population explosion within the black community shifted their numbers to a clear majority by the beginning of the 20th century. Even though the white population was also expanding at this time, they did so at a much lower rate. The entrenchment of seafaring migration lagged behind The Bottom but once it took hold large proportions of both black and white men and women abandoned St. Johns for the promise of enhanced socioeconomic opportunities abroad. Family building practices among remaining white inhabitants ensured their rapid disappearance while the black community, with equally high migration rates, was able to mitigate against complete annihilation through their higher overall fertility rates and, in particular, lower levels of celibacy. Over this period, the population composition skewed more and more towards the black and mixed descent population as the total population continued to follow a downward trajectory (Figures 6.12, 6.13).

Seafaring migration and family life in Windwardside

Moving from The Bottom and St. Johns to Windwardside meant entering a very different social terrain that responded in uniquely local ways to processes of migration and family change throughout the period of seafaring migration. Windwardside men, both black and white, were oriented towards the sea in the waning decades of the 19th century but established and retained a migration circuit rooted in a pattern of temporary male migration rather than either permanent single migration or permanent family migration so prevalent in the other two villages. Even as this pattern gave way to more single and family migration in the early part of the 20th century, a substantial minority of seafaring families still made their homes on Saba and waited patiently for their men to return from the sea. Other families found their calling in the soil and stayed connected to the land and its bounty despite the promise of a better life abroad. Unlike the sociodemographic processes that unfolded in The Bottom and St. Johns, the intersections of migration and family building in Windwardside allowed for the growth and maintenance of a predominately white population that developed alongside a shrinking black population and a stable mixed descent population of roughly the same proportions as that found in The Bottom (Figures 6.14-6.19).

With fathers, husbands, uncles, and brothers taking to the sea, Saba came to be known as an Island of Women who made their way in the absence of most working aged Saban men. Permanent migration rates for white men and women remained low compared to their peers in The Bottom or St. Johns and came in at just under 40% for men and just under 20% for women in the earliest period and then elevated to around 70% of men and 60% of women during the peak of seafaring migration (Figures 6.14, 6.15). As in the other two villages, these permanent migration trends reflected a gender disparity in mobility that favored the movement of men but they also indicate a continuing community practice of engaging in temporary male migration rather than family migration throughout the period. With many young men away at sea, the white population of Windwardside was populated by men and women who chose to live a farming lifestyle, retired sailors, married women waiting for their men to return home, and unmarried women who often stayed behind to care for their parents in

their old age. From the outset, this mixture of people had a very different nature than the populations of retired sailors and celibate women that developed in the other two villages. Although the total population was in decline due to high migration rates and depressed fertility rates due to the long absences of men, long birth spacings, and the substantial number of celibate women, this shrinking white community was still flowing with youthful blood unlike the aging and soon to be defunct native white populations of The Bottom and St. Johns (Figures 6.16-6.19). Farming families were universally large since husbands and wives were not separated by migration and this fact, coupled with the fertility contributions of families with men at sea, kept the number of surviving children per family around 4 even through the height of the seafaring period (Figure 6.17). The social worlds of celibate females were also very different because unmarried women who were never able to form their own families could still seek the support and company of their married kin and their nieces and nephews. Despite the elevation of white women's celibacy rates from around 30% in the early days of seafaring migration to almost 60% at the height of the seafaring lifestyle, the continuing vibrance of the white community in Windwardside mitigated against the extreme isolation that some celibate women felt elsewhere on the island and carved out a different and more active role for these single women in society at large. As processes of single male and family migration began to elevate the proportion of white celibate women in the later decades of seafaring migration, an influx of families from an expanding white Hells Gate population continued to breathe life into Windwardside even in the context of general population decline. Unlike the abrupt split between white elites in The Bottom and the low status rural in-migrants from Mary Point, Hells Gate people, particularly those with the means and desire to relocate to the slightly higher status village of Windwardside, tended to maintain a similar agricultural lifestyle to native Windwardside people in the lower ranks of society and generally blended well with the local population.

As with people from The Bottom, many young white Windwardside men took the gamble of going to sea. However, the tenor of these departures and the circumstances that surrounded them were different from the white elites who left The Bottom knowing that their futures were more or less

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secure. Although everyone on the sea shared in the dangers of sailing, the experiences of poorer

whites from Windwardside in many ways mirrored the experiences of the black community in The

Bottom. Of course, racial discrimination made it much more difficult for poor blacks to move up the

sailing hierarchy but the conditions of leaving in the poorer white Windwardside community echoed

some of the survivalist tones encountered in black narratives from The Bottom. Two older white

Windwardside men recounted their migration tales as such:

> I was just past eleven when I started out, cabin boy on a schooner. There was no money, you know, so that all we lived from was the products of the land; and soon as a boy came up twelve, fourteen years or something like that, why he tries to get away to be able to do something. All the young boys used to go at early ages. (Crane, 1987: 25)

and:

> I stopped school because I thought it was best to go away; and I was staying with my old uncle, and he didn't have much to give me and I thought it best to go and work for myself. My ambition was I wanted to become a captain of a steamboat, so I went to learn navigation and become a captain like all the other boys from Saba who became captain. I always heard about them and I wanted to be one, and that's why I went to sea. At the age of fifteen I went to sail on a sailing ship around the West Indies. (Crane, 1987: 292-293)

In their childhood, both of these men from the poor white community in Windwardside were strongly

influenced by the prospect of becoming something more than subsistence farmers. The difficult

conditions of life, like those found for blacks in The Bottom, created a rupture between the reality of

life on Saba and the potential that sailing might allow them to become something else away from

home. However, the decision to leave was not couched solely in terms of survival, as it was for so

many poor blacks on Saba, because poor whites held out hope that they, too, could achieve the same

level of prosperity that they saw enjoyed amongst white elites in their village. Interestingly, though,

unlike elite whites from The Bottom, these men and their families did not see formal education as a

way to better their economic situations and, instead, focused on specialized training, movement,

personal connections, and the privileges of race to ascend up the ranks of sailing life. The drive to

rise to the level of captain became a goal and motivation imbued with a desire to increase both the

economic and social status of themselves and their Saban kin. To have a captain in the family meant

that that individual and his relations had truly arrived. Pride in the seafaring heritage of the white

community, particularly in Windwardside, is still largely understood through recounting the

accomplishments of men who elevated themselves to these positions and rarely recognizes those who labored, successfully or unsuccessfully, in other areas of the seafaring trade. So it was here, in Windwardside, that this culture of socioeconomic elevation through sailing, signified through living a captain's life, really became part of village consciousness.

With so many men leaving to try their luck on the sea, family life in Windwardside became centered on women and their children and male absenteeism became the rule rather than the exception. As in The Bottom, seafaring men were very removed from the day-to-day lives of their wives and children during the period of temporary seafaring migration and played almost no part in the daily functioning of their families. Economic support, sometimes periodic, and occasional short-term visitations came to dominate images of Saban fatherhood. Boys and girls grew up with stories of their fathers but very few had any sort of meaningful emotional support or physical contact with their family patriarchs. Three white Windwardside natives shared these memories of their fathers:

> Our father got blowed up into an eruption up here. He sailed out, you know, not no steamers, a schooner, from America out to all the islands out here. And the accident happened into Martinique. Volcano. And you know, they could see the smoke from down here—the lava in the air, yeah, and he was into that. Yeah, he was into the schooner. Well, the other schooners cleared out. It must be what's to be. All the other schooners cleared, but the one that he was on, the captain wouldn't go. He wouldn't go and, well, that's what happened. Flossie was nine months, and I was about six year, I believe it was; but I don't know nothin' about him—can't remember, 'cause he was all the time to sea. He come home a couple of times. I believe I can remember once when he was home, and that's about all. (Crane, 1987: 81-82)

> Sometimes he'd be gone for two years, sometimes three. Then he'd come home and spend six months or so, and then go again. All the men used to have to do that to earn a living, so they had to go and they couldn't come back right away. And they had to go out there and work and save money to build their homes while they were gone and all of that, you know, in those days. It's not like now. I tell the young people, I said " You don't know what it is to have hard times. All you don't know. You come and you meet homes and everything else ready for you, but you don't know what it is". I know because my mother and father told me. That's what would happen with everyone's husband. You'd get married, and a couple of months after your young husband would leave you and go away to work. Well, now, in after years then, you see, they beginned to take their wives away with them then. But in those days they didn't—I guess, I don't know—in other words they must have got more money and so on, you know. When we were young, of course, there were many of them. Even in the older days a few went, but not many. But afterwards they began to go. (Crane, 1987: 105)

> [After my grandmother's first husband died, his] family wanted to keep the children and have them educated. She didn't want to part with them. Of course, I realize as a mother she wanted to keep her children; but she missed the biggest chance in the

world because the family that wanted to take them today are people of consequence in the States with a lot of money. They would have had a chance… But she stood here and she married a Saba man who believed that it was much easier to sit down than to work, and she had a tough life. So when my father and his brother were around sixteen years of age, they both decided they were going to try to get to the States. They were going to work their way to the States on a ship. I think the very night they put out from Saba a squall came up and they called everyone to help with the sail. The boy, Jan, he came up and the boom swung and hit him on the back of his head and knocked him over and he drowned. So Pappy, he went out to the States, and he worked there and eventually came back home and got married to my mother. When we were kids, he was in the States most of the time. In fact, I don't know if he was even home when I was born because I've never heard that discussed. But when we were young he was away all the time. (Crane, 1987: 251)

These narratives reveal that the class status of all three families was clearly lower than the white elites either in The Bottom or in Windwardside itself. In the first and third stories, tragedy struck and left one family fatherless and, thus, with an even smaller base of financial and emotional support, while another lost a child who was trying to make his way to America. They remind us that drawing a living from the sea was a fickle and dangerous proposition and that stories of death and loss were far from uncommon. The second narrative indicates that temporary migration allowed Windwardside men to slowly accrue money to build their Saban homes and, later on, to leave the island with their families. This process of accumulation was a step not necessary for those of better means and required enduring patience on the part of seafaring men and their families at home. Building something on Saba was seen as a first step and, for some, an end goal. Later, the orientation became one that set leaving the island as the ultimate badge of success. Under these conditions, fatherhood was defined by economic rather than emotional support although men still exercised considerable authority over their families even during their prolonged absences. Domesticity and sexual propriety for women and obedience in children were required elements of any good white Saban family and these norms were enforced both through internalization of these beliefs by families with absent men and by the watchful eyes and sharp tongues of community members. Lastly, the sense of loss of opportunity in the third narrative shows both the class differences that existed within Windwardside itself and between Windwardside and The Bottom at the time, their relation to ideas about the importance of education, and the persistent belief that migration would have allowed those children to

make something of themselves in the United States. Again, as in The Bottom, the United States is positioned as The Land of Opportunity even if those opportunities are conceptualized and experienced differently depending on one's position in Saban society.

Almost all white families in Windwardside followed the social script of same-race marriage before childbearing and deviations from these norms were not tolerated by the community at large. Women who married settled into lives dominated by their domestic roles of mother and wife while men continued to assume their place as patriarchal provider. Some women found the expectations and burdens of a care taking life to be emotionally and physically taxing as they struggled to keep their families together. Women with husbands on-island faced the challenges of rapidly expanding families due to the lack of available or effective birth control while their peers with husbands abroad tried to keep their smaller families running smoothly in the absence of their men. In reflecting on her days as mother and wife, one elderly white woman from Windwardside shared the following thoughts:

> Anyway, I got married early, too early to have so many children. Ten children I had. The one I was married to was named Allan. He was away sailing out in a schooner or something like that. I can't remember that part 'cause I didn't know him then. And then he came home, and he went to be a storekeeper, and there was the place where he kept, there where Mr. Carl is now…
> I didn't want plenty children, but I had them; but my children wasn't bad children, they was good. I never had no trouble with mine. I lost one, but it was a baby born and it was up to eight months and it died with whooping cough—a pretty lil' baby, lil' baby girl. The name was Hilma. She had blue eyes and blonde hair…
> Well, I wish I had me days back over. I wouldn't have to wonder and go about and wonder about the children and all that so. Mind, when you are young you are happy; you don't have no worries, you don't have no troubles; but as quick as you get married, then the trouble comes, yeah, that's right. I don't know why the young girls want to get married nowadays. I was foolish. I didn't have no help. (Crane, 1987: 11,15, 16)

In the absence of reproductive dysfunction, entering marriage at an early age ensured the production of large families and Saban wives were expected to manage these large numbers of children either on their own or with the help of female kin. Even with her husband on-island, this woman expressed a strong sense of abandonment when it came to rearing her children and credits marriage and childbearing with bringing trouble to her life. It is clear that she loved her children, as seen in her melancholy recollections of the child she lost, but it is equally clear that she was overwhelmed by the

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experiences of motherhood and wifehood that started when she was only 17 years old. These sentiments were probably not unique in her generation of women although most may not have been as outspoken or self-reflective as this particular Windwardside resident. Memories that Windwardside people shared of their mothers also reflected the difficulties of mothering when fathers were absentee and show a gendered division in the social behaviors of women and of their children. One white man from a wealthy Windwardside family who had five servants working in their home shared these snippets of life from his childhood:

> My father was around very little. All my life he was around very little, as he was a shipowner and captain. We were more under our mother's care. She brought us up, and we had to obey her to the letter, but I never regretted it. I had my grandfather, of course. They lived quite close, my grandfather and my grandmother. He also was a very strict man, and I was the only one of them who cared to go where he was to sleep or take meal or anything…
>
> None was ever rude to her [mother] or anything like that. We tried to do what we could for her at home. We realized, of course, that my father was away. I more or less was the head of the house at that early age. Even she wouldn't take his place, his seat was mine when he moved out. She still sat to my right, and I took the chair cause I was the one who did all the carving. I was asked what we would like to eat and so forth…
>
> I wasn't very bright at school, no, not at all. You know, there's ways of learning. I mean to say, you take now at home there was nobody called on but myself. My mother called on me for everything. If she wanted a door mended, if she wanted the window mended, if she wanted her pot mended, whatever was wanted I could do. I was the right-hand man, in other words. When I was small, I was always interested in our home as well…
>
> I remember just before Mother died, a few weeks before she died, She said " You know, I have lived my life for all of you. I made my home and that was where I was. When other peoples' wives were out to all kinds of dances and things, I stayed home with all of you" I said "I realize that." She gave her life for us, for the children. (Crane, 1987: 191, 195, 196, 202)

In this family, life revolved around the mother and her children became very attuned to her needs and aware of the sacrifices she felt that she had made for them. In lieu of a present father, the grandfather attempted to be a male role model for his grandchildren but his stern personality kept many of his family members at a distance. However, this does show that many children did grow up with some sort of male figure in their lives and that the absence of fathers did not necessarily mean the total absence of male role models in family and community life. At a very early age, the narrator in this story internalized the sense that he needed to play stand-in father and husband for his mother and she, in turn, began to defer to him as the "man of the house". This indicates the strength of gendered

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expectations within white Windwardside families, particularly those in the upper class, and it is likely

that many mothers came to depend on and assume a semi-submissive stance with their eldest sons.

The feeling of maternal sacrifice permeates the narrative and culminates in the mother's dying

declaration that she lived her life for her children and set aside worldly pleasures to become the ideal

wife and mother in her family. Social restriction and personal sacrifice were the enduring hallmarks

of idealized Saban womanhood and the tensions between these expectations and the desire to live a

more active life clearly surface as she comes to the end of her life. Although this woman gave voice

to her feelings about personal sacrifice while living up to the social contract of Saban wifehood and

motherhood, the experiences of the few who deviated from these social expectations also shed light

on just how restrictive a woman's life could be in the white communities of Windwardside and

elsewhere on-island. When speaking of the difficulties of women on Saba, one white Windwardside

man recalled the following incident from his youth and contrasts it with an emerging "modern" life

on Saba:

> We had a case here of a man came here and married a girl; and this girl was a girl that was very active, always to parties and a lot of fun and all that. This is the average case in Saba that a man married a girl and goes away and leaves her. But this was a very alive girl, more ways than one. And he married her and he goes away and leaves her here, and after a couple of years she gets a child for a Saba man. It caused a tremendous big scandal, like it would in a small community like this. She was disgraced. Eventually she left the island. She went away to Curacao and Aruba to live, and she's hammered out her days down there, one way or another.
> When this thing happened I was pretty young. I often asked myself, "Who should be condemned—the woman or the husband?" And my belief was the husband should have been put on the witness stand, or the stand of the accused or whatever you choose to call it, just as much as the wife. Both. She made a mistake. It was not her fault so much, but his was the biggest mistake—to marry a woman and he go away and have his time, like he obviously did, and she be put down here to look at four walls, wondering where he was and what he was doing. I don't believe it's possible that you can open a sex life to a human being—like a woman who has lately married, she has her sex life—and then all of a sudden you go away, you continue yours and she must cut hers off and be bottled up like a fabled little imp that was put in a bottle in the story. And she must live a virginal life for five, six years until the husband comes back again. No, man, that is expecting too much. Meantime, he's out raising hell and probably got a couple of kids scattered around here and there, too. But it's nothing at all to him. He comes back, he's the same gentleman, a nice fellow, and she's disgraced for life. Her entire life is ruined. That kind of stuff is unfair. Well, Carl is not the one who criticized her. From the moment it happened we remained the same friends. I've always regarded her the same and I always will because I figure she was the one who should have had sympathy, not he.

> Well, I think the women have it damn tough. Damn, damn, tough. To marry a man, especially if you love that man and he goes away and he's roaming up and down the United States and all you do is sit here and wait for a letter to come in from him with fifty or a hundred guilders or dollars, telling you that he's well and he hopes to see you in 1990. No man! Some life for the man, but it's a hell of a life on the poor woman! I can tell you that one. It surprises me that we haven't had more unfaithful wives in Saba than we have had. When you go over the history of this place that husbands have gone away for five, ten, fifteen years and all the time they have been away their wives haven't looked at another man, has not even gone out and enjoyed themselves but waiting patiently till the husband comes back again. That wife is not a woman, she's a martyr— and an angel. They were brought up to be like that. But I'm going to tell you, I believe things have changed. I believe some of these new wives, the modern wives, the husband better not go away and leave them for five, ten, or fifteen years, because we're living in a changed world and have a different outlook on things. (Crane, 1987: 283-285)

The clear disparity in the treatment of unfaithful husbands and unfaithful wives is targeted for criticism by this fair-minded Saban but his critique is set in counterpoint to prevailing attitudes about proper female behavior and about appropriate social sanctions meted out when a woman shows evidence of human weakness. He asserts that Saban women were raised to be martyrs and angels who endured long absences by men who may not be holding themselves to the same high standards. The onus is always on the woman to prove her loyalty and faithfulness. Meeting these expectations not only shows that she, as an individual and a female role model, successfully adhered to the cultural norms of sacrificial womanhood but also continually asserts the dominance of men in their families and in their society through their ever-present but often remote control over the social behavior and sexuality of their wives and their female kin. Although he remains sympathetic throughout, the end of his narrative signals the presence of change looming on the horizon and presages tensions that will later emerge between the cultural entrenchment of these gender norms, particularly in the minds of many men, and the increasing desire of women to be active and equal partners in their relationships and in island society as a whole.

Men had far different experiences of marriage and family life during seafaring times although most took their role of patriarch and provider to heart. One older white man from Windwardside told the following stories about his entry into married life and his reasons for seeking out the comfort of a wife and children:

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As I say, I wanted to go to sea and become a captain of a steamship. But then in Bermuda I had nobody to take care of me. A whole bunch of fellows living in a house together, bachelor's life. Kind of rough, you know. Everybody had to cook for themselves, so I decided I'd get married. Her name was Doris. She was born here and her family lived here in Saba. Well, it wasn't much to it [courtship]. You'd just visit the lady and stay for a few hours in her home. Of course, in Bermuda her parents weren't there. She worked over there, so I had to go by the people she worked with at night for an hour or so, go and sit down. Once in a while we'd go up to the Navy canteen, outside the Dockyard. Sometimes, once in a great while, we'd go to a hotel, but very seldom.

I were about seventeen and a half years. I wasn't eighteen years when I got married. I forgot about it [becoming a captain]. After you're married the sea life is no good then-you have to be with your family. Of course, there are married men that go to sea; but I was quite young then when I got married, and I got a job ashore. In years gone by the men used to leave and be gone five or six years before they came back, leave their wives behind. It's no good that way…No doubt marriage changed my life. Because when a man is single there are a lot of crazy things he might do. (Crane, 1987: 295-296)

Like the older white woman who had ten children, this man entered marriage at a very young age and made the decision to stay with his family rather than live a life of separation on the high seas. After losing his mother as a young child, it is understandable that he wanted a woman to care for him and look after him because he never had that kind of support growing up. However, his overall perspective on marriage reflects general societal attitudes about the role of women in their families and, specifically, the duties that he enumerates for wives were sacrosanct expectations held by the community at large. Men knew that life without a woman to cook and clean for them was hard so it was only logical that a man would eventually seek out a wife to ease his burdens of life. Although love may have developed over time, it was clearly not the motivating factor in this man's drive to become a husband but his commitment to staying with his family suggests that he eventually came to view his wife as more than a domestic servant. He also echoes the feelings of many men when he says that marriage settles a man down and keeps him above the fray of life's temptations. This suggests that wives often provided a powerful calming influence on the otherwise uncontrolled temperaments and desires of men. For many men, settling down meant acceding to a female-guided process of male domestication. This process of taming men did ascribe some level of intra-familial power to Saban wives as stabilizing influences and pillars of morality within their own households. However, although variable in the specifics, this form of power often manifested as powerlessness when men failed to succumb to their wives protestations over issues of drinking, philandering, or

inadequate economic contributions. Failure to control husbands played into the culture of long-suffering female martyrdom while it simultaneously signaled social inadequacies on the part of wives who were not able to satisfy their unruly resistant men and to teach them to behave in polite Saban society. This form of power was clearly rooted in narrowly defined Saban ideas about womanhood, the social expectations that these ideas generated, and the subsequent limitations that were placed on women's lives and the roles they played in their families and their communities.

Even though Windwardside had its share of elites, the class structure made for a different economic environment for the farming men and families that lived from the products of Saban soil and for unmarried and married women who were left to hold down the proverbial fort in the absence of seafaring men. Poverty was a fact of life for many white Windwardside residents and family tragedy was often interwoven with desperate economic conditions. The older white man who left for Bermuda at an early age and then married at 17 told of the early childhood loss of his parents and his struggle to survive in a very poor family:

> My father died when I was four months of age; he got lost in the sea in a ship off Cape Hatteras—her name was the Benjamin F. Pool—in a winter gale. The ship couldn't sail and overturned, and all hands on board were lost. My mother died when I was four years, and I can still remember it. My mother was dead. In fact, I didn't know she was dead, and I started to laugh. I took it as a big joke, but then I saw her lying there. I realized she was dead, and I began to cry—I remember that. My mother died with cancer as far as I can remember.
> I really can just remember my mother. I can't remember what she did, I just slightly remember her. But I went to live with my old aunt. I went to school, from school I would come home, and then I'd go out in the bushes all about, go to the sea and so. That's the way I spent my time. Of course, she was a very poor woman. She had nothing to give us. We tried to get some fruit and bring home and so on. We tried hard to help her get some fish, and she used to do this drawn-thread work like all the ladies do here now in Saba. She did a good job. She was well acquainted with that kind of work. She used to send it to America to sell. She was very strict. She made us go to school. She saw to it we went to school.
> She died when I was twelve years of age. Then I went to live with my uncle. I was just a boy in those days. I helped my uncle build up farming. That was about from twelve to fifteen I helped him farm. He'd take care of his animals. He had a couple of cows. I used to go hunting with him. Once in a while we'd go fishing, swimming, go downs to Spring Bay, at the Fort Beach, Core Gut Bay. We used to go fishing different places around the island. (Crane, 1987: 291)

It is no wonder that he made the decision to leave Saba at a very young age because the circumstances of his island life had left him with little hope of eking out an existence on his home island. The story

he tells is unique in its details but not in its general themes as a great number of Sabans lost family, mostly fathers and other male kin, to the dangers of the sea and a great many people also walked the thin line between economic solvency and economic disaster. His aunt may have been a widow herself but may have also been one of a number of unmarried women in Windwardside who were left without the financial support of husbands, brothers, fathers, or uncles. Drawn-thread work is the only thing that keeps her from complete financial ruin. The sense of unpredictability and living on the edge runs through his childhood memories and he and his siblings took on economic responsibilities for keeping up the household from a very young age. After losing a third family member, this man lived in his uncle's household and, like many young boys, became integrated into the workings of the family farm. Although he experienced more tragedy than most, the contours of life that he shared mirrored the experiences of many poor white families in Windwardside and presents a very different kind of life than that experienced in the elite society of The Bottom.

While the economic activities of Windwardside men revolved around seafaring migration and agricultural work, the economic activities of white women in Windwardside both reenacted norms of domesticity and, at the same time, challenged the idea that women's work should be confined to unpaid domestic labor within their families. The uncertainty of whether or when they might see their men or receive any economic support from far away husbands, brothers, uncles, cousins, and nephews, middle and lower class white women began to develop cottage industries to generate much needed money or, in many cases, to produce items to trade for other goods. Drawn-thread work, commonly called Saba Lace, became the industry of choice for almost all white women as it could be done within the home, either singly or in groups, after the days chores had been completed (Figures 6.20 and 6.21, from Julia Crane's 1964 Household Survey). Although participation of white women in this industry was universally high, the sheer numbers of white women in Windwardside and Hells Gate made the eastern part of the island the center of drawn-thread work activity. The creation of these beautiful pieces of art could be used to adorn anything from napkins to baptismal gowns and the women of Windwardside quickly developed a brisk business of on- and off-island trade. While some

of this trade was transacted through cash payments, a portion of it continued to be transacted within

the older system of barter where women traded their handiwork for desired or necessary items. Crane

(1971: 33-34) describes this system of exchange as follows:

> Women would write to companies in the United States and Canada whose
> addresses they found in magazines, on food containers, and so on, and, if they were
> fortunate, established an agreement with a company or with some of its employees to
> exchange drawn-thread work for goods of various sorts. In some cases, women would
> receive products such as foods or cosmetics which they either used or bartered or sold to
> others. A bride to be sometimes accumulated virtually all the linens and kitchen utensils
> for her future home by this means. Addresses of companies which would make such
> exchanges were sometimes guarded carefully within a family or a small circle of friends,
> in order to avoid the risk of overburdening the company which was making the
> exchanges and, in the case of some products, to maintain the items received at a high
> value for further exchange on Saba itself.

While the work was carried out in private domestic spaces, trade of Saba Lace allowed white women

to connect to the outside world independent of their men and most of those connections were forged

with places scattered throughout the United States. With many of their men working in the States and

with the States absorbing most of their handiwork, white women in Windwardside came to bind their

economic destinies tightly to the fate of the United States, a problematic proposition during the Great

Depression, and understood much of what they knew of the world through their own experiences with

American consumers and the tales they heard from returning men. As Crane notes, competition for

business became fierce and the identities and addresses of trading partners were very secretive. In

fact, many women participated in this industry for decades without fielding a single order on their

own and were forced to go through women with connections who, of course, took an additional cut of

the profits. Although the sale of Saba Lace was never a particularly lucrative proposition, for the first

time it allowed white women to participate in paid labor and to connect to the global marketplace in

order to independently meet their daily needs as well as their burgeoning consumer desires for the

latest fashions, cosmetics, and household accessories. Their labor also drew white Saba women

closer together in some ways. Passing down the trade forged intergenerational ties between novice

girls and their adult teachers and established this form of labor as one important signifier of white

Saban womanhood. One Windwardside resident remembered her initiation into the sisterhood of

drawn-thread work like this:

> Well, do you know I learned meself to do the drawn-thread work. I'd see
> different people doing it, and I'd get—as a girl I was what I was—I'd get little pieces of
> cloth, and I'd sit and I'd ask they who was doing the work, there was so many doing it I
> can't remember their names. I know there was a old lady—not a old lady, a young
> lady—and her name was Judith Ann, and I went to her with this little piece of cloth and I
> asked her to show me how to draw the threads out. I was a small girl. I had me little bit
> of thread on me little reel; and me mother give me the little bit of thread and the little
> piece of linen; and I went to the old lady, Judith Ann, and she drew the threads out and
> she begun the little piece of work, the little piece of pattern for me.   And it was called
> "the first pattern" and I learned that in one afternoon. And after that, she tell me to come
> back and she'd draw the threads for different little patterns and show it to me, and I could
> work it….Anyways, I done lots of work for her and I save a heap of money, too, in a little
> piggy bank, a lil' bank like a piggy, you know, I must've been about fifteen, not so old.
> We didn't work much work because we had a well-to-do father, and we never done no
> work. My mother used to show me how to wash, but I didn't do it. I wouldn't do it. I
> didn't like to work. Never done a thing, too lazy. I learned how to cook, and I used to
> like to cook. We had two girls helping. (Crane, 1987: 12-13)

This narrative shows that drawn-thread work became very much associated with what it meant to be a

woman in the social life of Windwardside and, irrespective of financial status, girls throughout this

village saw engaging in this activity as both a means to earn money and a way to assert their

movement into the full status of adult Saban womanhood. Older women initiated the young and, in

doing so, continued the cycle of this type of labor over the course of several generations.

The way that white Saba women engaged with these paid economic pursuits remained

entirely consistent with the standard gender norms in force during this time. Their labor was confined

to the domestic sphere and did not allow for any intimate contact with non-familial community

members that remained on-island. Many times, even the groups of women who gathered to work on

their pieces were close kin which meant that white women's work proceeded within the same sphere

as other aspects of their social lives despite the increased contact that some women had with off-

island customers. Like celibate women in The Bottom and St. Johns, unmarried women in

Windwardside were also expected to maintain allegiance to family, particularly to their aging parents,

to abstain from any male-female contact that might carry a whiff of impropriety, and to, above all

else, maintain their sexual purity through personal self-sacrifice. However, they shared a bond with

the many married women who also came under community scrutiny during the long absences of their husbands. Those who kept their thoughts on work and the tasks of daily life were much revered for their faithfulness and propped up as model women in their community. The few that went astray were scorned and consigned to the scrap heap of human fallibility. The sexual purity of celibates and the sexual faithfulness of wives became obsessions for the community at large. All eyes kept watch for any sign of female indiscretion while blind eyes were turned towards the behavior of many on- and off-island married and unmarried men. White women's labor practices developed in this context of puritanical sexual rigidity and conformed to notions of female domesticity and isolation while, at the same time, allowed women to gain some measure of independence and to open the door to a range of influences from beyond Saba's shores.

The black population in Windwardside became integrated into processes of permanent migration much earlier than the white population and, like white people in The Bottom, it would be accurate to say that "the black people cleared out" of this village (Figures 6.14, 6.15). In every period, black men left in higher proportions than white men and black women left at higher rates than white women in all but one period where they left the island in almost equal proportions. In the earliest period of seafaring migration, around 40% of women and 50 % of men left their village permanently and at the height of seafaring migration these proportions jumped to around 60% and 85% respectively. The reasons for this mass exodus and subsequent population decline may be lost since most of what is known about this time in Windwardside's history has focused on the white population and their participation in migration trails and on-island community life. Perhaps, for some reason, white Windwardside captains and high ranking sailors tended to take on local crewmen from the proportionally smaller black community or perhaps black Windwardside men were heavily recruited to sail aboard ships owned by men in The Bottom or St. Johns. In fact, their high rates of departure in the earliest periods of seafaring migration does suggest the presence of links that tied together black male migration from Windwardside with the migration patterns that decimated the white communities in the Bottom and St. Johns through early and sustained permanent seafaring

migration. It is also possible that the lack of available land and property in and around Windwardside helped spur this movement of black Sabans off-island since they were not able to reap the benefits of white departures in the same ways as blacks in The Bottom or St. Johns where whites tended to leave and not return.

As in the other villages, two radically different family-building responses emerged alongside these migration processes and suggest two very different underlying streams of thought about family life that existed in the black community. The parallel family building strategies that developed during this time divided the black population into those who adhered to the norm of the nuclear family, characterized by marriage before childbearing, and those who pursued a more flexible reproductive strategy that allowed for significant deviations from these norms. Celibacy rates for black women soared to almost 60% throughout the period of seafaring migration as black men left in substantially higher proportions than black women and, thus, created a sex ratio imbalance in the black Windwardside community (Figure 6.16). The high celibacy rates in the remaining black female population clearly show that many black women from Windwardside conformed to cultural norms that stressed the importance of marriage and marital childbearing by abstaining from having children outside of marriage. These women subsequently suffered from same sort of sociodemographic malaise associated primarily with the white population in The Bottom and St. Johns. However, despite the high celibacy rates and the cultural norms they reflected, another group of black women from Windwardside moved towards a pattern of non-marital childbearing and continued to form and raise their own families in the absence of a marital partner. Over this period about half of all childbearing women had children outside of marriage and approximately 30% of all births in the early period and 60% of births in the later period of seafaring migration were to unmarried women. Ultimately, reproductive flexibility and in-migration from adjacent Hells Gate prevented the black population of Windwardside from dying out completely but their higher migration rates, higher numbers of celibate women, and below replacement-level fertility throughout most of the seafaring

period meant that the black population of Windwardside declined in both total number and proportion over this span of time (Figures 6.17-6.19).

For black men and women who remained, economic conditions deteriorated as wealthy white Windwardside people departed and as the middle and lower ranks of a more agrarian white population began to dominate the social and economic life. Although some outlets remained for work in the traditional fields of domestic labor as cooks and washerwomen, agricultural work of various stripes, small-scale production of consumable goods like bread and candy, and other forms of skilled and unskilled work, much of this new population of whites in Windwardside lived in self-sufficient, self-contained ways so the demand for non-familial labor was significantly reduced. Black women, and especially biracial women, also became involved in the drawn-thread work industry, although it is likely that most of their connections to trade networks were mediated by white middle women who sold not only their own work but also the work of others through long established relationships with off-island clients. For some black and biracial women, the decision to work in the home may have signaled a desire to maintain the ideal of domesticity that was so pervasive in the surrounding white community and may have also allowed black and biracial women to mark status divisions amongst themselves. However, participation in the drawn-thread work industry was all-inclusive in the black and white communities and could, in no way, be seen as a past time of the elite in any of the villages. So, the status lines drawn here would be based on behavioral differences in and social meanings of labor and family formation practices rather than on any tangible difference in economic status. Without free access to and ownership of land, it must have been very difficult for some black families to survive in this changed economic environment and many clearly chose to seek their fortunes in distant lands. The early migration of many members of the black community likely facilitated other departures and movement into areas already populated by other black Sabans, family members or otherwise, likely aided new migrants in their search for work and their quest to establish a new life away from their island homes. With the infrastructure for migration gaining force and expanding

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while the opportunities for on-island survival and advancement declined, the promise of a better life became too tempting for most of the black population of Windwardside.

The life stories of those black residents who remained in Windwardside echo some of the same struggles of poverty and loss seen in the white community and, like white families, many black families at this time became very female-oriented and centered on mothers as the most pervasive authority figures in young black Saban lives. One older black man recounted his relationship with his mother like this:

> But the old lady, she had to do everything. My father died, you know, I was about four years. I just can remember him when he died, and then the old lady had to contend with we four, four of us, but she rared we up very nice.
> My father was captain of a lil' boat, and he git catched in a hurricane in St. Kitts. And he went to jump outside, and he jumped between the wharf and the small boat. He get squeezed. He didn't live long after, a year, say about two years he lived after. He came back here; they had him in the old hospital in St. Kitts. Then they brought him back here; he wasn't here too long. So my mother had to contend with we four; she was our father and she was out mother till we growed bigger, you know. (Crane, 1987: 115-116)

Although the experience of male absenteeism and the death of his father resonates with some of the stories told in the white community, there is no apparent sense that he should take up the male responsibilities of the family or any indication that other male family members stepped in to fill those roles. Instead, the sentiment emerges that his mother became both father and mother to her children and bore the full responsibility of their care until they reached adulthood. None of the narratives from the white community suggest that women had the duty or capability to "father" children and many white women leaned on their oldest sons or other male family members to play these roles in the permanent or temporary absence of their spouses. In this way, male authority over white households was never really questioned and, even after a partner's death, most white women would never have considered themselves both father and mother to their children given the strict division of gender roles in white Saban society. So, even in these early times, there is a distinct difference between the social experiences of white and black women in their families even when their life circumstances are very similar. Commitment to mothers, however, cross-cuts racial lines as seen in the following feelings expressed by a celibate black women from Windwardside:

> I wouldn't have go nowhere to leave my mother. When you have a mother, sometimes you have family they don't treat her so good. I don't regret being alone. Maybe someone seen that God fixed the way, with my mother sick here. Where her feet was swelling, she'd say, "Well, that's the beginning of the end.". She tell me so, and she told me that God would take care of me. She said," I have you, but you don't have no one; but God will take care of you." (Crane, 1987: 49)

Love for her mother translated into her sacrificing the potential for starting her own family and securing familial support in her own old age. Many celibate women, black and white, would have faced similar predicaments as their lives were devoted to caring for elderly parents. Some were more circumspect about the sacrifices that they made, and, in this way had more equivocal views about their relationships with their mothers and the loneliness that they faced after their passing. Another celibate black women expressed herself like this:

> I'm my mother's only child. That's why I'm left alone all the time after she died, nearly three years. It's two years and a half since she passed away. I had a little girl that used to sleep with me; but the family moved over to St. Maarten where their father could work, so I'm left alone altogether now. See that? When a mother has one child and no more, now my family is very little.
> I think nothing important has happened to me. Well, I haven't always been so satisfied. The saddest time I'm had is when my mother died. Well, and there was somebody liked me, you know; and they wasn't willin', and I had to be subject to them. That was something that sometimes I regret that one; but long ago we wasn't like the girls now. Nowadays if somebody likes you and if the parents ain't willin', they'll still take 'em and go somewhere else and they get married; but I was all done with that one. He went to the States. He came back in the same mind, and it was the same thing. And so it happened that way. But I don't say I didn't care for him, but I had to be obedient. Them days, I'm tellin' you, it was different. And maybe I wouldn't have been alone today—I would have had a family of my own. That was one thing I'm sorry. (Crane 1987: 177)

In the midst of her own loneliness, she comes to openly question the forces that shaped her life experience and places much of the blame for her regrets on her parents decision to reject the possibility of her marrying and starting her own family. The interplay between selfishness of parents who feel the need to establish a steady source of support in their old age and the enforced selflessness of their celibate care-taking daughters really comes to the fore in this woman's story. Conformity to social expectations created a void throughout her entire adult life and this tension between duty and personal desire would be recognizable to many celibate women, black and white, who lived their lives within similar familial constraints.

The biracial community in Windwardside hovered around fifteen percent of the total population throughout the period of seafaring migration and was second in size and proportion only to the mixed descent population in The Bottom. Like in The Bottom, the biracial population in Windwardside developed through the close relationships black and white people shared, the lack of marriageable partners for many white women during times of extremely imbalanced sex ratios, and the historical practice of white men having children with black women in both the slavery and post-slavery periods. The size and consistent replenishment of the mixed descent population in Windwardside suggests that a self-sustaining mixed descent community may have emerged in this village. This coupled with primary interracial childbearing relationships between members of the black and white communities in each generation has kept the number of biracial people relatively high in Windwardside. The population trajectory of the biracial population has some unique characteristics relative to both the black and white populations and is defined by a small increase in overall numbers during early seafaring period followed by slower but still significant rate of decline than in either the black or white communities. Unfortunately, the social experiences of this group of Windwardside natives are obscured by historical silences that riddle prior narratives of seafaring migration.

 As avenues for seafaring migration began to dry up, the population of Windwardside had undergone some pronounced upheavals that affected both its size and overall population composition (Figures 6.18, 6.19). An already white Windwardside became even whiter due both to their own internal population dynamics and the migrant departures and subsequent suppression of fertility in the resident black community. Focusing only on the fact that Windwardside remained white while the communities of The Bottom and St. Johns became black, however, would miss important transformations in white Windwardside society itself. With the departure of elite white families and the influx of population overflow from adjacent Hells Gate, Windwardside became more agrarian and more invested in a system of economic self-reliance even in the face of pronounced male absenteeism. White women merged expected gender norms with new labor practices as the trade in

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Saba Lace grew to substantial proportions. The men who remained worked the land and helped support not only their own families but also their extended families who lacked a steady supply of male labor. This system of mutual cooperation and interdependence is similar to that developed in the black communities of The Bottom and St. Johns although the economic position of most of the white Windwardside population was never quite so precarious. For blacks who had made their living sharecropping and laboring for well to do white families, life became untenable after this transformation. Their opportunities for securing work, establishing rights to till the soil, buying their own property or land were even more circumscribed than those of the black communities in The Bottom and St. Johns. Under these conditions, many set out on paths blazed by their family and friends who left before them and the native black population declined to a distinct minority in the community of Windwardside.

Seafaring migration and family life in Hells Gate

Hells Gate was founded as a small agricultural community and developed an economic base and social atmosphere more akin to Mary Point than to any of the other villages. With only a few torturous step paths carved between this enclave and the other communities, Hells Gate established relatively close relationships with adjacent Windwardside and Mary Point but remained more or less cut off from the affluent shipping-oriented scene that dominated life in The Bottom and St. Johns. In Hells Gate, there were minor differences in socioeconomic status among families but the class of established white elites that was so visible in the other villages did not exist in this social environment. Everyone made their living from the land and the community buckled down to do the hard work required by a farming lifestyle. However, Hells Gate people as a whole were not immune from the influences of seafaring migration but the ways that migration took hold of the population were very different in the white and black communities (Figures 6.22-6.27).

The white population of Hells Gate was rooted in the soil, insular in worldview, and extremely family oriented which led one observer to remark that Hells Gate whites were "born in the

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house and buried in the yard" (Keur and Keur, 1960: 246). This insularity is evidenced by the low rates of early seafaring migration in this population and by their consistently lower rates of migration across time. Departures of Hells Gate whites never reached the astronomical levels witnessed in any of the other white communities and this suggests that white Hells Gate people, by choice or by circumstance, remained somewhat disconnected from seafaring culture. Living in a farming community endowed Hells Gate men with a rich store of knowledge about the land but their isolation from the sea meant that they had little or no valuable skills to offer potential employers in the seafaring industry. Faced with the choice to go to sea with little chance of high monetary returns and the prospect of having to do menial labor in unskilled jobs, there may not have been the same motivations for Hells Gate men to leave the world where they had already attained a level of mastery. Even if the desire to leave existed, they may not have had the connections to secure off-island employment due to their peripheral position in the social networks of seafaring men and families. These factors combined to entrench the white Hells Gate population in a way that was not possible in the other villages and, collectively, life hummed on unchanged for many people in this small community while other parts of the island underwent radical transformation. Fuller integration into the seafaring economy did progress over time and it is likely that some of this was spurred by the connections that white Hells Gate people had with family and friends in Windwardside and, eventually, by the direct links to this economic cycle that Hells Gate migrants provided to those they left at home.

Under conditions of relatively low migration and a general lack of any pronounced sex ratio imbalance, the white population of Hells Gate grew at a very high rate during the early period of seafaring migration and was able to maintain its population while the white and black populations of other villages declined precipitously (Figures 6.22-6.27). Celibacy rates were very low and fertility rates were high compared to other white populations on-island (Figures 6.24, 6.25). This meant both that many more white women were having children and that the average number of children born to reproductively active white women was higher in Hells Gate than in any other village. The lack of

any substantial sex ratio imbalance, the low celibacy rates for non-migrant women, and the low non-marital childbearing rates suggest that when Hells Gate people left the island they either left as whole nuclear family groups or that they maintained a pattern of temporary male migration where men moved between their seafaring lives and their lives at home while their wives and children stayed on-island. Men were not leaving alone and marrying off-island women in as high a proportion as found in other villages and this fact meant that Hells Gate families were able to continue to form, replenish themselves, and maintain their connections to one another and to their home village. Even when seafaring migration made its way to Hells Gate in earnest, the large family sizes meant that even a 50% loss of population still allowed Hells Gate to experience either slow population growth or stability when other populations, both black and white, were vanishing rapidly. After the population explosion around the turn of the 20th century, more white Hells Gate people began to migrate into Windwardside as land and property from permanent Windwardside migrants became readily available. For some, movement from Hells Gate to Windwardside was seen as a step up in island society and many members of the white community from Hells Gate tried to gain respectability by disassociating from their rural roots and all of the negative stereotypes that painted Hells Gate people as backwards backwoods types. Others who moved to Windwardside continued their lives without any fundamental changes in class identity or general outlook on life. Without this movement, the population of Hells Gate would have continued to grow rather than level off and the white population of Windwardside may have gone the way of the original white populations in The Bottom and St. Johns. As a reflection of this population movement, many of the current day white residents of Windwardside can trace their family lines into Hells Gate, in part or in whole, and this internal migration of people helped to solidify the bonds that still exist between these two communities despite their rivalries with one another.

The gender norms and associated economic activities of white men and women and that emerged and solidified at this time were very similar to those that existed in the more agriculturally oriented segment of the white Windwardside population. Marriage formed the basis for childbearing

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and anchored the experiences of white families in Hells Gate. As in Windwardside, those women who failed to meet the expectations of sexual purity and faithfulness were black listed in the minds of many of their family members and friends. One older white woman places community reactions to deviant behavior in the context of familial love, honor, and disappointment:

Well, our little island was small, and there was one thing here that the people was poor but they kept up themselves. It wasn't a place that many things was done that weren't good things like that. For instance, if a woman went the wrong way before, well, people would grieve for years over it. You see, they wasn't accustomed to it. Everyone loved one another so, like if you was a-readin' in a book. (Crane, 1987:310)

Even though Hells Gate families were poor, they maintained a sense of social dignity and decorum through the fidelity of their wives and the sexual abstinence of their unmarried women. Any slip-up added social insult to the existing injury of poverty and provided an infinite well of social scorn for the deviant and social embarrassment for her family and the community at large. It is clear, however, that these reactions were rooted in a genuine caring for the future of Hells Gate women and their families and stemmed from the hope that enough social pressure would keep women on the "right" path. While those who adhered to these norms often lived within the ethic of self-sacrifice, those who did not left themselves open to the possibility of becoming communally sacrificed social outcasts whose treatment served as the ultimate warning to other women in their own village.

In the white community of Hells Gate, domestic space and duties were the domain of women while men either carved their living from the soil or set sail for a life on the high seas. This split between the internal space of women and the external spaces of men, both on- and off-island, was reflected in the nature of women's work that emerged during this time. With little in the way of class differentiation and an economic base that stressed self-sufficiency and periodic cooperation through labor pooling, women had to look to external markets to generate any significant cash flow or trade in kind. Hells Gate women, like the women of Windwardside, began to engage in the blossoming cottage industry of drawn-thread work and began to make significant economic contributions to their households beyond their traditional roles of homemaker, wife, and mother (Figures 6.20, 6.21). However, this work did not challenge prevailing gender norms of domesticity as work proceeded

mainly within the home or within groups of related female family members or close friends. Interactions with off-island people were important in shaping certain consumer desires or ideas about what life was like in other places, but the lack of direct personal contact between the female makers of Saba Lace and their heterogeneous clientele did not threaten the rigid division between the sexes required by patriarchal concerns about the sexual purity of their unmarried women or their marital fidelity of Hells Gate women during their husband's long absences. Nor did it threaten men's position as active and dominant agents in the social world of Saba and beyond or their status as the ultimate familial authority within their own homes. Their secure position atop the power hierarchy of Saban society was founded not only on the presumed superiority of their gender but also on their external experiences both in the community and off-island and the perception that they enjoyed a kind of worldliness not available to their female counterparts. Engaging in the drawn-thread work trade did, however, begin to awaken Hells Gate women to the possibility of becoming more economically independent in a time where male economic contributions were sometimes in question and certainly heightened the awareness that women had about both the things they could purchase with their new found incomes or the ways of life that people, particularly women, in other places enjoyed.

While the white population in Hells Gate increased in numbers and continued to be centered on nuclear family units closely connected to the land, the black population of Hells Gate teetered on the brink of disappearing completely (Figures 6.22-6.27). The pattern of early integration of black men into the seafaring trades in Windwardside is again seen in the population of black men from Hells Gate but the divergence between the migration rates of black men and women are extreme (Figure 6.22, 6.23). Around 80% of black men and 40% of black women from Hells Gate left the island during the early periods of seafaring migration and these proportions climbed to 95% and 50% at the height of seafaring migration. The proportion of the black Hells Gate population lost to seafaring migration is very similar to that found in the both the elite white seafaring families of The Bottom and St. Johns and the black population of Windwardside. These symmetries suggest that there were strong links between the black communities of Windwardside and Hells Gate and that

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these communities were seen as important pools of labor on the ships of wealthier black and white Sabans. Economic conditions for the black community in Hells Gate must have made the prospect of employment in lower level seafaring jobs attractive and suggests that the black community in this village found themselves living in less than ideal circumstances just prior to this period of massive migration. The lack of employment opportunities based on the dearth of an elite white class in Hells Gate, a ballooning white agrarian population that was only minimally engaged in seafaring migration, and the subsequent lack of opportunity for purchasing local land and property likely combined to create a deteriorating economic environment for black residents.

With black men already leaving Hells Gate in droves, family life in the black community of Hells Gate likely became more and more woman-centered as the sex ratio imbalance increased dramatically throughout the seafaring period. However, unlike black women in the other villages, the black women in Hells Gate tended towards following the cultural norm of getting married and then having children and, as a result, less than 15% of all black children were born outside of marriage in this community under conditions of seafaring migration. In fact, even as the proportion of women having children outside of marriage increased from around 20% in the early seafaring period to around 45% at the height of seafaring migration, the tendency towards marriage for black women from Hells Gate remained strong as most women did eventually enter into marital relationships with their long-term partners. It is also interesting to note that many black Hells Gate women who had children outside of marriage did so when they were living in other villages on-island. This suggests either that the social environment of life in other villages allowed, encouraged, or simply accepted as normal the practice of Hells Gate women having children outside of marriage or that the social environment in Hells Gate made life untenable for black women who deviated from family building expectations and forced them to live their lives in other communities. The low level of life-long celibacy and the high level of marital fertility among the small residual black population also suggest that those who wanted to start families on-island were able to do so, mostly within the context of marriage, and that husbands were either permanent island residents or returned frequently to spend

time with their wives and families (Figures 6.24, 6.25). However, despite the presence of men in these families, the large family sizes of the people who remained and the general lack of economic opportunity for many men, women, and children must have made life particularly difficult during this time. Black Hells Gate women cobbled together a living by securing intermittent work in a range of domestic services either in Hells Gate or in adjacent Windwardside, by producing and/or selling consumable goods on a small scale, or by receiving money and goods from their family members abroad. Black men who stayed on-island likely did a range of skilled and unskilled labor and probably engaged in agricultural pursuits both on their own land and on land they leased and worked for others. Cooperation was likely a hallmark of survival and families who remained undoubtedly helped each other through these challenging times through a mixture of economic activities that spread the wealth to those in need. Like members of the white Hells Gate population, as much as one-third of remaining black Hells Gate women and men moved to the more economically prosperous village of Windwardside and approximately 17% of the black male population relocated to The Bottom.

As in St. Johns, the biracial population of Hells Gate started very small and declined in both size and proportion of the total population throughout the seafaring period (Figures 6.26, 6.27). The black population in Hells Gate was likely never as large as in any of the other villages because Hells Gate lacked an elite white population that would have been able to afford a large number of slaves before Emancipation in 1863. The relative poverty of Hells Gate whites may also indicate that some of the original black population of Hells Gate was comprised of free blacks who chose to inhabit this small, remote farming village just like their free black peers in Cow Pasture and Middle Island. Whether the original black population was slave or free, the close and often intimate relationships that developed between blacks and whites as an outcome of the history of slavery were probably not as prevalent in this small economically modest community. Although some white Hells Gate residents clearly owned slaves, the number of resident black people in this village was never as large as in other areas and the interactions between whites and blacks would have had a very different character than

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those found in other villages. The daily intersections of black and white lives in places like The Bottom and Windwardside did not take place in Hells Gate because the majority of the white population of did not depend on black labor to run their homes or work their land. This physical and mental separation between white and black people in Hells Gate meant that the opportunity for developing and maintaining a mixed descent population was much more circumscribed than in other villages. However, it is interesting to see that the relative proportion of mixed descent versus black people increased in the absence of black men during the early seafaring period. This suggests that some black women established non-marital childbearing relationships with white men during this time although the exact nature and number of these relationships in unknown.

Seafaring migration exacted different responses in the black and white communities in Hells Gate and by the end of the period had transformed this community into one dominated by white small-scale farming families (Figures 6.26, 6.27). For the white community, many families dug into their Saba lives and did not choose or have the opportunity to leave their island. The lack of imbalanced sex ratios based on differential departure of white men and women coupled with low celibacy rates for white women suggests not only that seafaring migration eventually sparked the departure of whole families rather than individuals from Hells Gate but may also suggest that some families continued to cycle through a pattern of temporary male migration that kept Hells Gate families and their patriarchs firmly rooted in Saban soil. All of these factors combined to produce a growing white population that both expanded its number and proportion in Hells Gate itself and created an internal diaspora by adding significantly to the declining white population in Windwardside. Black men left Hells Gate in significant proportions at the beginning of this migration period which suggests early integration into seafaring trades and a general lack of economic opportunity for black people, particularly men, in Hells Gate. The small number of remaining black families were almost all founded on marital relationships between husbands and wives and the relatively high fertility rate for black women also suggests that most husbands stayed on-island with their families. Black women from Hells Gate who chose to have children outside of

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marriage rather than stay celibate tended to do so in other villages which suggests a lack of approval of non-marital childbearing in the black Hells Gate community, the behavioral influences of living in other villages where many black women were having children outside of marriage, or some combination of the two. Like their white neighbors, black men and women did what they could to support their large families in a deteriorating economic climate by doing piecemeal work, generating agricultural produce, pooling resources with family and friends, and receiving some financial assistance from kin off-island.

Saba at the end of seafaring migration: a glimpse of the big picture unfolding and a review of village-level seafaring population trends (ca. 1870-1940)

A quick scan of the village level patterns of migration, variations in population size and composition, emergent labor practices and associated gender norms, and shifting family forms that these intersecting changes brought about clearly shows that individual and collective experiences of these trends depended very much on who you were and where you lived on-island. It would be grossly inaccurate to describe the experiences of some imagined collective white population based exclusively on the experiences of white elites from The Bottom or some totalizing black experience based on the experience of black residents in Hells Gate. However, while valuing the specificity of village life and the influences that local experiences continue to exert on-island, it is also important to step back and take a brief look at aggregate population-level trends and the broader population dynamics they reveal both as a means to get another perspective on Saban life and as a way to disseminate island-level information that could ultimately be used in future comparative research. The following summary will not only review aggregate trends of migration and family building in seafaring times but will also offer a glimpse into how these processes blended with subsequent Saban experiences of oil refinery and post-oil times. This limited look ahead will contextualize the historical importance of seafaring times in Saban family life and serve as a basic roadmap for the analyses and discussions of post-seafaring times found the following three chapters.

When considering aggregate patterns of migration, it is interesting both that, island wide, black people have always left Saba in equal, if not greater, proportions than white people over the past 150 years and that this mass-exodus was most acute in the eastern half of the island where tales of white male seafaring prowess are still found in great abundance (Figures 6.28, 6.29). Under conditions of seafaring migration, black men and women left in either equal or slightly higher proportions than their white peers but the dawn of oil refinery migration saw an acceleration of migration in the black community while migration in the white community steadily declined. Although migration steadily declined for the black community over the post-oil period, the bulk of the evidence after seafaring migration abated suggests increasing mobility for black Sabans and increasing sedentism for white Sabans. White Saban men show the lowest proportions of permanent migration in the post-seafaring period and were, as a group, the most stationary segment of Saban society. Aggregated village-level proportions of population lost ca. 1856-present also reflect these trends and clearly show that the black Saban population has not only been more mobile than the white population over the past 150 years but also that the divergence between an increasingly immobile white population and an increasingly mobile black population was most extreme in the eastern agriculturally-oriented villages of Windwardside and Hells Gate (Figure 6.29). Furthermore, even though the aggregated village-level proportions of migrants are higher for white men versus white women, cohort trends indicate that white women, like their black peers, have also been more mobile than white men in post-seafaring times (Figure 6.28). In combination with aggregated village data, these oil and post-oil trends suggest that white men from Windwardside and Hells Gate were and still are more likely to stay on island than black men, black women, and white women. Ironically, the persistence of heroic seafaring narratives in these communities clashes with the reality that white men have had less experience in the wider world than other islanders over the past 50 years. The historical invisibility of women, black people, and poorer white people in migration narratives, particularly those that emerged during seafaring times, is perhaps not surprising giving prevailing historical biases towards capturing the perspectives of those "in power" but it suggests that more work needs to be

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done to understand not only how and why these silences arose but also the full range of these neglected experiences and how they relate to Saban society as a whole.

Aggregate trends in the proportions of celibate women and completed family sizes reveal family building dynamics in play across the island and are deeply intertwined with changes in migration patterns across time (Figures 6.29, 6.30). In the earliest periods of seafaring migration, the proportion of white celibate women was double that of black women (17% versus 33%) but these differences narrowed as seafaring migration took hold of a larger swath of the population and more women, black and white, were left without marriageable partners (39% white women, 27% black women). At the close of seafaring migration, about 30% of women from both the white and black communities never formed their own families either within or outside the context of marriage but this proportion halved to 15% for black women during the oil refinery period while about a third of white women remained celibate over the same period of time. Increases in non-marital childbearing in the black community as an outgrowth of migration pressures, intergenerational transmission of non-marital family forms, and the steady elimination of women who insisted on marriage before childbearing from the reproductive pool partially account for the dramatic drop in celibacy among black women after the end of seafaring migration, the rise of the proportion of black women having children outside marriage from 47% in the early seafaring period to 77% under conditions of oil refinery migration, and the growth in the proportion of children born outside of marriage from just under 40% in the early seafaring days to around 50% as the oil refinery period drew to a close. Interestingly, the proportion of never-married black women declined from seafaring to oil refinery times, from around 50% to 35%, as the proportion of women married after having non-marital children increased from under 20% to almost 60%. This suggests that although more black women were having children outside of marriage, the socioeconomic conditions for eventual marriage improved for black men and women under conditions of sustained oil refinery migration as they reaped the economic benefits of laboring in the oil industries on Aruba and Curacao. Conversely, entrenched social prohibitions against non-marital childbearing in the white community are largely

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responsible for the consistently high levels of celibacy in the white population under conditions of heavy seafaring and oil refinery migration that only abated after migration opportunities waned in the post-oil period and more white men became permanent fixtures on-island. Ironically, it was in this period that the proportion of white women lost to migration began to outstrip that of white men which led to the development of a substantial concentration of white bachelors and divorcees in Hells Gate and Windwardside. This pool of unmarried but generally economically stable men began to draw increasing social concern and their varied responses to the perceived lack of marriageable partners on-island had and continue to have important social ramifications that are detailed in later chapters. Trends in family formation processes resulted in very similar completed family sizes for black and white women during seafaring times and, on average, each childbearing woman who stayed on island had about four surviving children. At the end of seafaring times and in the early days of oil refinery migration, completed family sizes in the black community stayed slightly larger than white families even though completed family sizes for both communities remained stable during this transitional period (4.6 vs. 3.9 surviving children). Although family sizes increased in both communities during the height of oil refinery migration and in the early days of the post-oil transition, black families increased both their actual size and relative size compared to white families (6.16 vs. 5.16). In the immediate post-oil period, completed family sizes declined for both black and white women (6.16 to 4.7 and 5.16 to 2.4, respectively) but the proportional decline for white families was more pronounced and suggests disproportionate access to and acceptance of modern contraception among white women in the early post-oil period. Over the past few decades, completed family sizes, like proportional migrant loss, have further converged with white families now having about 1.8 children and black families having slightly larger families that average about 2.5 children per household. Fluctuations in patterns of marriage and childbearing reflect the prevailing socioeconomic environments and attitudes of each phase of Saban migration as well as the continued influence of experiences and perspectives developed in earlier times. While the forms and flows of family life developed under conditions of seafaring migration form the primary focus of this chapter, following chapters will present equally

detailed and interconnected sociodemographic and qualitative analyses to explore the trends outlined above and their relationships to perspectives on work, movement, and family life during oil and post-oil times.

Differences in the proportion of residents lost to permanent migration and variations in family building processes and resultant completed family sizes have altered both the size and composition of the total Saban population (Figures 6.32, 6.33). The island population expanded greatly just prior to the onset of sustained seafaring migration and reached around 2400 around the turn of the 20th century. Over the next few decades, the population halved through the combined effects of migration and fertility patterns and during oil refinery days it halved again until stabilizing around 800 in the post-oil period. In seafaring times, the white population declined at a slightly quicker pace than the black population and, by the end of the period, the white population had shrunk to just 54% of its original size and moved from 63% to 58% of the total population while the black population did only marginally better by retaining 57% of its original population size and moving from 31% to 33% of the total island population. The biracial population remained stable in size but increased its proportion of the total population from 6% to 9% over this stretch of time. Given the almost identical proportion of permanent migrants in the black and white communities and very similar completed family sizes, it is clear that the failure of more white women to reproduce is primarily responsible for small proportional growth of the black population throughout the seafaring period. Population decline during the oil refinery period was similar for both the black and white populations, at around 40% loss of the preceding population totals, and although the population composition did not shift the forces that underlay these stabilities were very different. Black families were both larger and lost more family members to permanent migration than white families who became comparatively sedentary and began to limit family size through contraception at an earlier date. After oil refinery migration ended, the proportion of black people in the Saban population expanded despite continuing higher migration rates mainly because black family sizes declined at a slower pace than white family sizes. A simultaneous general slackening of migration opportunities also created a small increase in

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the total size of the black population at this time, a blip of population growth not seen in either the black or white population since the turn of the 20th century, and brought the proportions of black and white people in the Saban population to equality, at around 41%, with the remaining population comprised of a growing group of biracial people.

Over the course of Saba's aggregate population history, racialized and gendered experiences of migration and family building processes combined to produce important changes in population size and composition that, in turn, exerted different effects on Saban life. The myth of generalized white flight and comparative black immobility during seafaring and subsequent times is thoroughly debunked by looking at the proportions of black and white Sabans lost to migration during different historical periods. During seafaring times, black and white Sabans, as a whole, left the island in large numbers, produced a rapid decline in the total island population, and restructured experiences of family life. More black women began to have children outside of marriage rather than become life-long celibates like their marriage-oriented black and white peers. Since completed family sizes were almost identical in the white and black communities, more black women having families and more white women abstaining meant that the shifting population composition both inched towards the creation of a racially balanced society and signaled the coming loss of the white majority on island. However, the rapid increase in migration in the oil-refinery period meant that even though more black women were having families than white women and that black families that were, on average, larger than white families, the racial composition of the island remained stable during this time even as the total number of Sabans living on-island continued to plummet. In the post-oil period, slackening but still high rates of migration and a slower adoption of modern contraception in the black community slightly increased the actual size and relative proportion of the black population while rapid constriction of family size diminished the relative share of the now numerically stable white population despite the lowest levels of migration seen in the past 100 years. The end sum of these processes have produced a population evenly divided between black and white Sabans with a small but growing and socially important group of biracial Sabans that now comprise about 18% of the total

Saban population. Looking at the general arch of these aggregate population trends helps us to reconsider some received wisdom about Saban migration and family life and to bear witness to the complex interactions between migration and family building processes over a long period of time. It may also serve as an additional data source to study family life in any number of potential comparative local, regional, or global frames. However, it is important to keep in mind that, until recently, life experiences on Saba were highly structured by local conditions in operation in each of the four villages and that the extended analysis of the micro-socioeconomic conditions recounted in the bulk of this chapter holds greater potential for understanding day-to day Saban lives.

Over time, each village developed its own set of gender, class, and race relations and the impacts that seafaring migration had on different groups of people both developed within this existing set of relationships and, at the same time, created significant changes within them. Once dominated by elite white society, The Bottom came to consist of a large black population of varying economic means and a small group of transplanted poor rural whites from Mary Point. St. Johns also lost its elite white families and became home to an almost exclusively black population by the middle of the 20th century. In Windwardside, a significant group of white elites and other seafaring families did vacate the island but some white families continued either to engage in temporary seafaring migration that separated husbands and wives for extended periods of time or to make their living through diverse agricultural pursuits rather than by taking to the sea. In Hells Gate, the white population did not participate in early seafaring migration to any appreciable degree and, because of this, experienced a period of rapid population growth. Many white families from Hells Gate moved into areas of Windwardside abandoned by seafaring migrants and intermarriage between the communities became a common practice. This helped Windwardside maintain its white majority even after the departure of most white Windwardside natives. While the white population grew and then stabilized in Hells Gate, high levels of early participation in seafaring industries decimated the black population on the eastern side of the island. While it could be said with some accuracy that "the white people cleared out" of The Bottom and St. Johns, the reverse is certainly true of Windwardside and Hells

Gate where "the black people cleared out" and left a majority white, largely agrarian, population in these communities.

Family forms in the white community in all four villages consistently demanded marriage before childbearing while the black community divided into those families that were founded on marriage before childbearing and those where women had children without being married and either married later in life or not at all. As the number of eligible male partners declined precipitously, life-long celibacy became common for black and white women who did not relinquish their belief in marriage before childbearing. Because non-marital childbearing was not a viable alternative for most white women, the communities in The Bottom, St. Johns, and Windwardside developed a large population of aging unmarried white women who never had families of their own. Many black women also became life-long celibates, particularly in Windwardside, but the social alternative of non-marital childbearing meant that fewer black women remained childless. Furthermore, black women who adhered to the ideal of marriage before childbearing were selectively weeded out of the reproductive pool and did not have a chance to pass on their own attitudes about family life to their sons and daughters. This created an expanding cyclical pattern of non-marital childbearing because more children were born into families not founded on marriage and tended to follow this path when they formed families of their own. However, it is important to stress that the institution of marriage remained strong in the black population, particularly in Hells Gate, and that many black families continued to be formed exclusively within the context of marriage. The fact that many women who had one or more children outside of marriage tended to marry at some point in their lives also gives evidence that marriage remained a strong community value even if its meaning changed over time. This diversity of family formation practices stands in stark contrast to the rigid script of marriage-first family building in the white community and the rigid gender norms that white women were required to honor in the name of domestic duty and sexual purity.

In a climate of economic uncertainty, elevated consumer desires, and an increasingly cash-based economy, many black and white women made the decision, through need or want, to engage in

paid work of various types. White women gravitated towards the cottage industry of Saba Lace, particularly in Hells Gate and Windwardside, and black women in all four villages tended either to work as domestics or to produce consumables for sale on a small scale. Women's work in the white community adhered to established gender norms and was carried out within the home either singly or in same-sex groups of related family or close friends. Like most of their migrant men, the bulk of Saba Lace made its way to the United States and the connections forged through this trade solidified the bonds that many white Sabans felt with America. Although some black women participated in the Saba Lace industry, particularly in Windwardside, black women on the whole tended to be more visible in their local communities since the majority of their work allowed for movement beyond the home and required interaction with a wide range of Sabans. In both the oil refinery period and the post-oil period, the effects of this schism between white and black women's labor patterns and gender experiences continued to exert pressure on some white women to adhere to social norms that project an image of feminine domesticity while more black women are able to move freely between their roles as worker, wife/partner, and mother without acute condemnation from their communities. This is not to say that black women did not experience gender domination, inequality, and exploitation in their relationships with men, only that these social norms did not revolve as tightly around social sanctions against working outside the home or interacting with people outside the immediate family.

These aggregate and community-level shifts in population composition, labor practices, and orientation to the outside world helped to create the sociodemographic environment for the next phase of oil refinery migration and to establish certain cultural elements of modern day life that still exist in each of these villages and across the island as a whole. Understanding the ways that these communities developed their relationships to one another and to the local, regional, and global labor markets and cultural flows allows us to unravel some of the reasons that lie behind persistent community norms and the tensions, fears, and hopes that people have when these norms are challenged by continuous waves of social change. For Sabans, the next chapter of that story opens with the establishment of oil refineries on the Dutch controlled islands of Aruba and Curacao.

Table 6.1: Correspondence of birth and fertility cohorts to specific historical migration periods

Historical period when cohort members entered adulthood and began building their own families and/or decided to migrate	Birth cohort	Years coming of age (20)	Women's fertility cohorts
Early seafaring migration	1856-1875	1876-1895	1876-1915
Middle seafaring migration	1876-1895	1896-1915	1896-1935
Late seafaring to early oil refinery transition	1896-1915	1916-1935	1916-1955
Height of oil refinery to early post-oil transition	1916-1935	1936-1955	1936-1975
Immediate post-oil; Development of the welfare state	1936-1955	1956-1975	1956-1995
Middle post-oil; High period of the welfare state	1956-1975	1976-1995	1976-present
Current post-oil; Transformation from sending to receiving country	1976-present	1996-present	1996-present

Table 6.2: Population projection, Total island population

Population count	Total (n)	White (n)	Black (n)	Biracial (n)	Combined African (n)
Estimated population 2004	811.11	346.07	332.94	134.61	467.55
Actual population	828.00	343.00	340.00	145.00	485.00
Estimated-actual population	-16.89	3.07	-7.06	-10.39	-17.45
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.98	1.01	0.98	0.93	0.96
Estimated pop 30-90	477.62	244.07	168.94	64.61	233.55
Actual population 30-90	492.00	241.00	176.00	75.00	251.00
Estimated-actual population	-14.38	3.07	-7.06	-10.39	-17.45
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.97	1.01	0.96	0.86	0.93

Population composition	Total (n)	White (Proportion)	Black (Proportion)	Biracial (Proportion)	Combined African (Proportion)
Estimated population 2004	811.11	0.43	0.41	0.17	0.58
Actual population	828.00	0.41	0.41	0.18	0.59
Estimated-actual population		0.01	0.00	-0.01	-0.01
Estimated pop 30-90	477.62	0.51	0.35	0.14	0.49
Actual population 30-90	492.00	0.49	0.36	0.15	0.51
Estimated-actual population		0.02	0.00	-0.02	-0.02

Table 6.3: Population projection, Hells Gate

Population count	Total (n)	White (n)	Black (n)	Biracial (n)	Combined African (n)
Estimated population 2004	190.24	139.32	33.93	16.99	50.92
Actual population	192.00	137.00	30.00	24.00	54.00
Estimated-actual population	-1.76	2.32	3.93	-7.01	-3.08
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.99	1.02	1.13	0.71	0.94
Estimated pop 30-90	109.24	86.32	16.93	16.93	33.87
Actual population 30-90	110.00	84.00	13.00	13.00	26.00
Estimated-actual population	-0.76	2.32	3.93	3.93	7.87
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.99	1.03	1.30	1.30	1.30

Population composition	Total (n)	White (Proportion)	Black (Proportion)	Biracial (Proportion)	Combined African (Proportion)
Estimated population 2004	190.24	0.73	0.18	0.09	0.27
Actual population	192.00	0.71	0.16	0.13	0.28
Estimated-actual population	-1.76	0.02	0.02	-0.04	-0.01
Estimated pop 30-90	109.24	0.79	0.16	0.05	0.21
Actual population 30-90	110.00	0.76	0.12	0.12	0.24
Estimated-actual population	-0.76	0.03	0.04	-0.06	-0.03

Table 6.4: Population projection, Windwardside

Population count	Total (n)	White (n)	Black (n)	Biracial (n)	Combined African (n)
Estimated population 2004	198.37	131.21	37.63	29.53	67.16
Actual population	211.00	140.00	39.00	32.00	71.00
Estimated-actual population	-12.63	-8.79	-1.37	-2.47	-3.84
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.94	0.94	0.96	0.92	0.95
Estimated pop 30-90	133.37	94.21	21.63	21.63	43.26
Actual population 30-90	146.00	103.00	23.00	23.00	46.00
Estimated-actual population	-12.63	-8.79	-1.37	-1.37	-2.74
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.91	0.91	0.94	0.94	0.94

Population composition	Total (n)	White (Proportion)	Black (Proportion)	Biracial (Proportion)	Combined African (Proportion)
Estimated population 2004	198.37	0.66	0.19	0.15	0.34
Actual population	211.00	0.66	0.18	0.15	0.34
Estimated-actual population	-12.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Estimated pop 30-90	133.37	0.71	0.16	0.13	0.29
Actual population 30-90	146.00	0.71	0.16	0.14	0.29
Estimated-actual population	-12.63	0.00	0.00	-0.01	0.00

Table 6.5: Population projection, The Bottom

Population count	Total (n)	White (n)	Black (n)	Biracial (n)	Combined African (n)
Estimated population 2004	276.48	58.87	160.36	57.25	217.61
Actual population	293.00	54.00	176.00	63.00	239.00
Estimated-actual population	-16.52	4.87	-15.64	-5.75	-21.39
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.94	1.09	0.91	0.91	0.91
Estimated pop 30-90	162.48	50.87	84.36	84.36	168.72
Actual population 30-90	179.00	46.00	100.00	100.00	200.00
Estimated-actual population	-16.52	4.87	-15.64	-15.64	-31.28
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.91	1.11	0.84	0.84	0.84

Population composition	Total (n)	White (Proportion)	Black (Proportion)	Biracial (Proportion)	Combined African (Proportion)
Estimated population 2004	276.48	0.21	0.58	0.21	0.79
Actual population	293.00	0.18	0.60	0.22	0.82
Estimated-actual population	-16.52	0.03	-0.02	-0.01	-0.03
Estimated pop 30-90	162.48	0.31	0.52	0.17	0.69
Actual population 30-90	179.00	0.26	0.56	0.18	0.74
Estimated-actual population	-16.52	0.06	-0.04	-0.02	-0.06

Table 6.6: Population projection, St. Johns

Population count	Total (n)	White (n)	Black (n)	Biracial (n)	Combined African (n)
Estimated population 2004	144.51	7.30	109.54	27.67	137.21
Actual population	133.00	12.00	95.00	26.00	121.00
Estimated-actual population	11.51	-4.70	14.54	1.67	16.21
Congruence (estimated/actual)	1.09	0.61	1.15	1.06	1.13
Estimated pop 30-90	69.51	4.30	54.54	54.54	109.08
Actual population 30-90	75.00	3.00	55.00	55.00	110.00
Estimated-actual population	-5.49	1.30	-0.46	-0.46	-0.92
Congruence (estimated/actual)	0.93	1.43	0.99	0.99	0.99

Population composition	Total (n)	White (Proportion)	Black (Proportion)	Biracial (Proportion)	Combined African (Proportion)
Estimated population 2004	144.51	0.05	0.76	0.19	0.95
Actual population	133.00	0.09	0.71	0.20	0.91
Estimated-actual population	11.51	-0.04	0.04	0.00	0.04
Estimated pop 30-90	69.51	0.06	0.78	0.15	0.94
Actual population 30-90	75.00	0.04	0.73	0.23	0.96
Estimated-actual population	-5.49	0.02	0.05	-0.07	-0.02
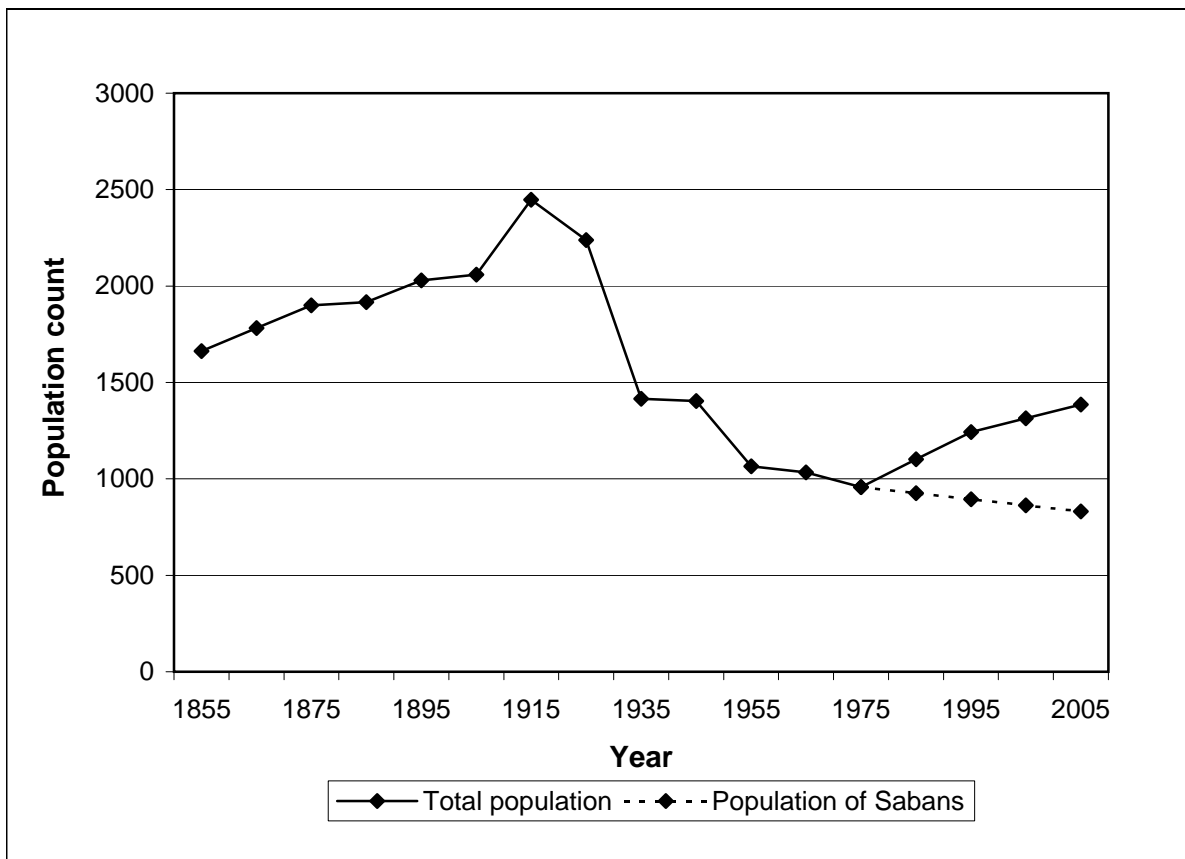
Figure 6.1: Population decline on Saba, (ca. 1850-present)
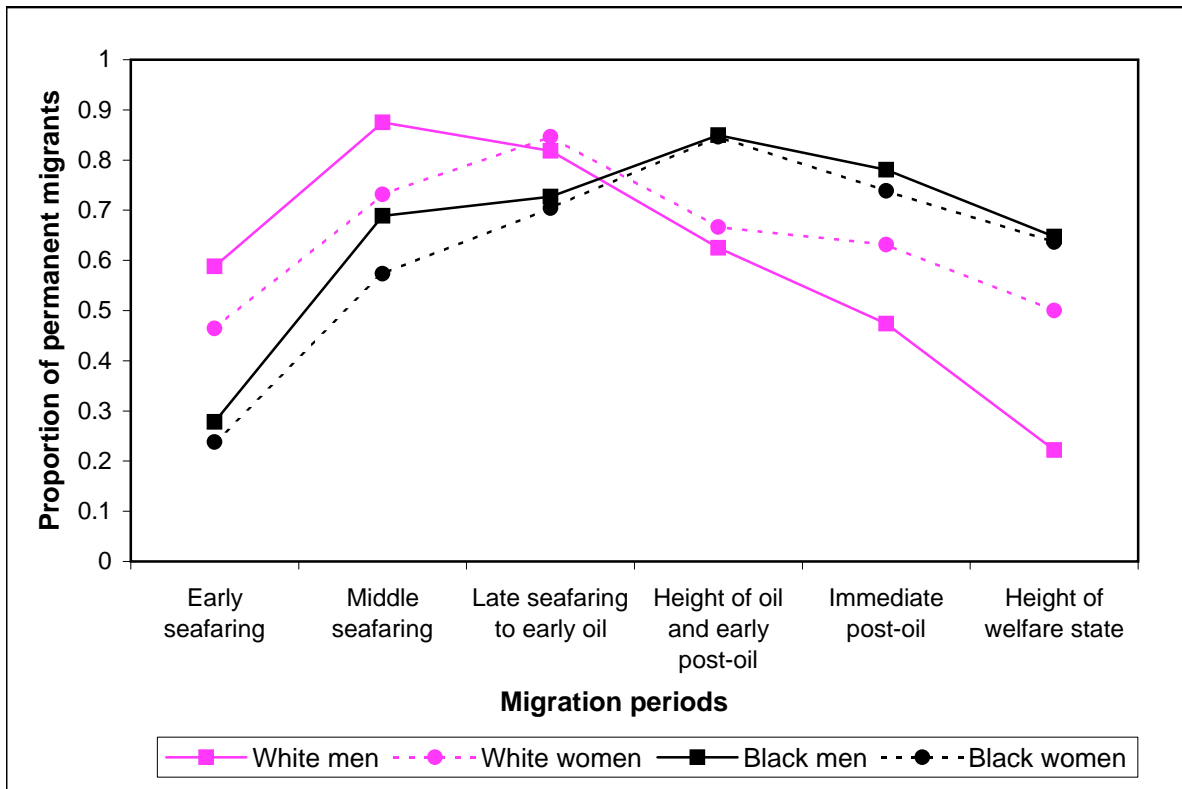
Figure 6.2: Proportion of each birth cohort lost to permanent migration, The Bottom
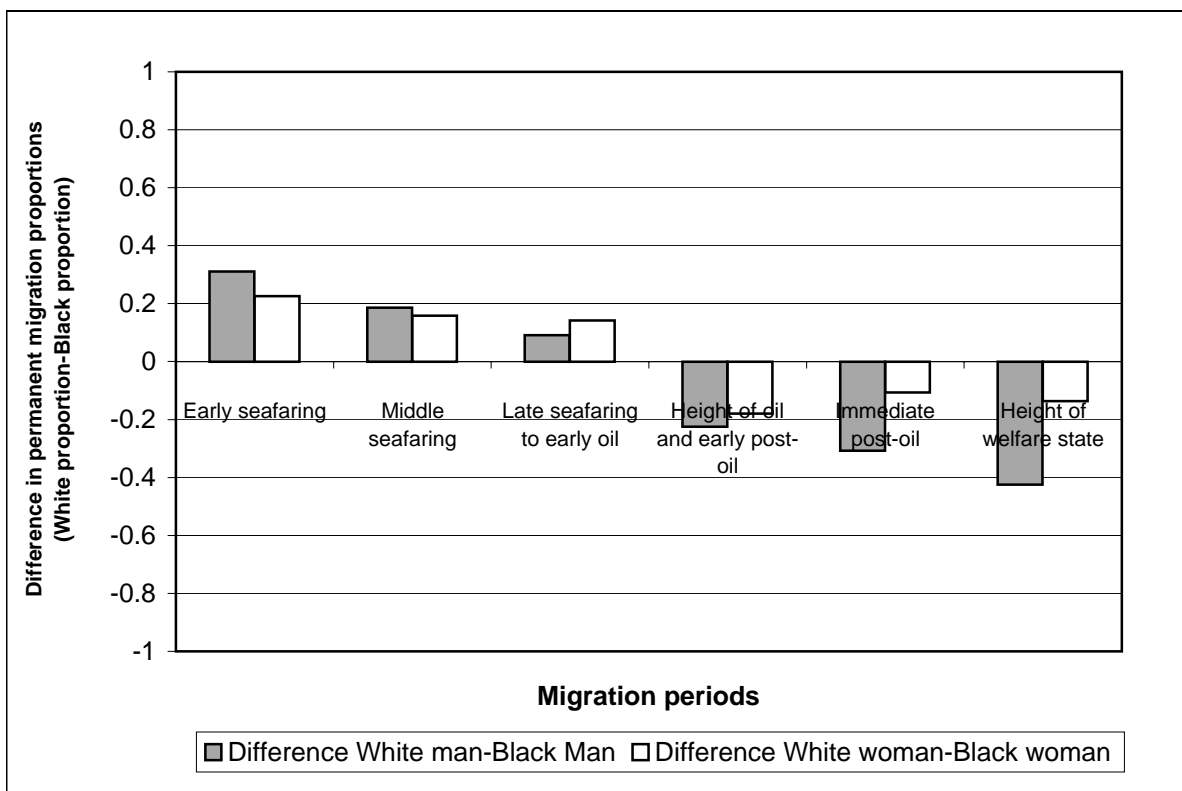
Figure 6.3: Differential cohort loss in the black and white communities, The Bottom
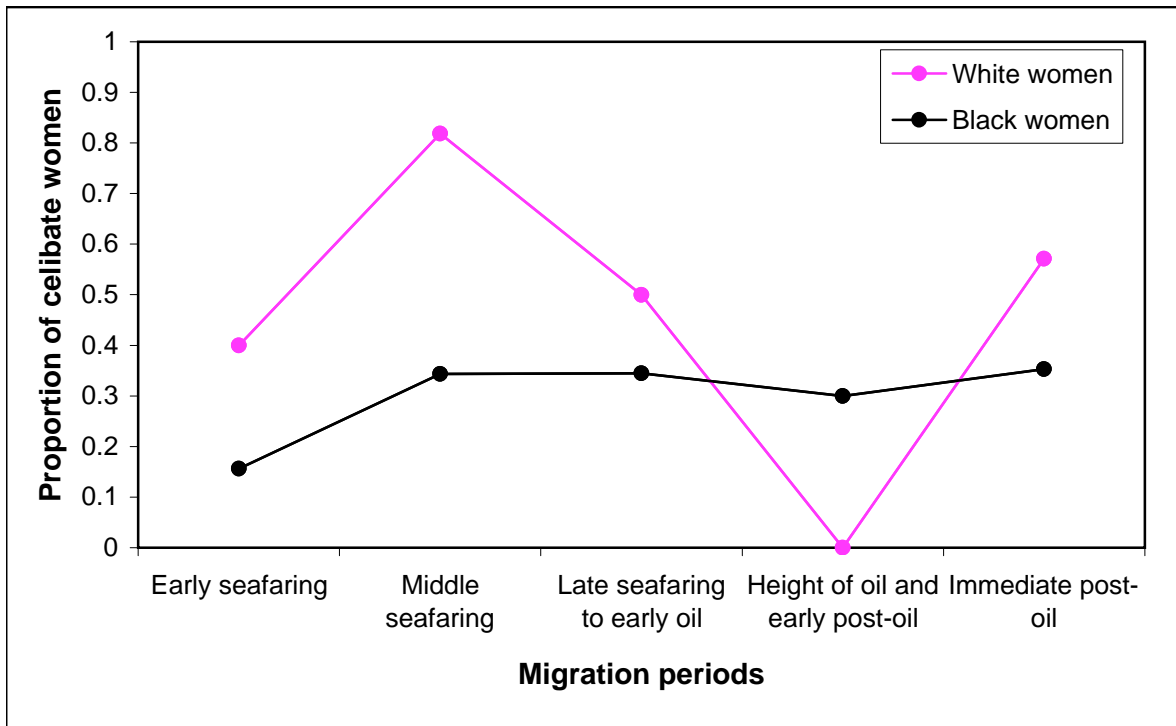
Figure 6.4: Celibacy*, The Bottom
***For the purposes of population projections, celibates are defined as childless unmarried women,
infertile married women, and childless widows. However, childless unmarried women by far
comprise the largest share of this group.**
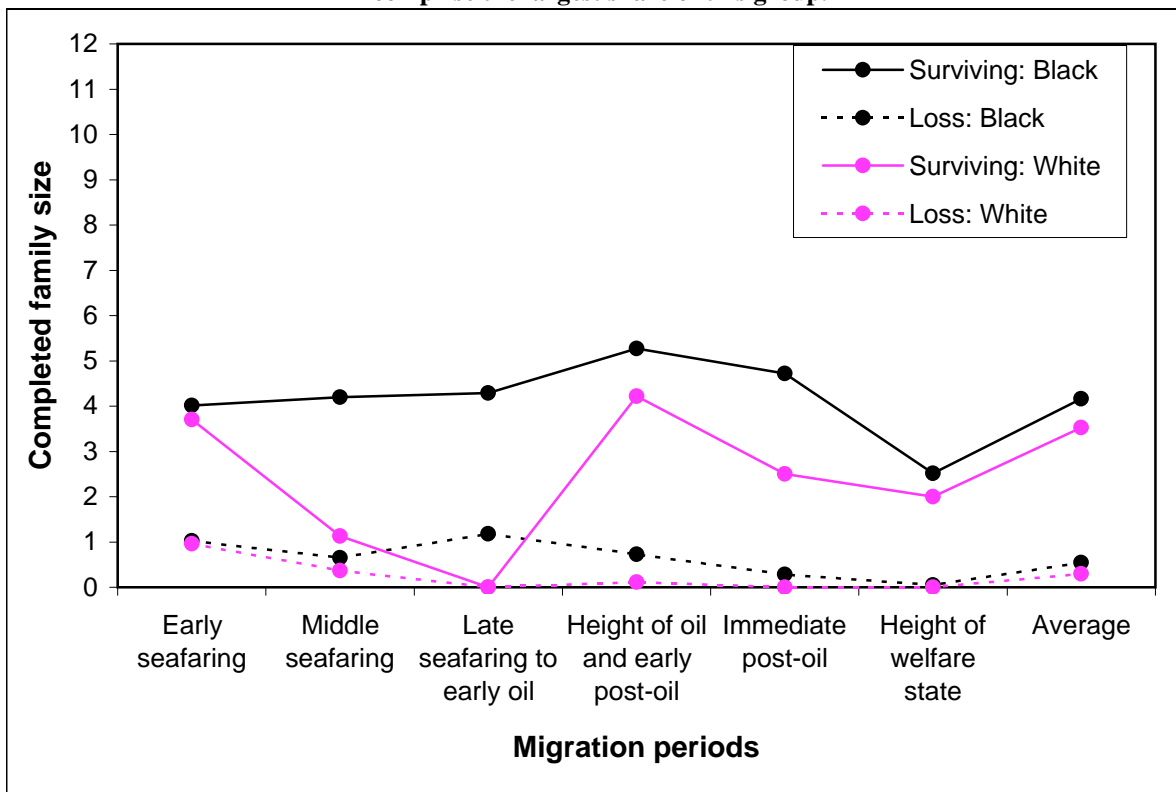
**Figure 6.5: Completed family sizes (approximates Total Fertility Rate) of childbearing women
who stayed in The Bottom; surviving children vs. children who died**
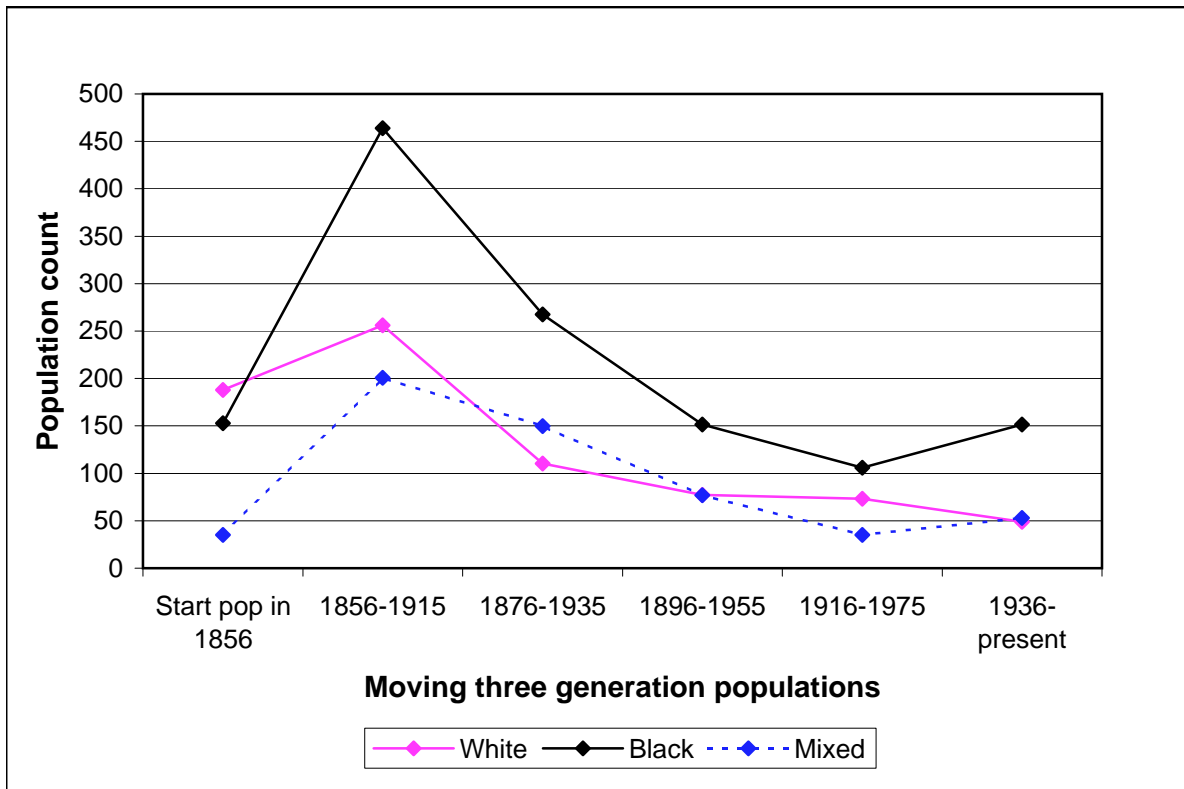
Figure 6.6: Projections of population growth and composition, The Bottom
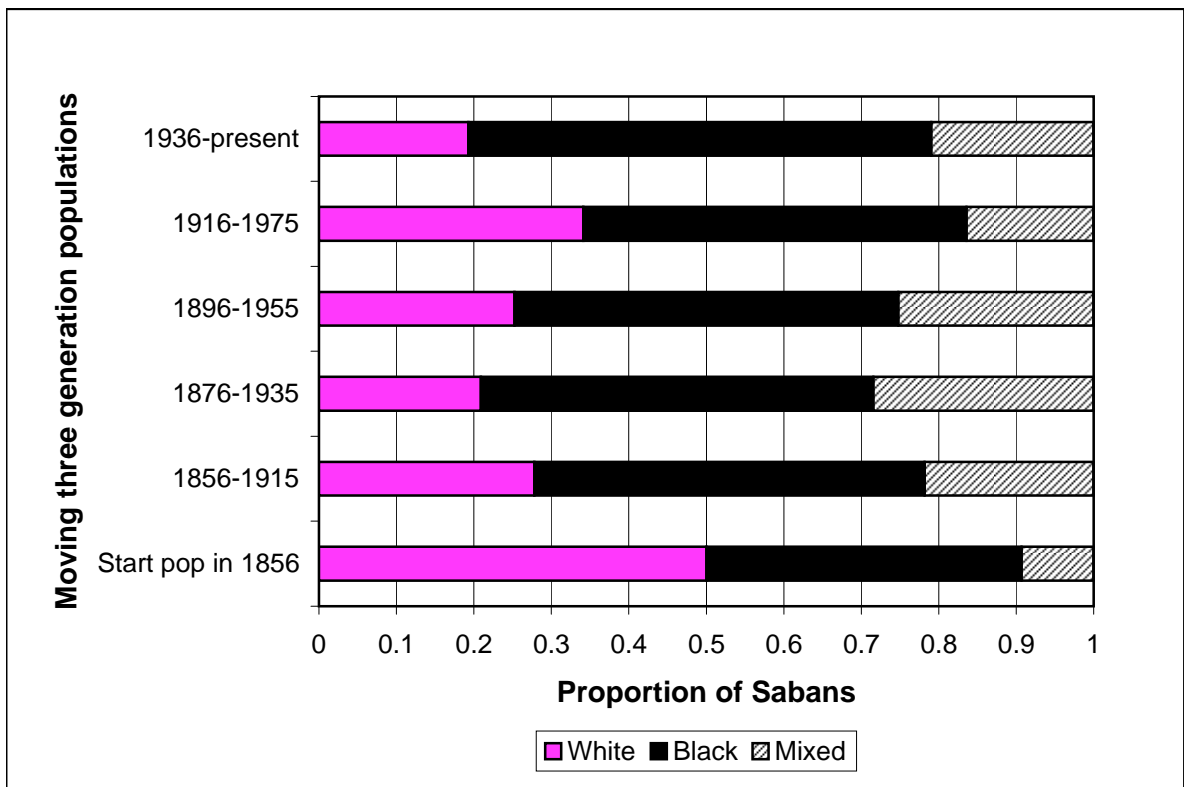
Figure 6.7: Projection of population composition changes, The Bottom
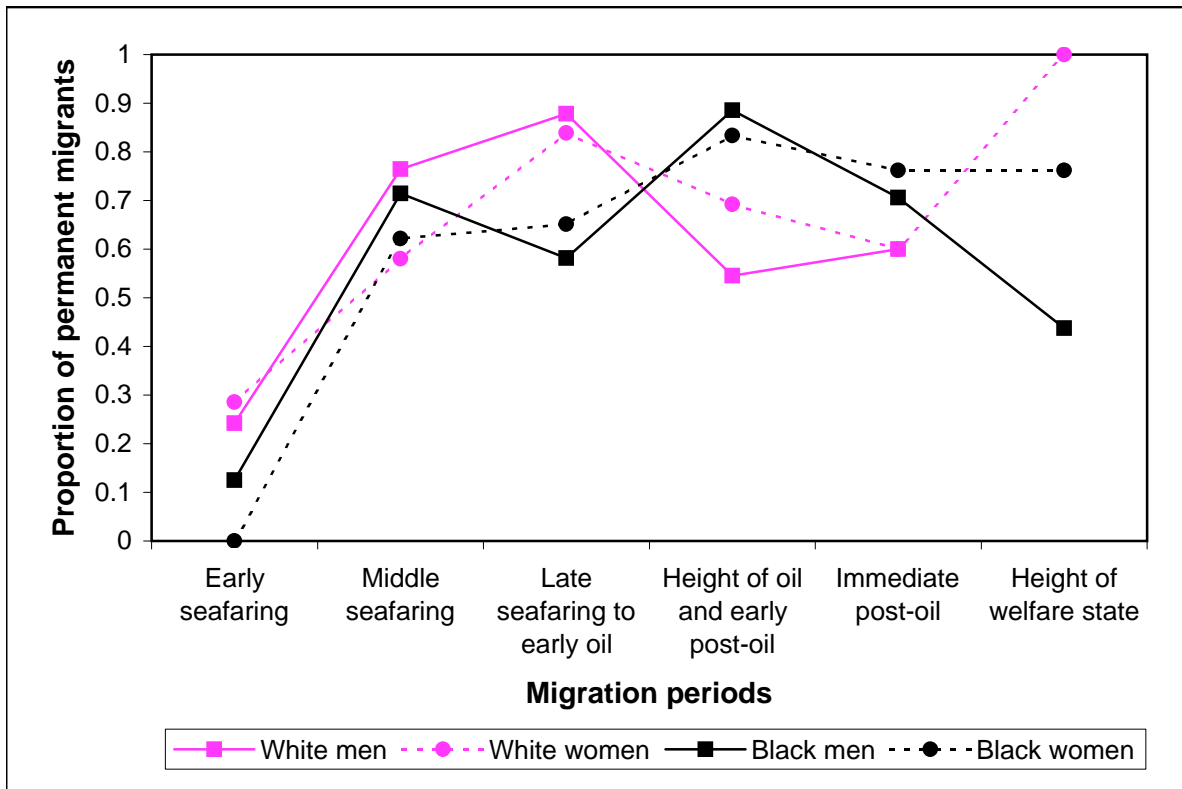
Figure 6.8: Proportion of each birth cohort lost to permanent migration, St. Johns
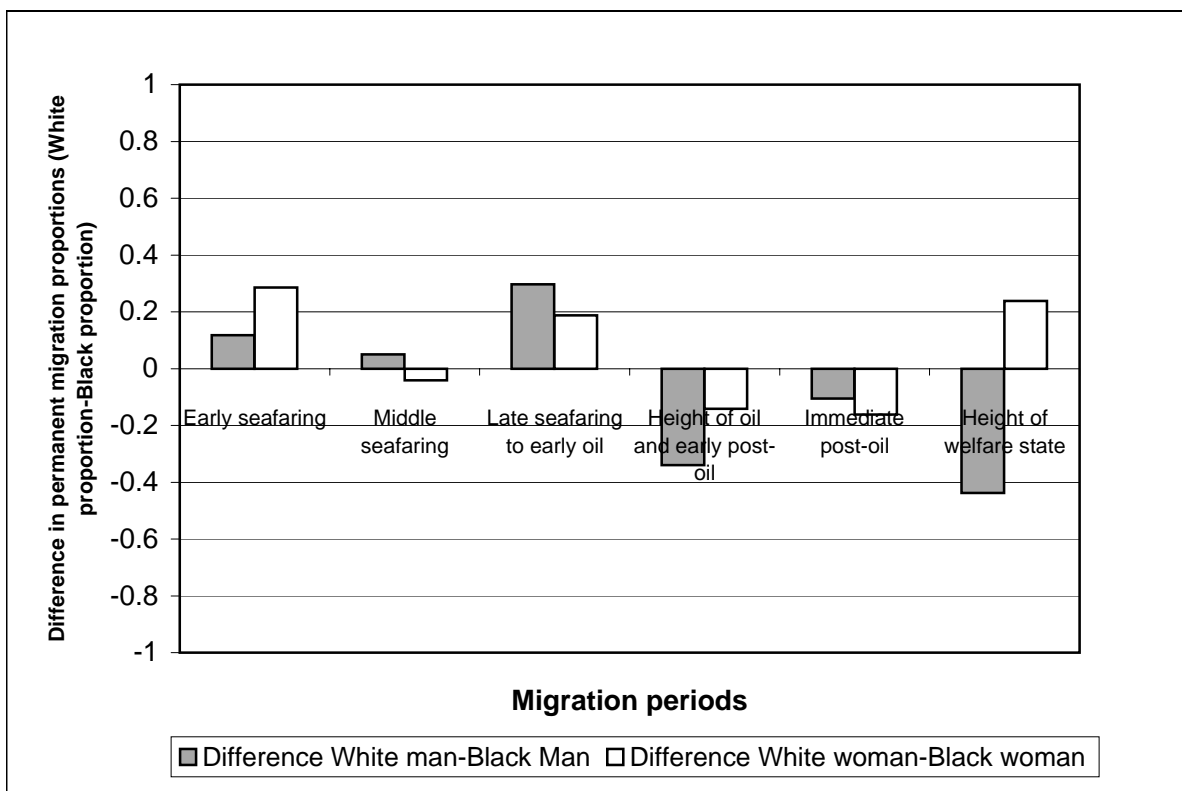
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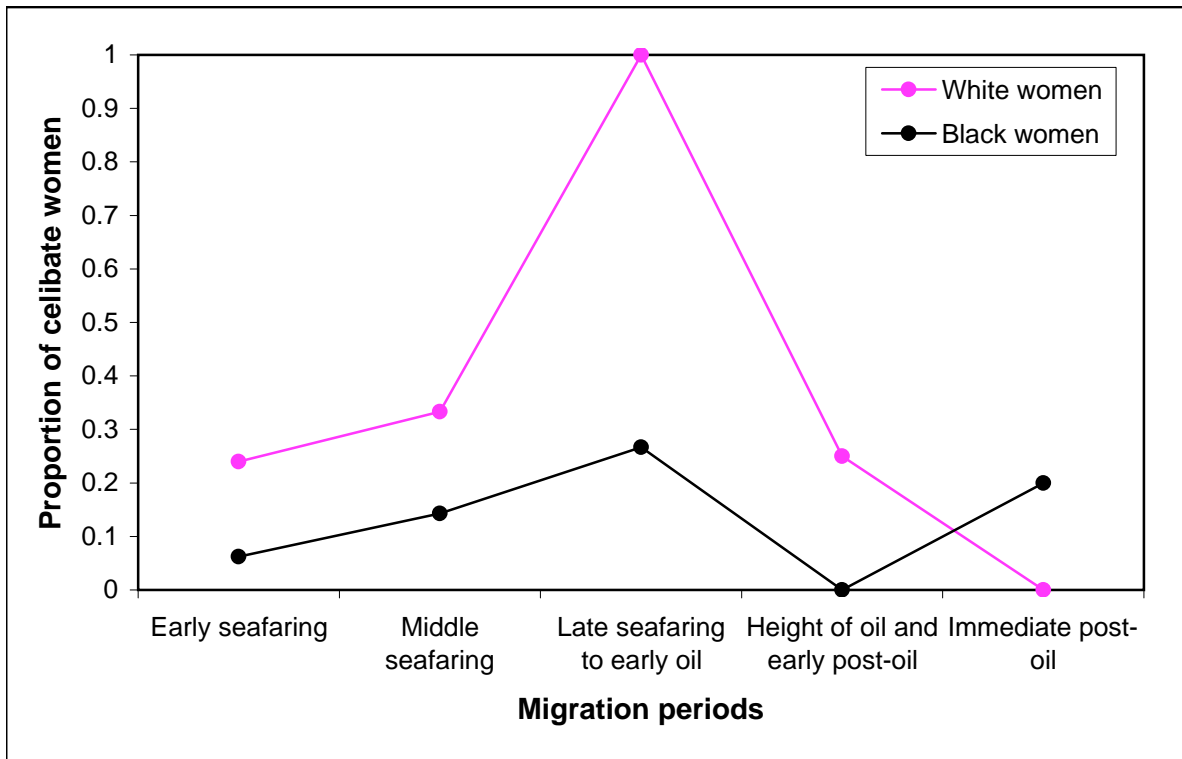
Figure 6.10: Celibacy*, St. Johns
For the purposes of population projections, celibates are defined as childless unmarried women, infertile married women, and childless widows. However, childless unmarried women by far comprise the largest share of this group.
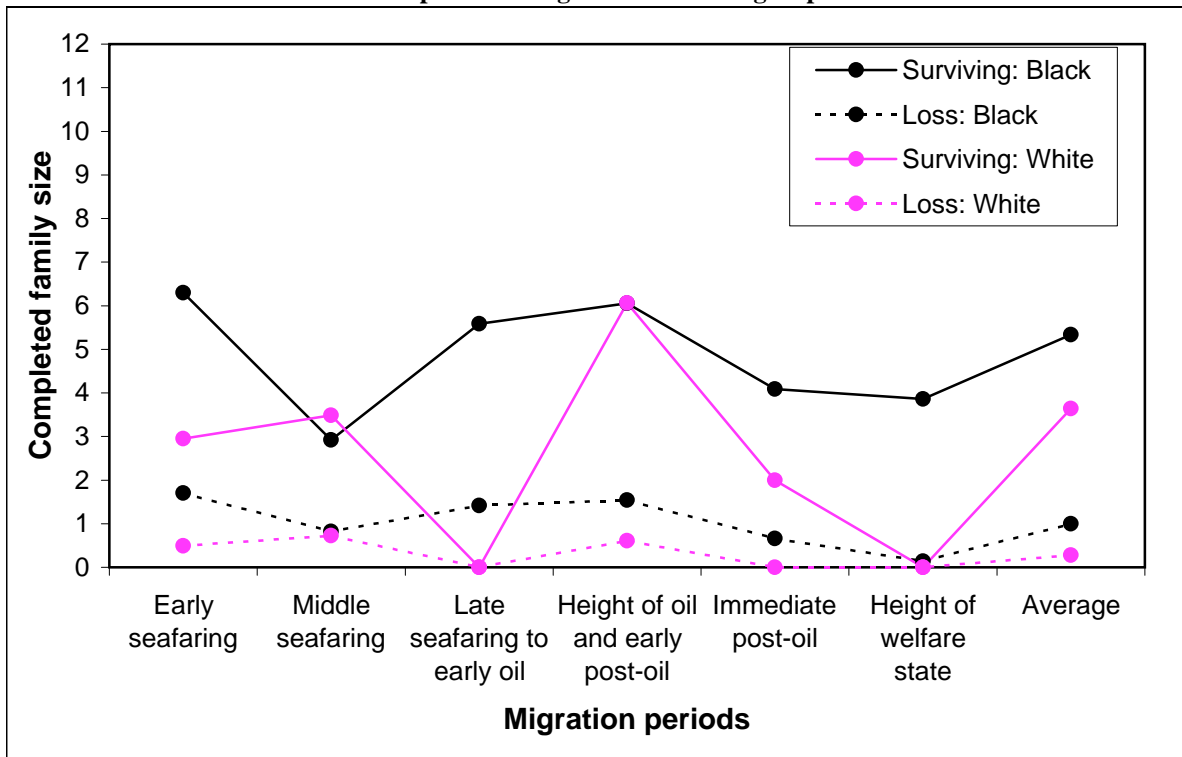
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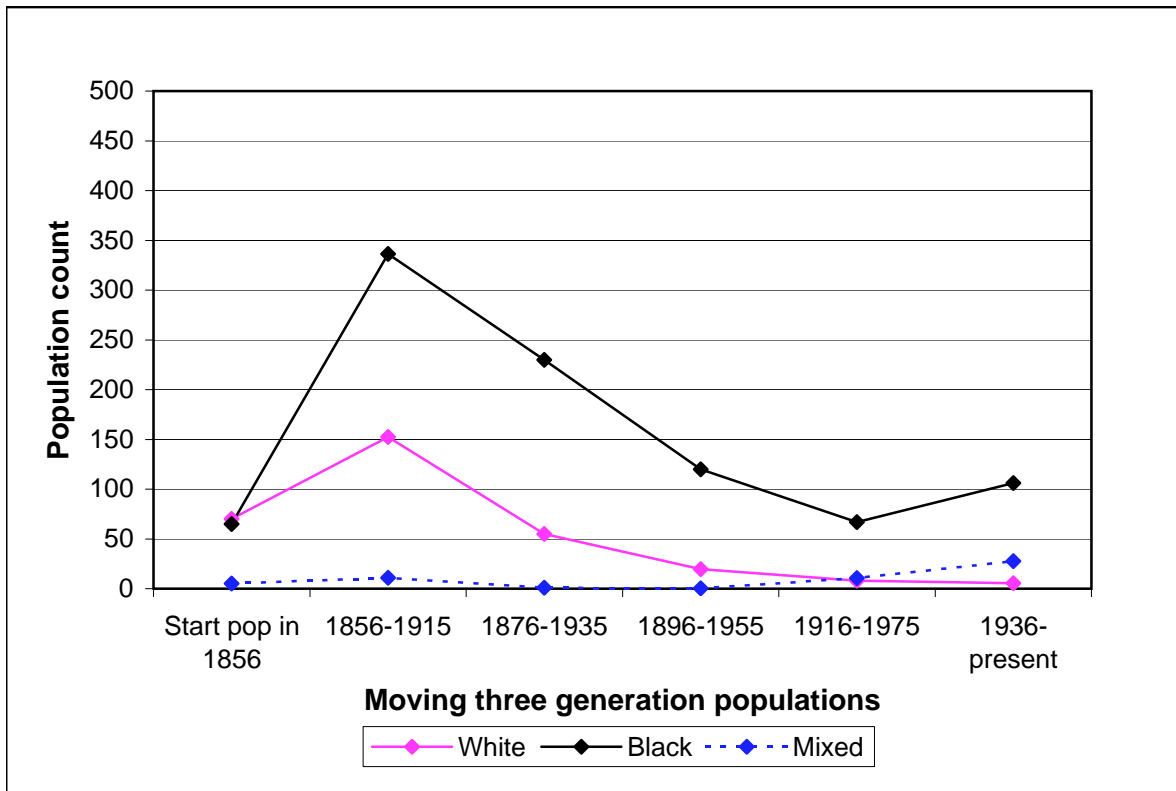
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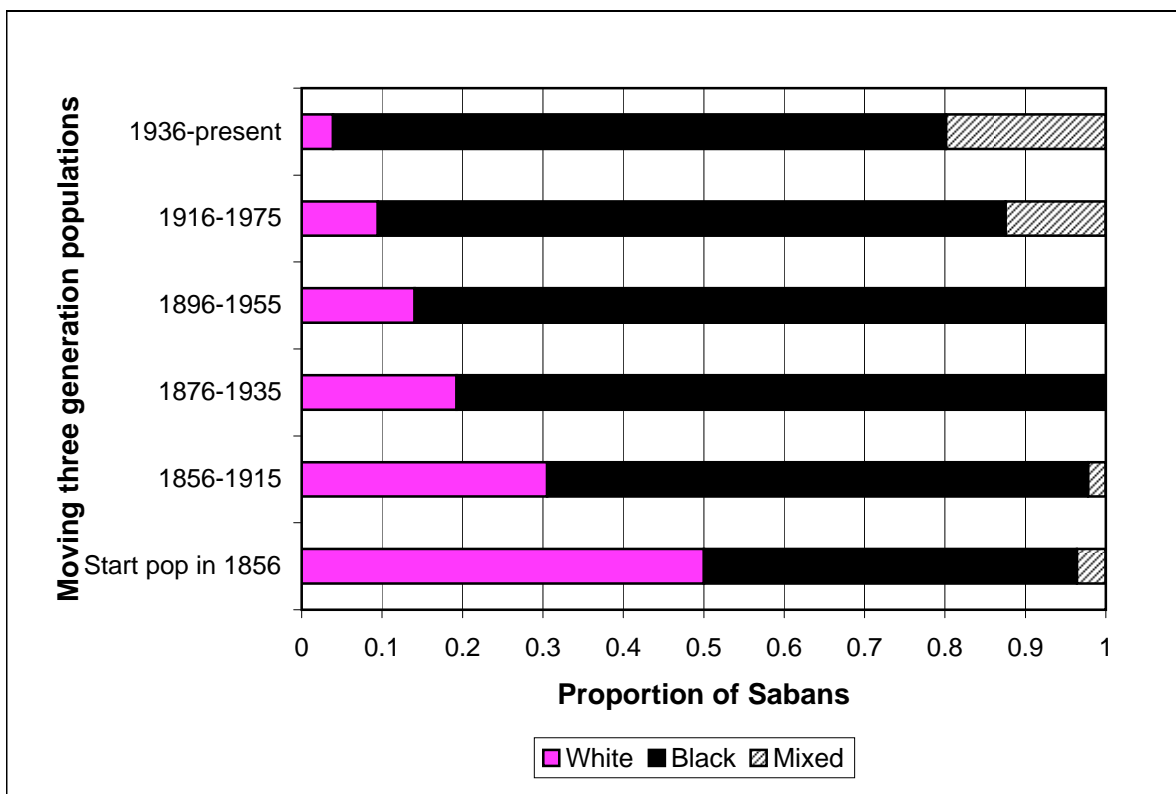
Figure 6.13: Projection of population composition changes, St. Johns
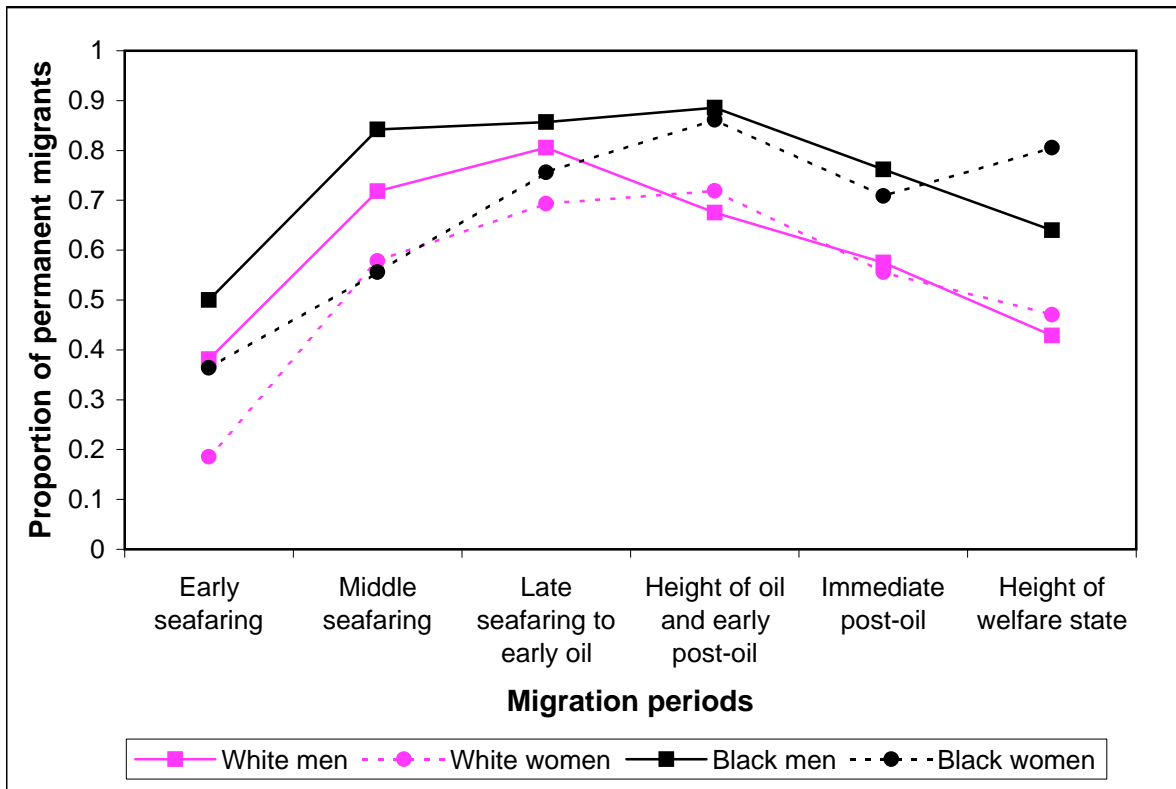
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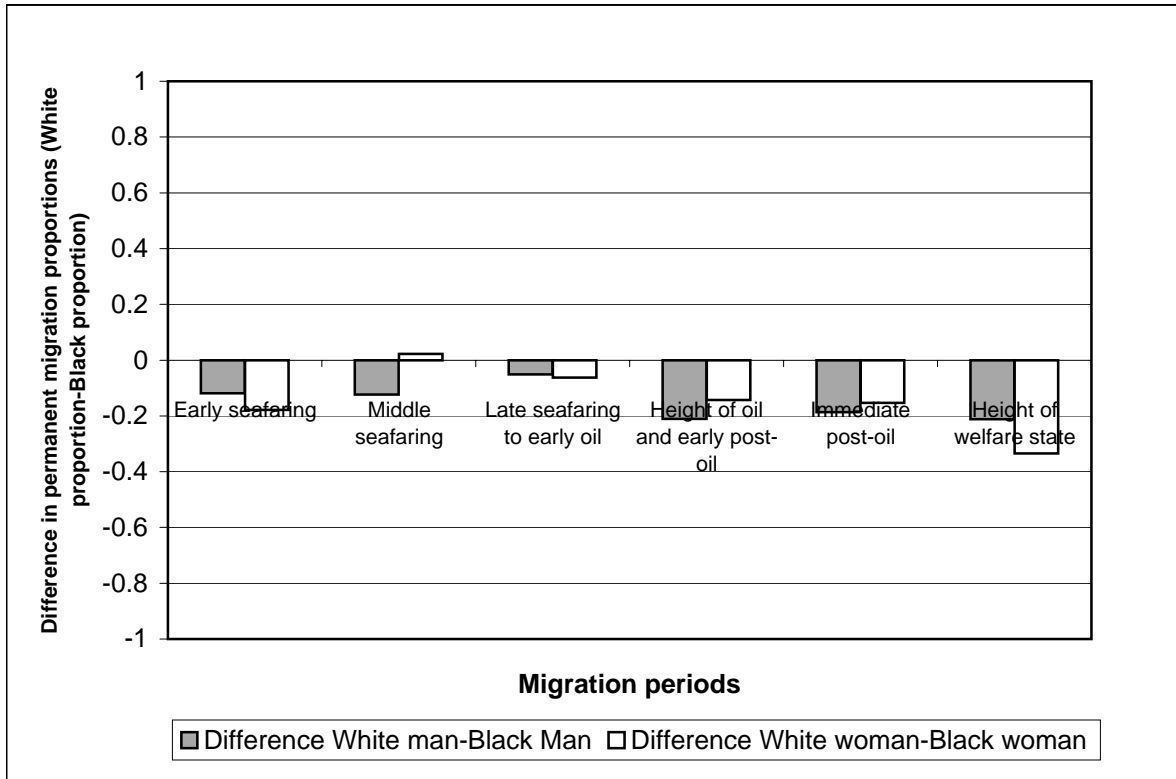
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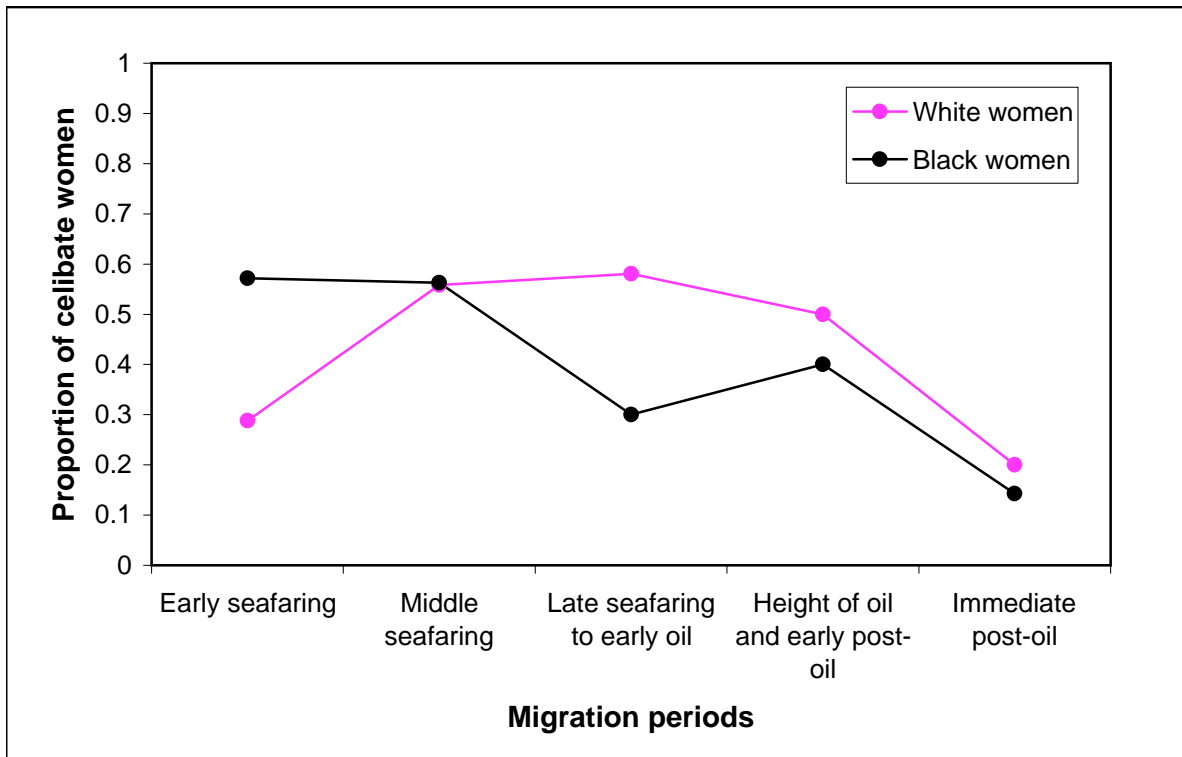
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*For the purposes of population projections, celibates are defined as childless unmarried women, infertile married women, and childless widows. However, childless unmarried women by far comprise the largest share of this group.
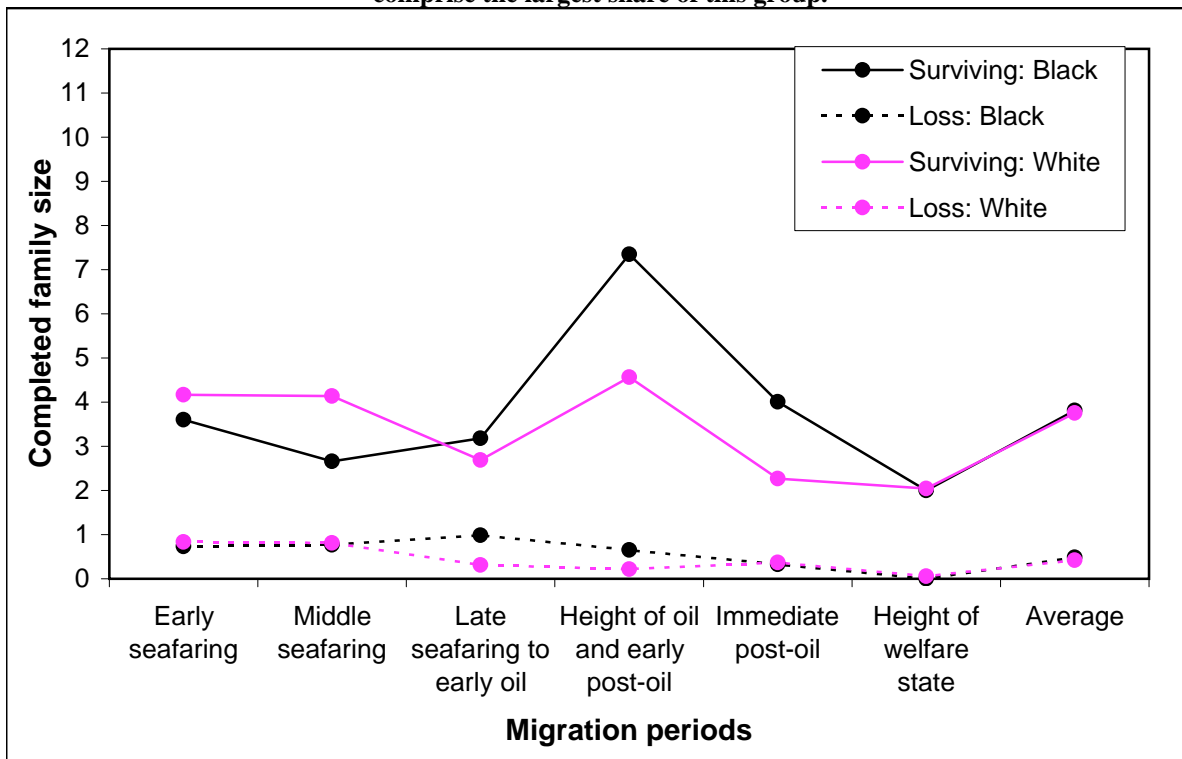
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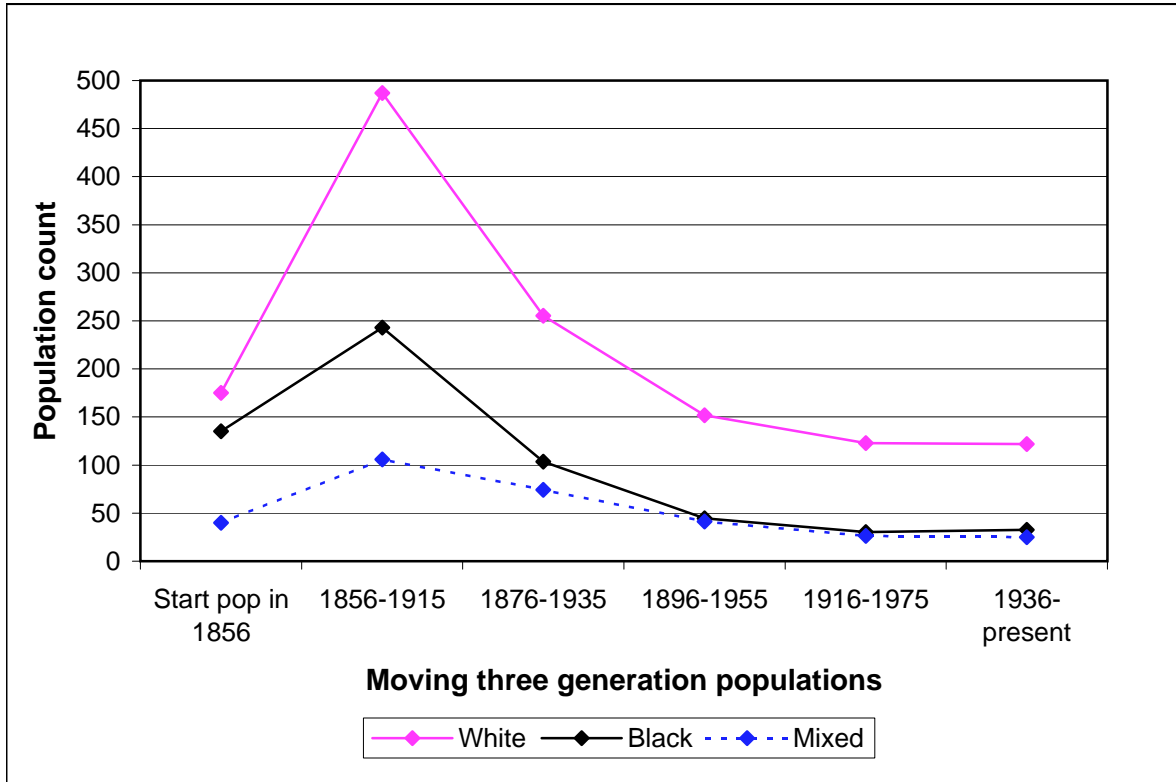
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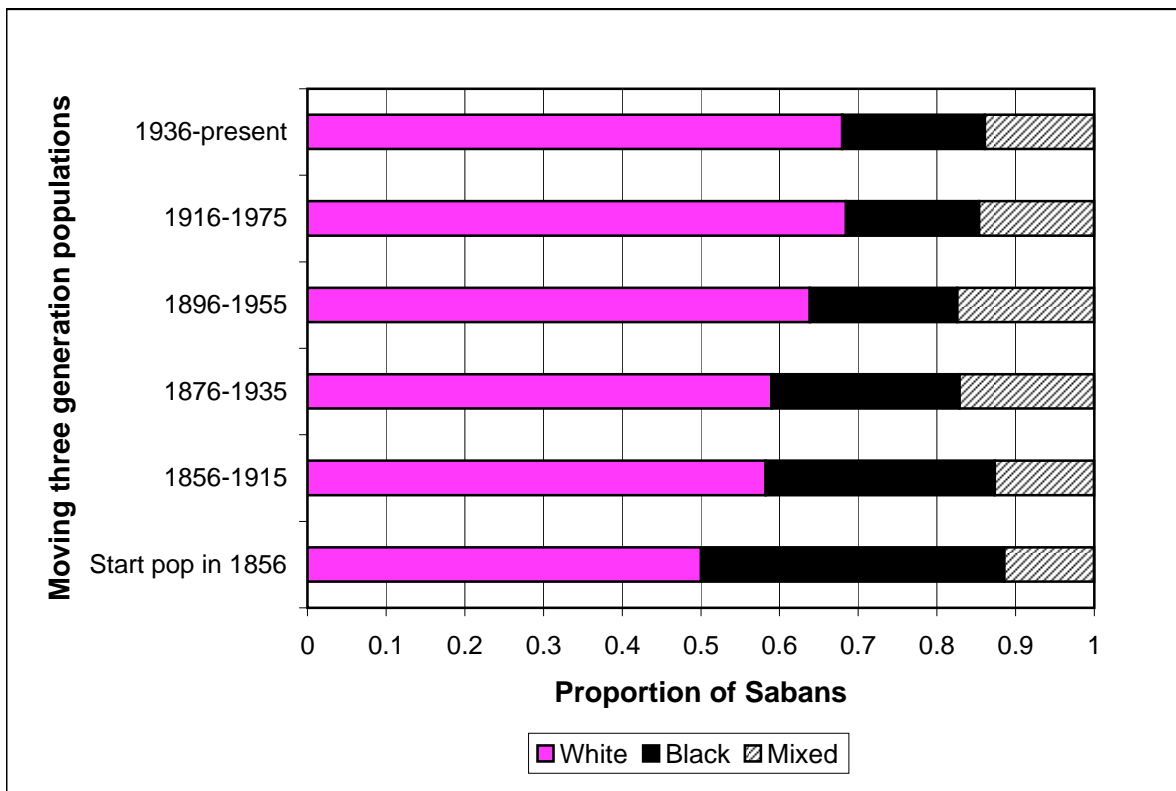
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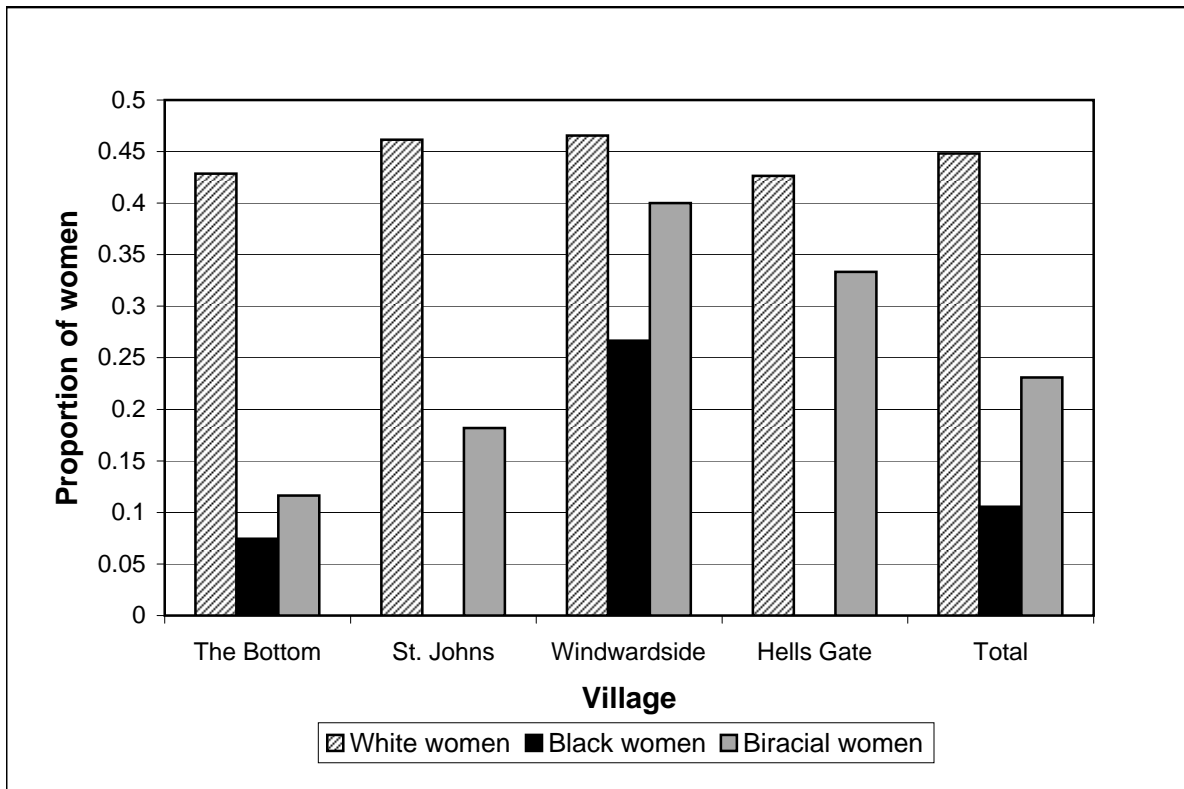
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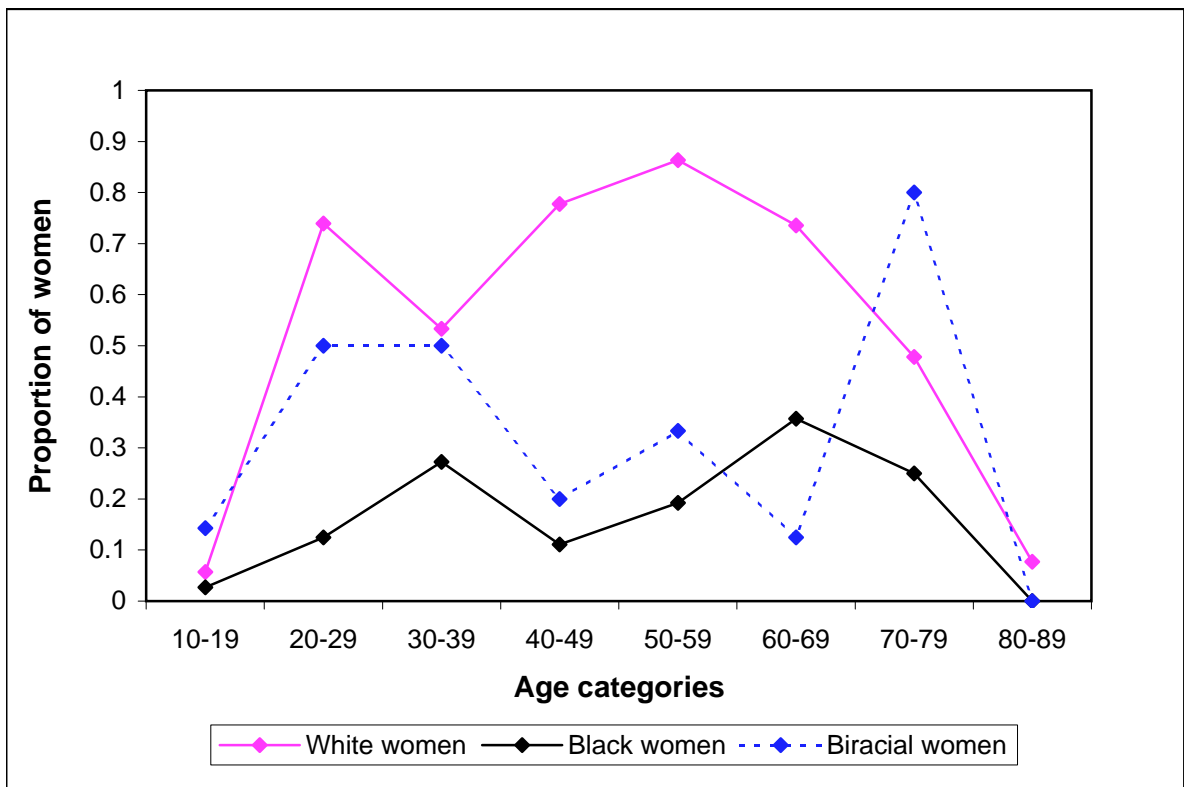
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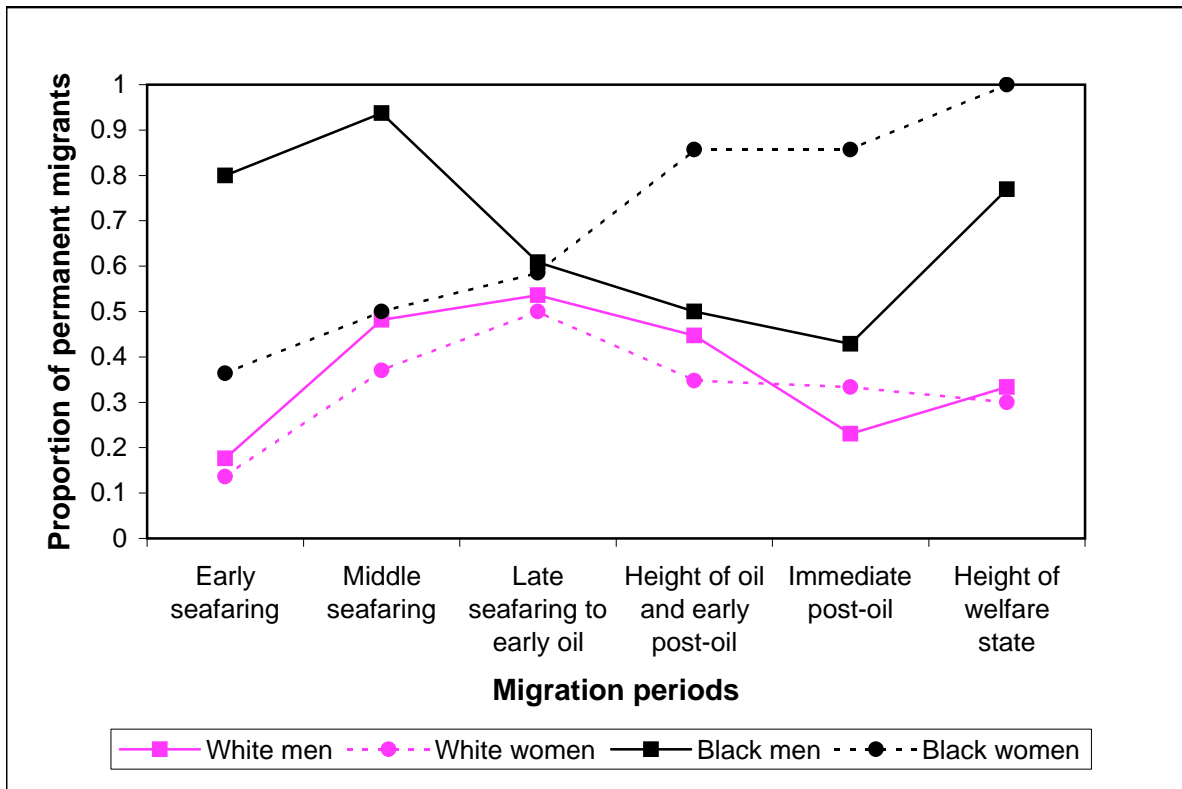
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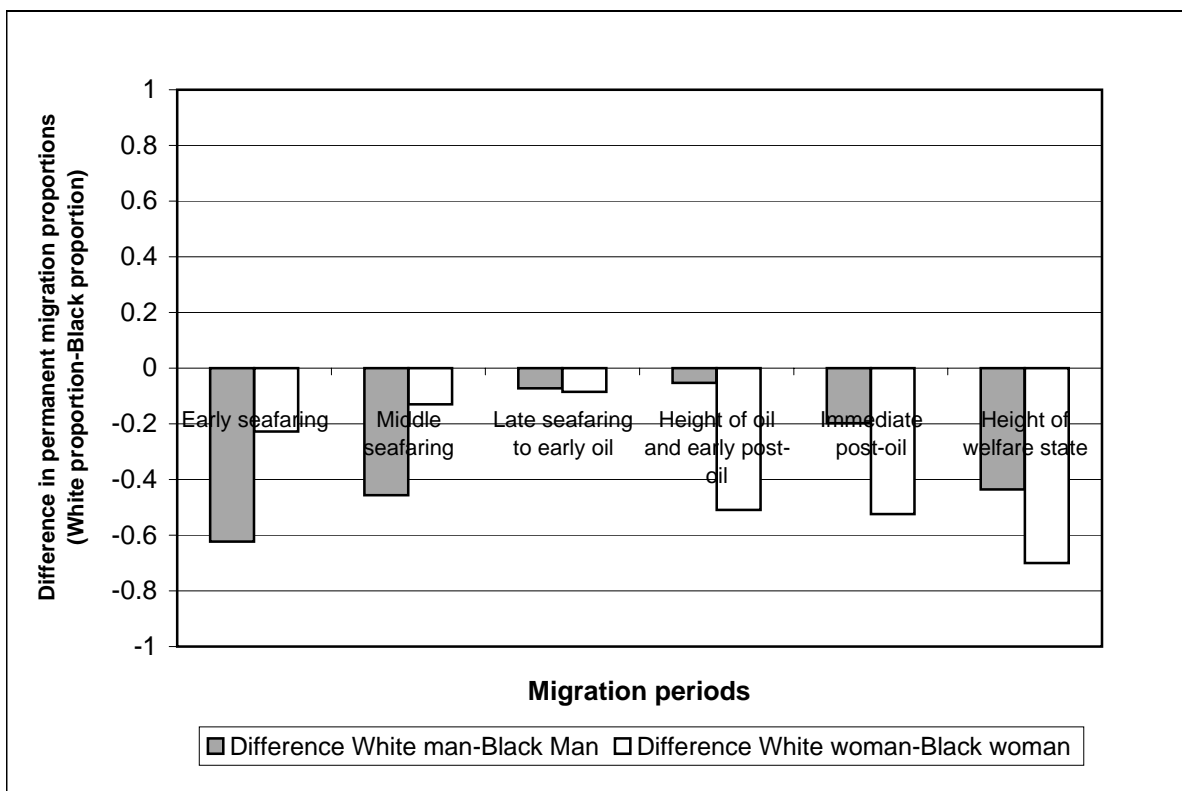
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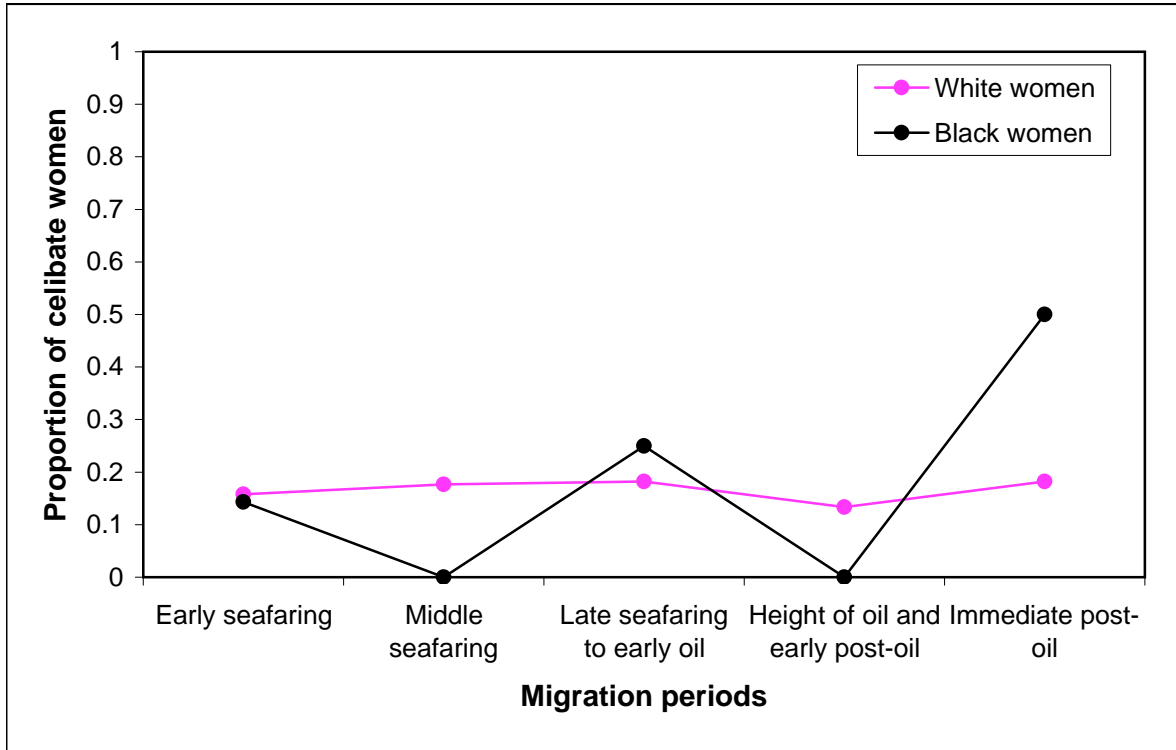
Figure 6.24: Celibacy*, Hells Gate
*For the purposes of population projections, celibates are defined as childless unmarried women,
infertile married women, and childless widows. However, childless unmarried women by far
comprise the largest share of this group.
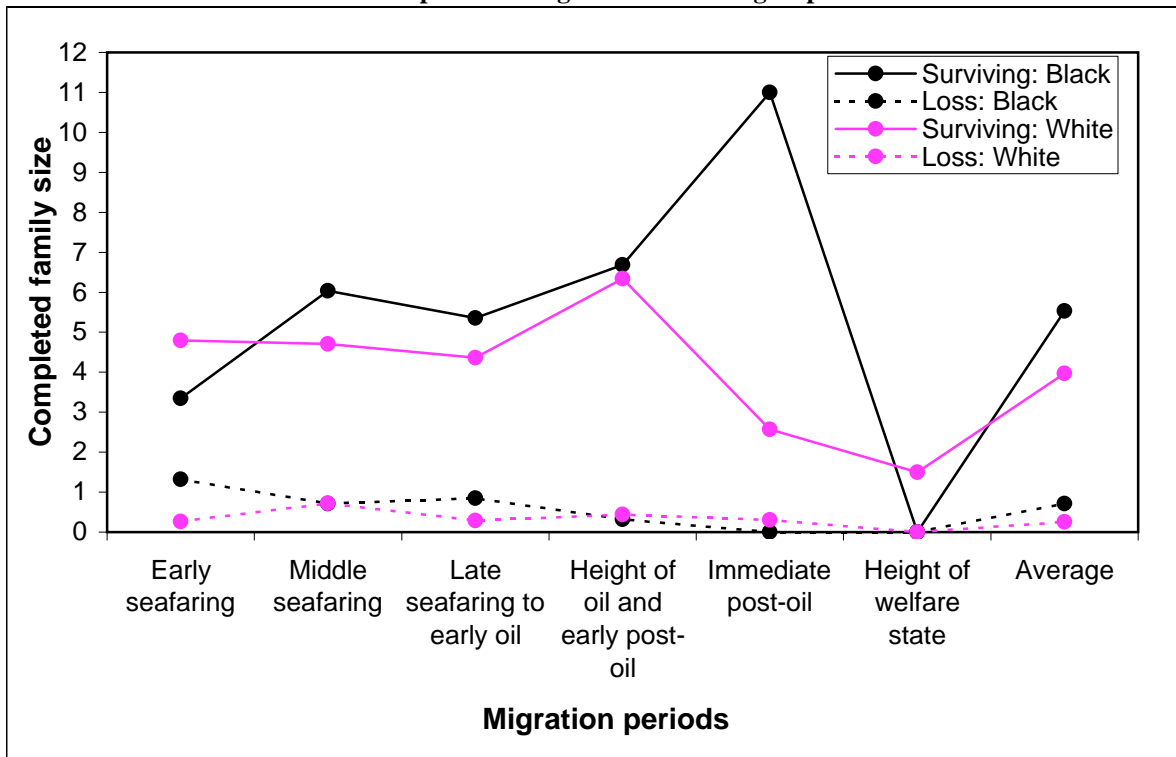
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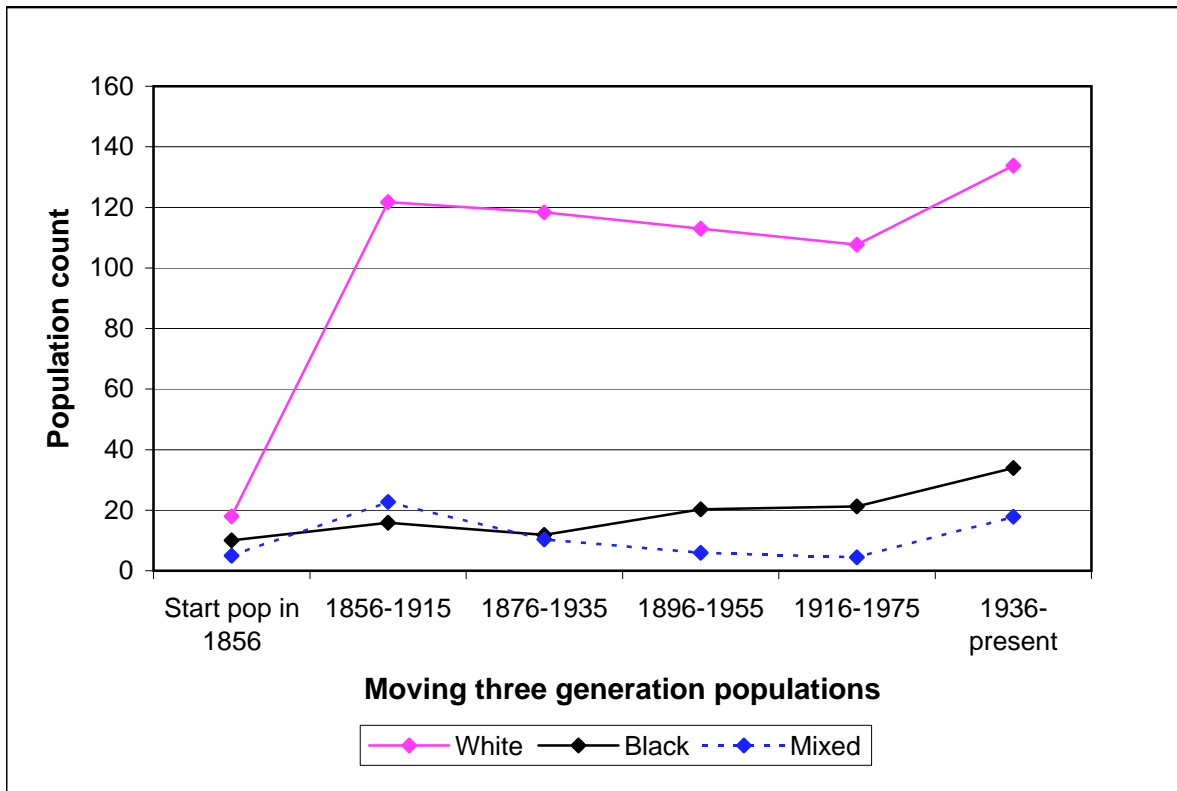
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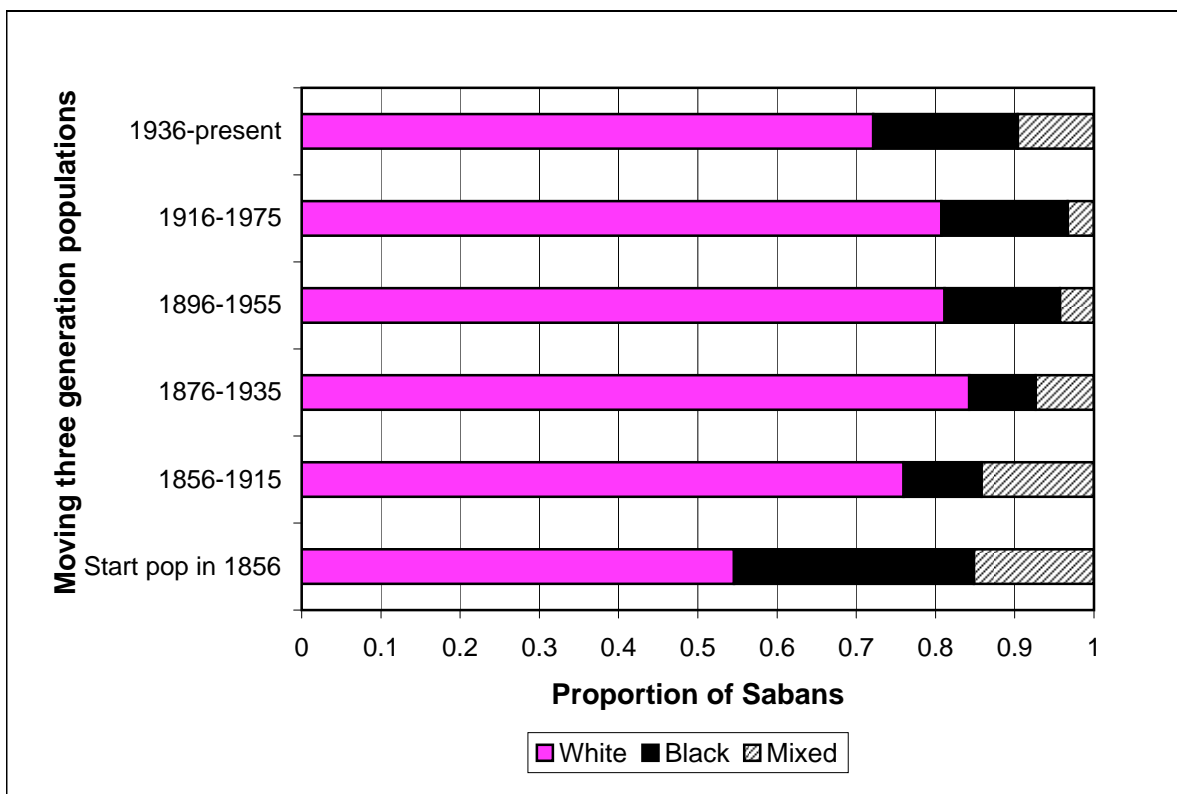
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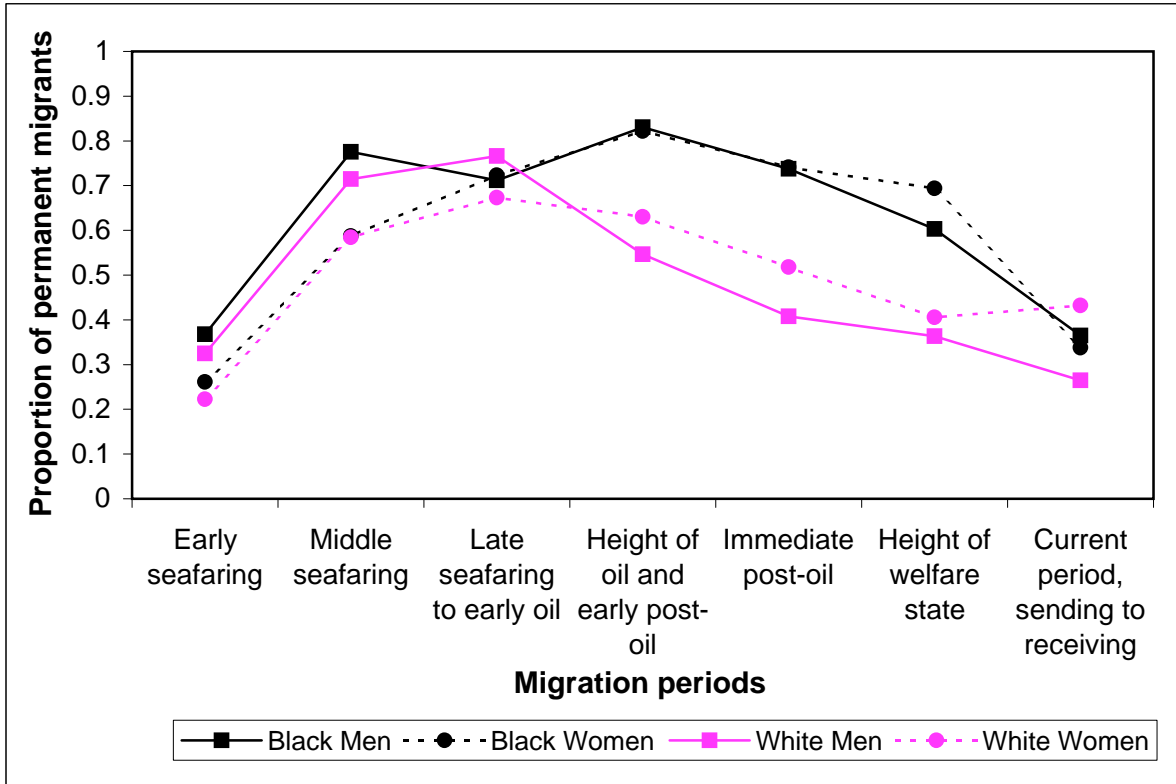
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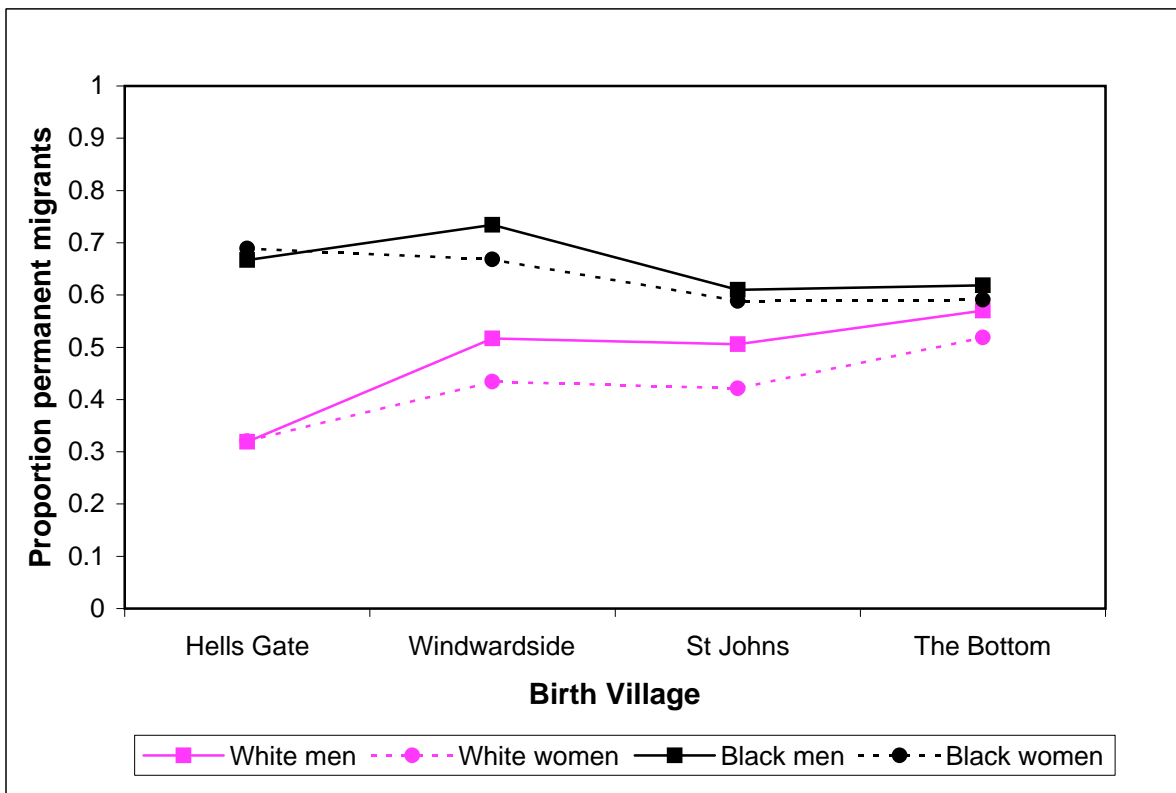
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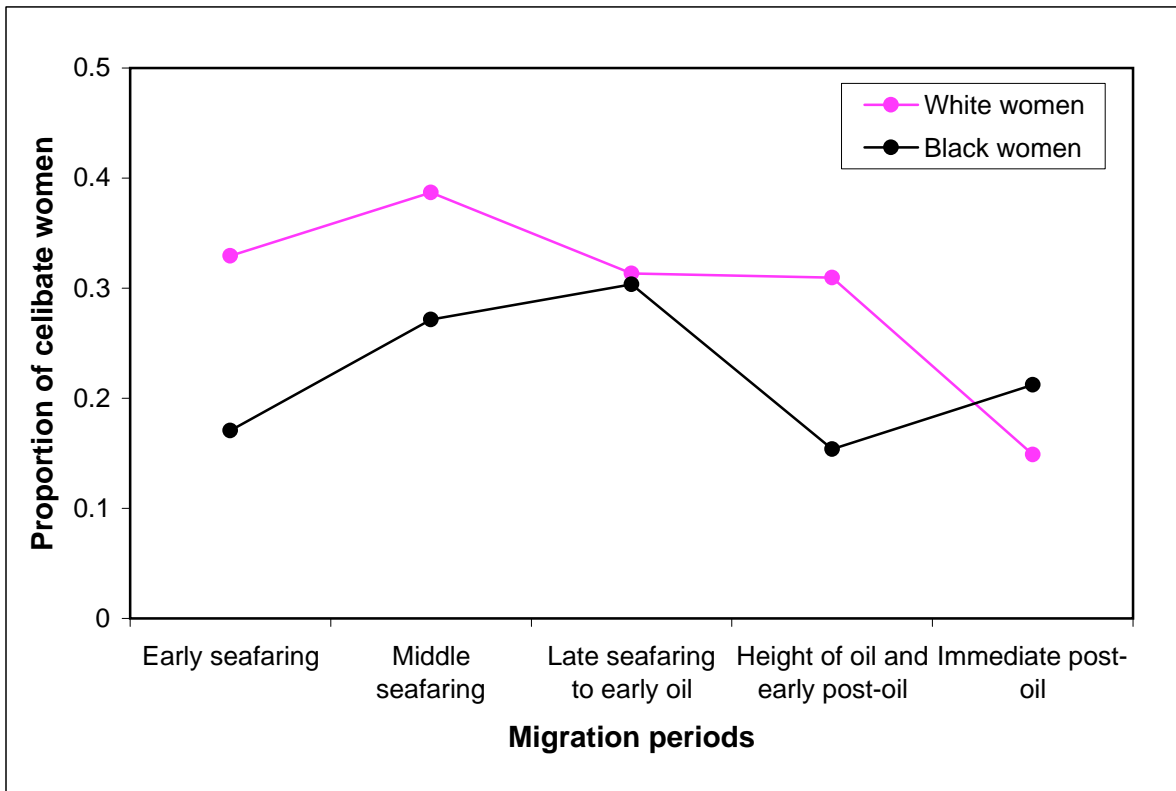
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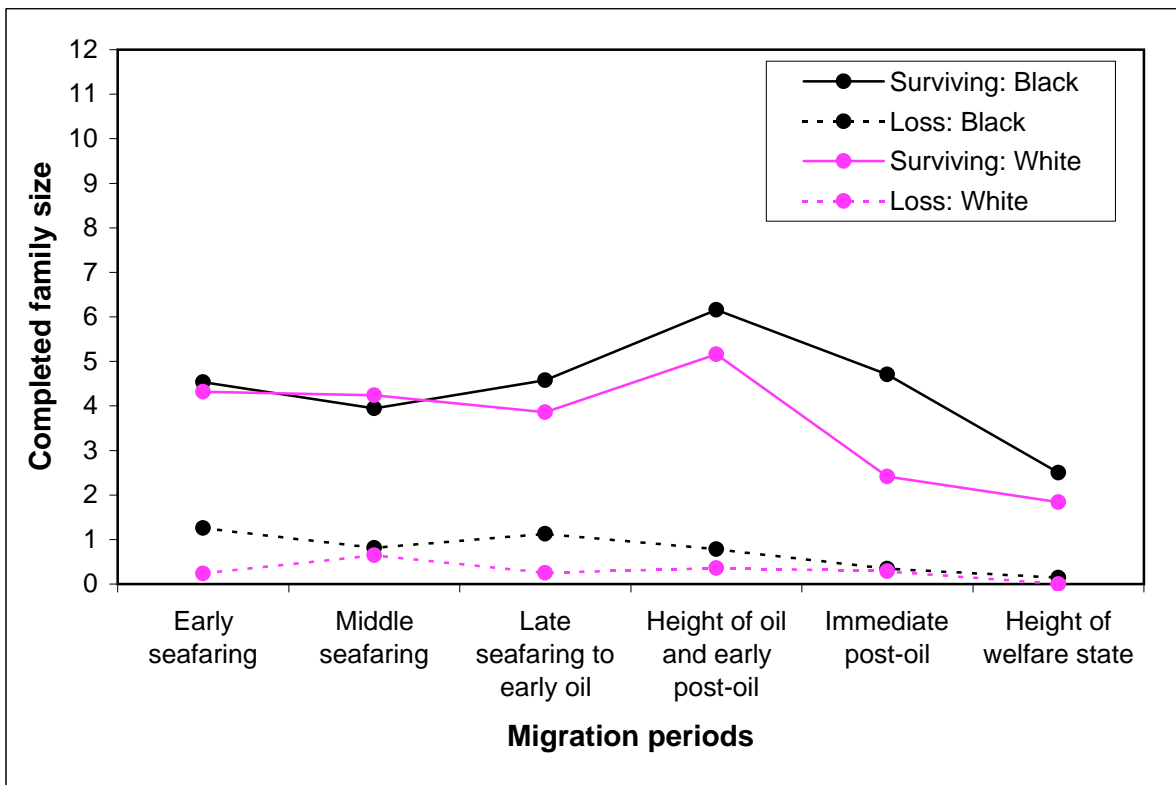
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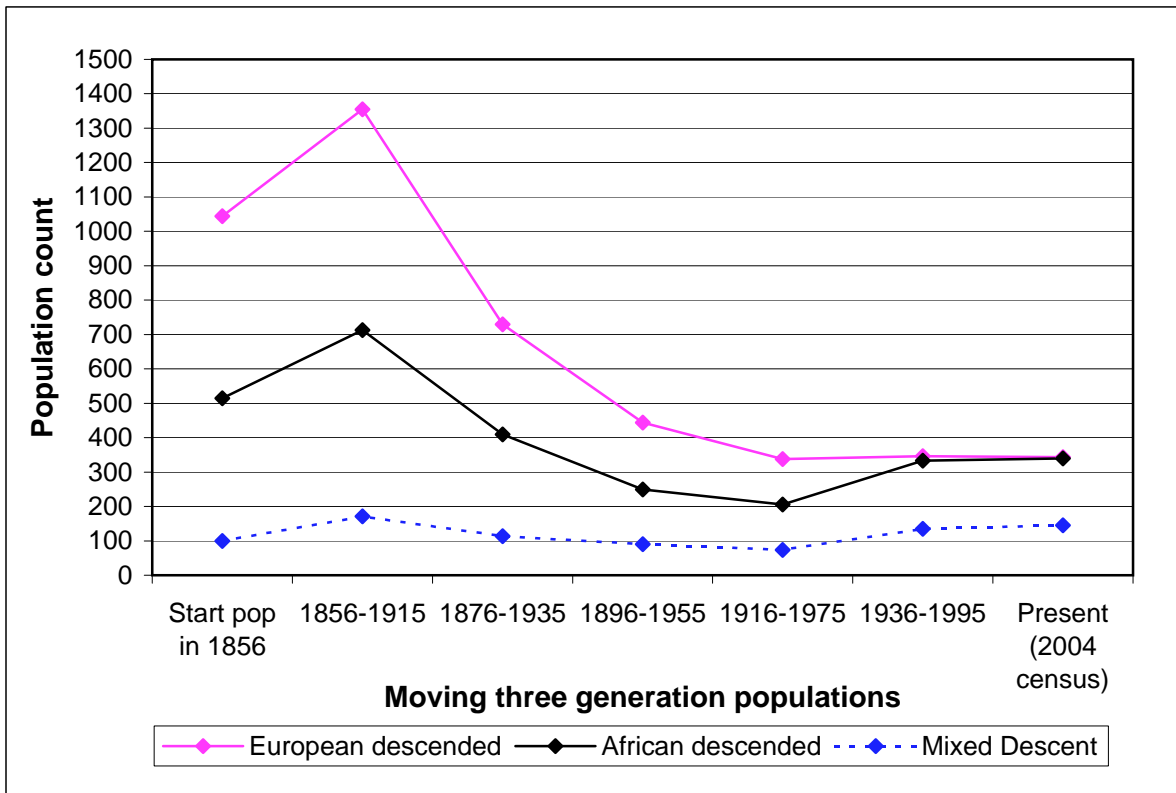
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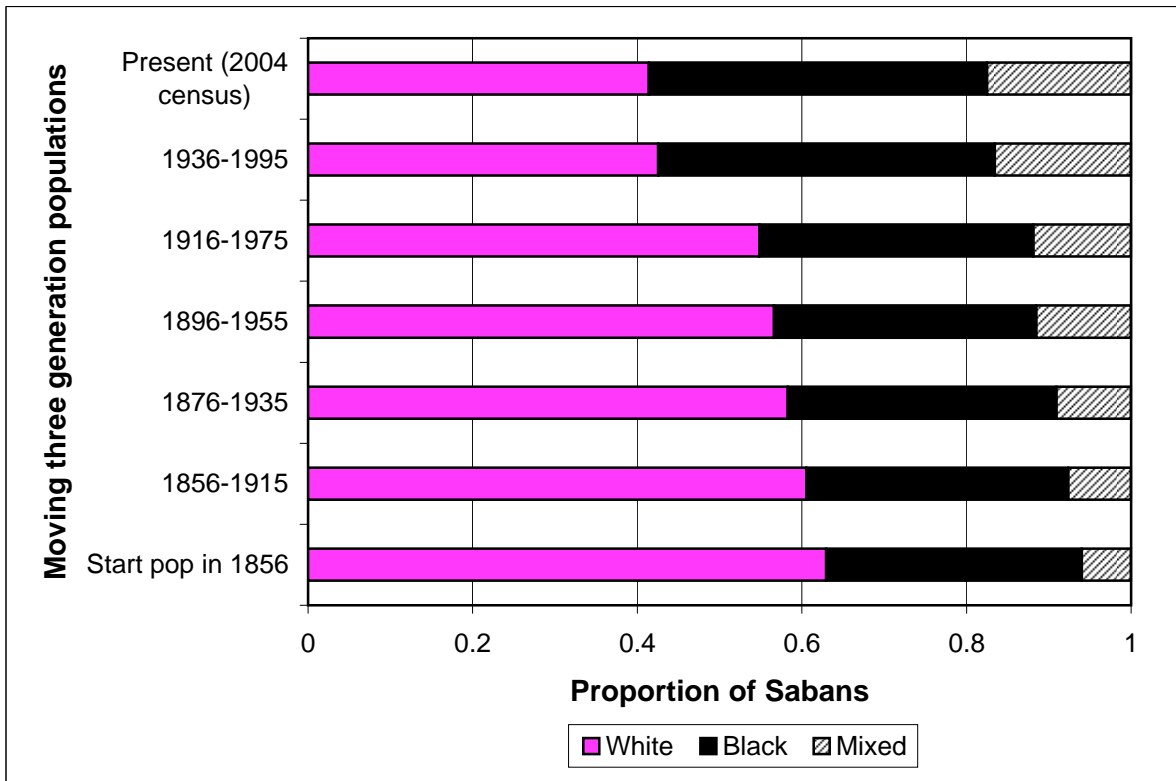
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CHAPTER 7

**AS ONE DOOR CLOSES OTHER DOORS OPEN: SABAN PARTICIPATION IN THE
CARIBBEAN OIL INDUSTRY (CA. 1917-1955) AND THE RISE OF THE WELFARE
STATE ON SABA (POST-1955)**

During the 1930s, the traditional seafaring industries declined in significance due both to

shifts in technology from wind to steam-powered ships that required less labor and shifts in

emigration laws that increased the difficulty of gaining entry into the United States. While this could

have been a time of great hardship and isolation on Saba, the development of the Caribbean oil

industry in the southern Dutch islands of Aruba and Curacao injected new economic opportunities

into the lives of all Sabans. Instead of casting their gaze towards the United States, many Sabans

began to forge dense regional migration networks with the southern Dutch islands and, for the first

time, the work of both men and women, black and white, became fully integrated into this emerging

labor regime. Relocating the center of economic power and migration possibilities into the Dutch-

owned Caribbean proved to be an important if relatively short-lived economic windfall for Sabans

from all sectors of society. When employment opportunities in the oil industries receded in the

1950s, Sabans were again faced with the challenges of surviving in a time when regional labor supply

vastly exceeded labor demands. The role of the island government soon assumed supreme economic

importance as a source of employment and effectively redistributed wealth drawn from Dutch coffers

through a variety of public works projects and social programs. Dependence on the government for

support allowed many Sabans to stay on island but it also created much angst in some sectors of the

population who felt a painful breech between the hard-working independent spirit of the agricultural

past and the new attitudes towards work and personal responsibility that rose with government

dependencies of various kinds. Generous programs that funded off-island higher education also

began to create a deep social split between those with the educational resources to compete for on- and off-island jobs and those who were not fortunate or motivated enough to secure higher education to open these possibilities. Highly educated Sabans tended to leave their island for better employment opportunities elsewhere and took much of the brain-trust developed at government expense with them. Like seafaring migration, the involvement of Sabans in the regional oil industry and in their economic adaptations in immediate post-oil period had a lasting impact on the size, structure, and family building experiences of the local Saban population.

Surveying the scene: The rise and fall of the Caribbean oil industry, the development of the Saban welfare state, and the evolving relationships between Saban migration and experiences of family life

In 1914, vast oil reserves were discovered along the shored of Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela but both the geographic and political situations within Venezuela were not deemed ideal for establishing refinery programs within the country itself. The physical proximity of both Aruba and Curacao to Venezuela, the presence of deep-water harbors that could support oil-related shipping traffic, and the relative stability of the Dutch-controlled governments of these islands made them prime candidates for integration into the regional oil-based economy. These economic and political conditions led to the establishment of a large refinery run by Curacaose Petroleum Industrie Maatschappij (C.P.I.M), a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, on the island of Curacao in 1917 and the establishment of an additional refinery controlled by Lago Oil and Transport Company, a Standard Oil Company of New Jersey partner, on the island of Aruba in 1923. Combined, these refineries became two of the largest producers of petroleum products at the time and processed nearly 750,000 barrels of crude oil a day. Shallow-draft tankers moved these vast quantities of crude oil from the extraction points in Venezuela and nearby Colombia to the islands of Aruba and Curacao that lay 100 to 200 miles to the southwest. Many Saban men worked aboard these ships and, in this way, continued to live their lives connected to the sea. The influx of laborers and oil-rich ex-pats from Holland and the United States also opened up new markets for a range of service industries and

domestic servants, in particular, were much in demand. With Saban men on the seas and in the refineries, Saban women began to engage in economic pursuits of their own by working in the homes and shops that came with a rapidly growing population. The insatiable desire for labor generated by the global lust for oil opened up financial opportunities for struggling Sabans and accelerated the depopulation of the island as a whole.

Sabans who remained on-island grew increasingly dependent on the remittances sent home by kin and women and children, in particular, relied heavily on remittance money from their husbands and partners living abroad. This is not to say that married and single women did not participate heavily in on- and off-island economic life but that the financial health of Saban households often partially reflected the successes and failures of men striving to fulfill the role of breadwinner through migration. In the context of increasing levels of non-marital childbearing, situations also frequently arose where unmarried women decided to leave their children with family on-island and migrate south to try to better the economic status of their families. Here, too, the fortunes of these women impacted the internal economic status of their on-island households. They sacrificed daily contact with their children to scrimp and save money in the hopes of easing their children's lives back home. Migration figures indicate that over 80% of black men and women were lost to permanent migration at the height of the oil industry, that 75% of black men and women in the immediate post-oil period left their island homes, and that 70% of black women and 60% of black men sought their fortunes on foreign shores at the height of the welfare state. By comparison, around 65% of white women and 55% of white men during the height of oil refinery migration, 50% of white women and 40% of white men in the immediate post-oil period, and 40% of white women and 35% of white men at the height of the welfare state were also enticed to leave their island home through the promise of securing a better employment and a higher standard of living off-island. The oil refinery period and the following post-oil periods mark the first time that black Sabans, as a whole, left the island in higher proportions than their white peers which suggests both a difficult on-island economy for many black Sabans and a real increase in the likelihood of securing comparatively lucrative employment through

migration to the oil islands of Aruba and Curacao. White men, however, appeared to have dug into their island lives more than in the past and soon became the least likely to permanently migrate from home throughout the oil and post-oil periods. Reasons for this are complex but center on the expansion of the white agricultural population on-island, the relative lack of off-island connections in the agricultural white community, their commitment to a farming lifestyle, and, in later times, the control of significant political and economic resources that allowed for a high level of entrepreneurship, access to well paid government jobs, or, at a minimum, access to family members who could provide jobs and government benefits to ease the difficulties of life. Of course, entrepreneurship and political favoritism happened in the black community as well, particularly in families that had amassed significant amounts of wealth through off-island labors and on-island investment, but the higher rate of migrant loss throughout the oil and post-oil periods suggests that many black Sabans were unable to tap into these kinds of political-economic resources and viewed migration as the best way out of a difficult economic situation.

In general, wealth generated from labor in the oil refineries was distributed unevenly due to racial, class, and gender discrimination in hiring practices and job advancement and on the particular characteristics and quirks of the men and women themselves. For some Sabans, work opportunities in the Dutch refinery on Curacao were thought to be less influenced by the politics of race than the American-run Lago company on Aruba. This spurred a segment of the black population to seek their fortunes with the Dutch on Curacao even though Saba, as a whole, remained strongly oriented towards the United States and shared an affinity with Americans more generally. Although difficult to pin-point the amount of revenue entering Saban households at the time, in 1956 Saba received money orders from the Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles that totaled $34,700 U.S. dollars or approximately $35 for every inhabitant. This accounting does not cover remittances from the States or elsewhere since these remittances were sent home in the form of cash by registered mail or in personal checks that were not monitored by the government (Keur and Keur, 1960: 135-136). Irrespective of the exact amount of income that remittances brought to Saba, it is clear that Sabans

during this time lived in the context of a vast and growing remittance economy that buoyed economic life on island and continued to draw Sabans into the outside world.

The dangers and instabilities of economies based on single resources, particularly those not locally controlled, are well known and Sabans soon felt the financial sting of declining labor demands in the Antillean oil-market. The hyper-dependence of these islands on the jobs and resources that oil created was apparent early on when observers in the 1950s estimated that 60% of Curacao's economy and 80% of Aruba's economy was based in this industry alone. When economic disruptions caused fluctuations in the demand for oil or when new technologies intervened in labor dynamics, the situation of both Windward and Leeward islanders became very tense and unstable. The first signs of problems on the horizon came at the height of The Great Depression when many Sabans on Curacao and Aruba became unemployed and without any means of supporting either themselves or their families (Keur and Keur, 1960: 144). To solve the problem of supporting a destitute and desperate class of unemployed people, the governments of the Leeward islands paid for the transport of Sabans to their home island where they at least had the means to plant, hunt goats, and fish to sustain life. The population on island swelled to an estimated 2000 people during this time but quickly reverted to a pattern of rapid and sustained decline when jobs again opened up in the southern islands.

At the peak of its labor needs, the Lago refinery alone employed up to 8,000 people with 6,200 working in refinery operations and the rest employed in construction or other supporting industries. The beginning of the end of this labor swell came when the Venezuelan government dredged the entry to Lake Maracaibo in the early 1950s. This program of successful dredging work allowed for the deployment of fully loaded ocean going tankers that could carry 300,000 barrels of crude oil on each voyage and, simultaneously, made the fleet of smaller shallow-draft tankers that carried only 25,000 barrels per trip obsolete. Fewer sailing men were needed to man this new fleet of mega-tankers and, as such, many of the jobs filled by Saban men suddenly dried up. Decreases in the demand for sailing labor also came at a time when job opportunities in the refineries themselves were on the decline due to advances in factory automation. With a shrinking and less financially secure

population, all of the related service industries also took a severe hit and many who had worked as domestics, shop clerks, or in other businesses saw their opportunities dissipate. Even though Sabans were given employment preference over non-Dutch citizens, the number of available jobs came to vastly outstrip demand and an air of protectionism came to dominate local politics. When asked to describe layoff policies in the 1960s, one public relations officer with Lago stated that "This is the Arubians' island, you know" and when pressed to elaborate added that "an Arubian who has been here a couple of years would be less likely to be fired than a person with twenty years from Saba or St. Maarten" (Crane, 1971: 80). In this climate of economic uncertainty, many Sabans opted or were forced to take small pensions that came with early retirement while others were dispatched from their long-time jobs without any financial support or cushion. This meant that some Sabans could come home to live quiet modest lives on their savings and pensions while others returned home in dire economic straights.

Because the oil industry, like the shipping industry, was not sustainable economic resource in the long term, Sabans once again felt the tremors of economic ebbs and flows that emanated from places outside their own tiny island and found new ways to cope with these challenges. Although regional economic opportunities slackened in the immediate post-oil period, 75% of black men and women, 50% of white women, and 40% of white men still migrated off-island to try their luck in foreign lands but these proportions dropped to 70% of black women, 60% of black men, and around 40% of white men and women as the welfare state took root on Saba. It is clear from these numbers that the black population, particularly black women, continued to suffer acute levels of economic distress, which compelled more black Sabans to leave the island, while more white Sabans were able to make ends meet even through difficult economic times. With fewer jobs available off-island, focus shifted towards the role of the government in providing on-island jobs through public works and other forms of government employment and, although almost everyone pursued one or more economic activity, the majority of Sabans who stayed on-island began to depend heavily on the government for support of one stripe or another (Tables 7.1-7.6, Figures 7.1-7.4; data derived from Julia Crane's 1964

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Household Census). A common mantra emerged at this time as Sabans remarked, with some consternation, that "In the old days you had to get your food from the ground and nobody knew there was a government. Now they just depend too much on the government." (Crane, 1971: 31). As this saying suggests, many people had very mixed feelings about the new role of government and, most of all, they loudly bemoaned a perceived decline in work ethic, especially amongst the young.

Variations in the ability to access political power and related pools of government-controlled money, including political favors that could facilitate the accumulation of money, also played into post-oil migration strategies, or lack thereof, as did the divergent orientations of the black and white populations to the possibilities and possible economic benefits of migrating, and the earlier limitation of family size through contraceptive use in the white community. Although the political process on-island has become more color-blind over the past few decades, early political participation in the immediate post-oil period and throughout much of the height of the welfare state favored white politicians and, by extension, white families who were highly interconnected with well-positioned family members. At the same time, declining family sizes in the white community meant that there were fewer white Sabans for the government to "take care of" while black families continued both to form at a higher rate through lower levels of celibacy (more families) and have more children than white families (higher average family size) which combined to produce more black children than the local government was willing or able to support. For example, white children born on Saba between 1916-1975 comprised just 35% of the total pre-migration population produced during these years while black children accounted for 51% and biracial children for 14% of the total pre-migration population. These pre-migration figures clearly show that more children of black and biracial descent were being born on Saba than white children and that the higher migration rates in the black population both slowed the transformation of Saba from a white majority to a black majority population and prevented the white Saban population from becoming a comparatively small minority group on Saba. Some clues as to why black Sabans continued to leave the island in droves exist in the employment survey conducted by Crane in 1964 and collectively suggest that white Sabans had

better access to both public and private sector jobs than their black peers. In fact, when looking only at the black and white populations on Saba, white Sabans comprised just 42% of the pre-migration working age population but occupied 62% of government jobs and 55% of private sector jobs listed in Crane's survey. Meanwhile, black Sabans comprised 58% of the pre-migration working age population but occupied just 38% of the government jobs and 45% of the private sector jobs available on-island (Tables 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.6).   While some of these discrepancies may reflect a preference among black Sabans for migrating rather than staying on-island and participating in the local public and private sector labor markets, a good deal of the difference was likely rooted in differential access to those local labor markets and the higher degree of control exercised by white Sabans who quickly adapted to the opportunities provided through the new political system. Although economic opportunities, particularly those generated through political participation and political favor, have become much more equal for black and white Sabans over the past few decades, these early days of the welfare state on-island clearly favored white Sabans and gave them the means to make a life on Saba when many members of the black population continued to look towards migration as their only way out of economic hardship. However, for those poor black and white Sabans who stayed, dependence on the government grew as social programs provided necessities like housing and grocery money and as the civil service expanded to provide a range of skilled and unskilled jobs as a means to redistribute wealth in the local population. While those who left continued to forge their own way in the world, many of those who stayed became deeply wrapped up in the logic of a European-style welfare state as those with power and access continued to manipulate the system to their socioeconomic benefit and those with limited resources continued to turn to the government for direct support through the provision of low-level jobs and direct aid but were not able to harness political-economic power to elevate their socioeconomic status.

Outside observers were universally critical of the impact that government interventions had had on the mentality and work ethic of the population of the Windward islands, as a whole, and officials from the Central Government on the oil-rich island of Curacao were particularly damning in

their assessments of their less fortunate compatriots. In 1955, nine members of the Staten in Curacao had these less than glowing things to say about the effects of devolving financial and political autonomy to the local level in 1951:

> This plan is a failure. Formerly the population lived quietly and contentedly, not so now. The islands were not capable of executing the plan. The spirit deteriorated as soon as political factors made their entrance. There is too great a party type of political organization; the general interest is neglected. Guidance is lacking. The economic situation in the islands has deteriorated. Since the start of the plan more than five million florins have been spent with little or no result. The suggestions of the plan were not followed. No requests were made to the Caribbean Commission for technical assistance. Connections between the islands continue to be poor. Property rights are as confused as ever. Education is fair, but the school curriculum is poor. Job counseling is needed; too many graduates become illiterate after four or five years. On Saba, with a total population of 1000, no less than four schools are maintained. There is a need for places where surplus crops could be stored and preserved to prevent the present spoilage. The percentage of foreign laborers (mostly girls) is too high. Roads are poorly maintained, moneys are not spent efficiently. It is easier to earn a "living" by doing relief work. The policy of no import duties on the islands is too liberal. People have the idea that much can be obtained for nothing; they show little activity or initiative. (Keur and Keur, 1960: 52-53)

Another assessment in the same year was equally disapproving and noted that:

> The administrative changes which have taken place on the Windwards have not produced expected results. Elements are at work which have poisoned the mental state and spirit of the people. Under the motto of "autonomy" changes have taken place in attitudes towards work and government support. The inhabitants should be made to understand that he who does not work shall not eat. Relief should be a thing of the past; obstructionism should not be tolerated. There should be a strong and potent local government which is capable of bearing responsibility. People should work reasonably and productively under the direction of qualified experts and foremen. This is to the advantage not only of the Windwards themselves, but also to the taxpayers of the Leewards. (Keur and Keur, 1960: 53)

In their own assessment of the situation, Keur and Keur (1960: 89) asserted that government labor provided direct competition to the island's agricultural base and summed up the situation like this:

> Many persons have become accustomed to look to the local government for aid and support. The strongly paternalistic policy of the government has superceded functionally the old plantation system whereby the needs of the workers, and formerly the slaves, were cared for by the owner. Thus, the stimulus to develop personal initiative has been, and still is, lacking. Since the local governments of the three Windward Islands are not geared to, or in sympathy with, the development of agriculture, and since the wages paid for fewer hours of less arduous work are higher than a farmer can pay, labor is drawn away from the soil to projects of road building and repair, street cleaning,

boatloading, etc. The governments appear to tolerate shirking, irregular working hours, and low output. Why would a man work harder on the land for longer hours and less pay? Actually, as a result of its wage and work policy, the government is in direct competition with agriculture, and fosters for many the desideratum of a well-subsidized laziness.

Although speaking of the Dutch Windward Islands in general, the system of government work and government aid was in full swing on Saba and the problems that had arisen did not escape the attention of Sabans themselves. During Crane's stay on the island from 1964-1965, she noted that the government was the largest single source of employment and economic support and employed up to 80 people at any one time with a total of about 30 full-time employees and the rest working "on changes" (Crane, 1971: 102). The demand for government work reached such a high level that a system of two weeks on-two weeks off had to be implemented in the name of fairness. The vast number of employees worked construction jobs on The Road but others drove government jeeps, kept government grounds, or did other odd-jobs on government property. The pay scale depended on skill level and marital status, with married men commanding larger salaries, but work on the road started at about 5 guilders a day and skilled labor like carpentry could fetch 12-15 guilders per day. This seemed like big money for less work compared to the earning potential and labor demands of a farming life and became too strong of a draw for many men and their families to resist. However, Sabans, like many the outside observers, were not altogether pleased with the status quo and expressed many reservations about the impact of big government on community life.

Social anxieties about the decline of agricultural self-sufficiency and the rise of government dependency surfaced repeatedly in the post-oil period as younger Sabans came to identify modernity with a cash-based economy that actively marginalized the social and economic value of unpaid agricultural work. By the early 1950s, even those who kept active in some sector of the agricultural economy often did so as a sideline and, in fact, 28 of 79 Saban farmers worked in the ground as a means to supplement the income they generated from other jobs (Keur and Keur, 1960: 75-76). At this time, most farmers tilled their own fields but 40% worked other people's land as well and traded shares of crops to landowners in order to secure access to sufficiently large plots. Agricultural labor

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was cooperative and reciprocal rather than paid as farmers, their friends, and their family members all pitched in to ensure a successful harvest. Mixed farms that included a range of crops and one or two cows were the norm and the size of farms varied from a low of about one acre in The Bottom to a high of three acres in Hells Gate (Keur and Keur, 1960: 75). This reflects historical patterns of land tenure and availability but also indicates a stronger commitment to a farming lifestyle in the majority-white eastern parts of the island where a sense of dignity and pride surrounded the reaping of a good crop. However, farming was hard, unpredictable, dirty work and Saban youth began to feel that "the old people worked too hard" for too little in these increasingly low-status agricultural occupations (Crane, 1971: 103). These factors combined to make the seemingly assured and regular income of government labor all the more attractive. Anxieties about agricultural decline accelerated amongst the older generation as the passion for farming visibly waned across the island and as more and more Sabans openly expressed a preference for relying on intermittent low-wage government labor and government handouts. People thought aloud: What would happen if Sabans lost their ability to farm and the government coffers ran dry? How would Sabans survive? Because Saban men had always demonstrated their manhood through hard work either in the ground or off-island, the transition from self-sufficiency to government dependency also truly cut to the heart of what it meant to be a man in Saban society and threatened to undermine the economic and social status of men in their families. As such, changes in patterns of men's labor, in particular, were the target of much social discussion and, often, social disapproval and this continues to be the case today.

Women tended to remain economically active in their traditional forms of labor with white women gravitating towards drawn-thread work and black women continuing to work as domestics or small-scale producers of baked goods, candies, and the like. Since government jobs for women were few and far between, government dependency for women either ran through the labor of their men or took the form of receiving poor money or old-age pensions from the government. This acted as a kind of double dependency where women found themselves dependent not only on the labor decisions and opportunities of their men but also of decisions made by governmental officials, who, it

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should be noted, were also almost exclusively male. The ability of a woman to rise above poor

economic circumstances without the aid of contributing men or the government was seriously

curtailed because they were barred access to the most lucrative on-island jobs. Crane (1971: 118)

describes the economic situation of women during this time as follows:

> The economic position of most women is very poor indeed when compared with
> that of men. Whereas a daily wage for unskilled men and boys over fifteen is seldom
> lower than five guilders (about two and one-half United States dollars), many women
> who do housework and laundry or work in shops receive wages ranging from twenty
> guilders plus food to about seventy guilders per month. Only a handful of women receive
> wages over one hundred guilders per month.

The low pay-scale of women's jobs reflects the on-going societal belief that women's work and the

money it produced was supplementary rather than primary in the economics of the household.

Although white and black women suffered from this widespread belief, black women, in particular,

continued to be paid very poorly for their hard domestic labor. Since labor, itself, was stratified by

race on Saba, the economic and social struggles of poor black women remained largely invisible to

those of other social classes who not only devalued laboring in the hard and dirty work of domestic

service as "what those other people do" but who also had little sympathy for the growing number of

unmarried women who were left as sole providers for their families. Whether conscious or not, these

attitudes made life all the more difficult for poorer black women who had no other labor alternatives

available to them on-island and likely sparked the departure of many black women who hoped to find

better opportunities away from home. White women, however, were equally disadvantaged from an

economic perspective even if their labor was seen as more acceptable in its adherence to certain

feminine ideals. Although many white women continued to produce drawn-thread work for sale to

tourists and to other foreigners abroad, the changing economics of this industry meant that women

faced a growing problem of diminishing returns. While many older and middle-aged women

continued to insist, rightly, that Saba Lace kept the island afloat in the lean years of high male

migration and inconsistent male contributions to household maintenance, the reality of the situation in

the mid-19th century led economic observers to classify those doing drawn-thread work as semi-

unemployed (Crane, 1971: 119). In her own observations of the drawn-thread work trade, Crane (1971: 49) describes the situation as follows:

> Some drawn thread work was sold to the few visitors to the island, and some by mail to various places; but much the greatest portion was sold in the United States. The economic life of the whole island was, therefore, very much affected by conditions in the United States, and, particularly by the falling purchase power of the dollar. Very early, the services of the young girls came to be used for some of the earlier parts of the work, particularly hemstitching, a custom which continues today. Women who are now grown tell of having to hurry home from school each afternoon and start hemstitching as quickly as possible. Their usual output for an afternoon and a bit of the evening was the hemstitching of one handkerchief, for which they received the equivalent of about two and a half American cents. Because of the high cost of linen imported from England or Ireland, charges made for the cashing of checks received in payment, and the necessity of paying postage to mail the articles to buyers, the margin of profit for drawn thread work has always been small. In a great many cases, too, people had no customers of their own and had to rely on women who received large orders from the United States to farm some of the work out to them. In this case, of course, the worked receiver a bit less because the women who received the order made a small share of the profit. In 1965, some women reported that they had been doing drawn thread work for thirty or forty years and had been lucky enough to get only four or five orders themselves, all the rest of their work having been done for fellow Sabians who received big orders.

Despite these economic limitations, a large segment of the white female population on Saba continued to reap minimal profits from this tedious eye-straining work. Although the weight of historical inertia certainly played a role in the maintenance of this labor form despite its obvious drawbacks, the lack of viable socially acceptable labor alternatives also kept many white women and young girls in their homes with their linen, needles, and thread. The government emphasis on employing men as family providers led to the development of male-only work on The Road as the largest single source of government employment and left all women, black or white, outside the direct stream of government largess. The racialized structure of women's work and the strong social pressure for white women to remain isolated in their homes made other forms of labor outside the home equally unacceptable even if they generated similar amounts of income. While all women suffered from gender discrimination in labor practices, the split between working inside and outside the home differentially structured the work and social experiences of white and black women in very important ways. Keur and Keur (1960: 253-254) note that in the early 1950s only 8-10% of white women questioned had ever worked either outside their homes or off of Saba while 47% of black women questioned reported working outside the home and 22% of these had experiences working

off-island. Despite increasing participation of all women in the labor force on Saba, many white women continue to struggle with the conflicting desires of wanting or needing to work outside of the home while simultaneously striving to fulfill the expectations of domesticity placed on them by their husbands, their families, and society at large. Many black women move between their working and family lives with far fewer social sanctions and this freedom is undoubtedly rooted in their long history of participating in work outside of the home and on the intergenerational history that positioned many black women as the financial heads of their own households.

For a small minority of Sabans, attention focused on obtaining government-funded advanced degrees through secondary education on Aruba and Curacao and, later, through university-level education mainly in the United States and Holland. While the various forms of government welfare kept people at home from bearing the burdens of real poverty and, in many ways, created an artificial bubble of economic protection around Saban residents, increasing emphasis on education continued to produce a smaller but steady flow of Saban migrants who had the knowledge to compete for high-skill jobs in the regional and global economies. In combination, these streams of response to the economic situation on Saba created an atmosphere of increasing economic and mental dependence on government largess among those who stayed and a heightened desire to leave Saba among those citizens who had invested time, money, and energy in the pursuit of higher education. The extreme irony of these departures was not lost on Sabans as they were well aware that substantial government investment in education tended to produce very little in the way of on-island contributions of highly educated Sabans. This situation arose because most educated Sabans came to feel that they could not find suitably intellectually or financially rewarding professions on-island and, thus, spent the bulk of their working lives, if not the remainder of their lives, away from home. Along with lingering issues of racial and class-based discrimination, Saba became more and more segregated between those with education and those without. Those without educations settled into life in low paying, low-skill government and private sector jobs while their educated peers established themselves in comparably lucrative professions overseas. In this way, Saba as a whole became saddled with enormous public

expenditures that served as a buffer against complete economic collapse and an increasingly

inefficient civil service packed with Sabans who had little formal education and minimal personal

exposure to life off-island.

While government expanded on island and highly educated Sabans departed, a new form of

development through tourism began to trickle into Saba. Tourism had brought rapid economic

development to their neighbors in St. Maarten, but it had also increased both the external influences

filtering into St. Maarten society and the level of crime and other social problems that opening to the

outside world can bring. While Sabans longed to elevate their economic status, they desperately

wanted to avoid the pitfalls of rapid socioeconomic change via tourism. The topography of the

island, the lack of beaches, and the lack of general infrastructure meant that the pace of change was

slowed but, like the transition away from agriculture, the threat and promise of change through the

tourism industry loomed large on the mental maps of many Sabans. In the late 1950s, Keur and Keur

(1960: 120-122) surveyed the current undeveloped state of the tourism industry on Saba and her sister

island of Statia like this:

> Hotel facilities are extremely limited on Saba and St. Eustatius. The
> government guest houses in The Bottom, Windwardside and Oranjestad can
> accommodate only for or five persons each. Saba can be reached only by boat, viz. once
> a month by steamer, twice a week by government mail schooner, or by privately
> chartered launch from St. Maarten. The final transfer to a rowboat in order to reach the
> landing place on Saba is a rough adventure, with the constant threat of soaking by the
> breakers. But in spite of such difficulties, more than 100 determined tourists manage to
> visit the island each year. Returning to St. Maarten is often uncertain, especially during
> the hurricane season when people occasionally have been marooned on Saba for a week
> or more…Saba would be an ideal escapist's spot for artists, writers and people who want
> "to get away from it all", if accommodations were improved and communications were
> less hazardous…Tourism is in its initial stages, and up to 1958, has had a very limited
> effect upon the economy of the islands in general; nor has it impinged upon the lives or
> well-being of individual islanders to any appreciable extent.

Just a few short years later, things had begun to change as Crane (1971: 123) shares a much rosier

picture of the future of the Saban tourism industry even though the basic problems of topography and

access remain:

> The one field of economic endeavor to which Saba looks forward is the tourist
> industry. Until early 1965 there were only two guest houses, one in The Bottom and one
> in Windwardside, both of which had originally been opened by the government but had

come under private managements. Two women in The Bottom also occasionally took tourists into their homes. In February of 1965, however, a small but attractive guest house was opened in The Bottom by a Sabian who had retired from the Lago refinery in Aruba. In December of 1965, a larger hotel with a swimming pool opened in Windwardside. Many Sabians were employed in its construction; and eight local people have been put on the staff. This hotel is largely financed and run by Americans. The few visitors who have reached the island in the past have always been enthusiastic; but the great difficulty in reaching Saba, the lack of certainty about getting out again, and the lack of beaches for swimming or golf courses and other sports facilities have combined to discourage most would-be visitors. With increased airplane service and a swimming pool already in existence and facilities for sport fishing in the planning stage, Saba hopes for many visitors.

On-island development for the tourist trade was not limited to the construction of guesthouses and other specialized facilities. The development of the island's own infrastructure also quickened the pace of tourism on Saba by supplying both the prospective guest and the local population with increased access to transportation, electricity, and telecommunications services. So, in a very real way, building roads and connecting houses to a power supply not only helped ease life for local villagers but also increased the attractiveness of Saba as a tourist destination for travelers who expected certain luxuries in life. The first segment of The Road was completed in 1945 and linked the village of The Bottom to Fort Bay. Slowly, The Road wound its way east across the island as it reached St. Johns in 1951, Windwardside a short time later, and punched through Hells Gate by the end of 1957. In 1963, on-going road construction connected the newly minted airport at Flat Point with the village of Hells Gate that lay just above and, in 1964, plane service to Saba recorded a total of 396 landings for an average of over one a day (Crane, 1971: 85-86). In the same year enterprising young Sabans established the Saba Electric Company which first supplied five hours of daily service to residents of The Bottom but soon connected the other villages to this modern convenience (Crane, 1971: 88)

In the early years after The Road was completed, passengers traveling the steep inclines and tricky switch backs did so mainly on the power of their own two legs, or four hooves or paws, as the case may be. However, increased automobile traffic soon became a fact of life on Saba. The first jeep made its way to Saba in 1947, by 1965 there was a total of 49 licensed automobiles on island and, by 2003, an incredible sum of 679 vehicles was registered on-island. In the beginning, however,

the influx of cars and trucks had little tangible effect on many local people because the price of catching a ride amounted to a full day's pay and the expense of maintaining an automobile proved prohibitive for the vast majority of Sabans (Crane, 1971: 85, 88). Mechanized movement between villages was confined to those with means or those with connections and this restriction, in part, helped to maintain the strong sense of village identity despite the increased physical connectivity among the villages. However, even those without access to regular transportation were changed by the encroachment of the outside world. The impact of this interface can be seen in the following excerpts of a humorous childhood story about The Great Sheep as recounted by a prominent islander:

> 'Hear it a'comin'', someone shouted. And, indeed, I too could hear it a-comin', but what it was I could not imagine, until a square thing with a man sitting on top of it burst around the corner, while I took off as fast as I could through the bushes for the closest tree, and didn't stop until I reached the top. With tears flowing like water I waited until the noise went away, before venturing to look down from the tree. I wasn't the only one in it. There were at least three older boys perched in the lower branches, watering the tree with their tears and crying out loud enough to drown the noise of The Great Sheep. It was many weeks later, after plotting a thorough approach, that I ventured within fifty feet of the monster. The greatest thrill of all came when I finally mustered the courage, along with a few other boys, to run up to it, touch it, and then take off with lightening speed to the nearest tree. It seemed like a lifetime before I was able to produce enough boldness to sit on it and get my first jeep ride. (Johnson, 1989: 109)

His description of a beloved older black man's response to The Great Sheep shows a growing generation gap in the ways that islanders responded to "modern" things entering their small communities:

> When he grew too old to walk and the first jeep arrived on Saba, his former white colleagues rigged up a rocking chair to two long poles, and brought him on tier shoulders from English Quarter, to see the pride of Saba, its jeep. In disgust, Nix looked it over and asked them to carry him back home to die. His quiet world had been shattered by the noisy jeep and he wanted no part of it. (Johnson, 1989: 105)

It is clear from the juxtaposition of these two responses that young and old alike found themselves bewildered by the changes happening on their small island. A seamless transition between the slow-paced agricultural past and the up-tempo modernized present was not possible and, while many younger Sabans welcomed these changes as the promise of a brighter future, many older Sabans felt an acute rupture between the only life they had known and a new way of life that lay just over the horizon.

The historical experiences of Sabans during the waning days of seafaring migration, the rise and fall of oil industry employment, and the subsequent entrenchment of widespread government dependency for those who stayed on-island created the socioeconomic environment that surrounded and gave rise to a range of Saban family forms connected to but different from the past. As Sabans transitioned from a seafaring to oil-centered economy, family sizes in the black and white communities averaged around four surviving children in the white community and 4.5 surviving children in the black community but during the height of oil refinery migration and the subsequent decline of oil-related migration opportunities in the early 1950s, family sizes in both communities increased to just over 5 children per white family and just over 6 children per black family due to earlier entry into motherhood, a decline in the separation of partners by migration, and a lack of contraceptive availability or use. In some cases, high fertility coupled with decreased work opportunities led to increasing poverty in large lower class families in both the black and white communities. Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, Saban women began to exercise direct control over their fertility through modern contraception which led to a sharp decline in completed family sizes in both the black and white communities. Although black families moved from an average of about six children per family during the decline of oil industry migration to an average of around 4.5 in the immediate post-oil period, fertility restriction was far more pronounced in the white community and resulted in the halving of family size from about 5 children per family to just under 2.5 in the space of a few decades (Figures 7.5-7.7). Interestingly, age-trends in childbearing suggest that Saban women used modern contraception not to delay entry into motherhood at an early age but, instead, to restrict childbearing after the desired family size was achieved (Figures 7.6, 7.7). While husbands remained, on average, about six years older than their wives, age at marriage for black women dropped about three years from a high of almost 27 years in the late seafaring/early oil times to a low of about 24 years in the immediate post-oil period before elevating slightly to around 26 years in the past few decades. For white women, age at first marriage peaked at 25 years under conditions of sustained seafaring migration and then dropped to 23 years during early oil times and, again, to 22 years at the

end of oil refinery migration and the movement into a post-oil welfare state (Figure 7.8). Age at first

birth followed a similar trend in both communities and, for black women, fell from about 24 years at

the height of seafaring migration and the early stages of oil refinery migration, to 23 years at the end

of oil refinery migration, and to just 21 years in the post-oil period. For white women, age at first

birth elevated slightly from about 24 years to 25 years during the transition to an oil economy but

then steadily dropped to around 22 years in the post-oil period (Figure 7.9). These trends show a

pattern of earlier entry into motherhood and wifehood, particularly in the post-oil period, than was

witnessed in the past coupled with a continuing pattern of significantly older men marrying very

young women. Collectively, this suggest that most of women's experiences in the oil and post-oil

periods revolved around their roles as mothers both within and outside the context of marriage until

quite recently and that married women and women in other kinds of partnerships remained in largely

subservient socioeconomic positions to their older and, in some cases, more worldly men.

On the whole, the institution of marriage and marital childbearing as a cornerstone of family

life remained strong in the white community during oil refinery and early post-oil times but became

less dominant in the black population (Figures 7.10-7.14). While white Sabans adhered to a pattern

of marriage before childbearing, black Sabans, particularly those of lesser means, began to gravitate

towards family forms founded on visiting relationships and, occasionally, on consensual cohabitation

that produced children outside of marriage. In the later days of seafaring migration and the early days

of oil refinery migration, 55% of black children were being born outside of marriage and 65% of

childbearing women had at least one non-marital birth in their lifetimes (Figures 7.10, 7.11). When

looking at the total population of black Saban women during this transitional time, 30% remained

celibate, 25% had children only within the context of marriage, and 46% had at least one child

without being married (Table 7.15). Of women who had children outside of marriage, almost 60%

coming of age during the late seafaring and early oil refinery days did eventually marry which marks

a significant increase from just 20% in the early days of seafaring and 40% in the seafaring period

just prior to the opening of the refineries on Aruba and Curacao. About 20% of these delayed

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marriages took place within 4 years of having a first child and 35% occurred between 5-9 years, but the substantial remainder occurred only after 10 or more years of non-marital child-raising and over 20% happened after 20 or more years (Figure 7.12). Despite the propensity to marry, many black women were faced with the reality that they would be responsible for raising their children largely in the absence of a regularly contributing long-term spouse and this situation is reflected in the fact that 22% of women at this time either had children but never married or married only after children were grown (Figure 7.13, Table 7.15). The combined effects of life-long celibacy and childbearing without eventual marriage meant that almost half of all black women coming of age during late seafaring and early oil refinery times had no experience with marriage at any point in their lives (Figure 7.14)

At the height of oil industry migration and during the early days of its decline, about 45% of black children were born outside of marriage but nearly 80% of childbearing black women experienced a non-marital birth at some point in their lives even though 60% did eventually marry (Figures 7.10, 7.11). In the total population of black women coming of age at the height of oil refinery migration, just 15% remained celibate, 20% had children only within the context of marriage, and 65% had children without being married and either married later or not at all (Table 7.15). The slight decline in the proportion of black children born outside of marriage during the height of oil industry migration coupled with the fact that about 80% of black women had one or more non-marital children suggests that although non-marital childbearing became a more common experience for black women under conditions of later oil refinery migration, that the socioeconomic climate of these times did promote eventual marriage and the transition into marital childbearing and marital unions as the basis of family life. In fact, about 20% of eventually-married women coming of age and starting their families outside of the context of marriage during oil refinery times transitioned into marriage within 4 years of having their first child and additional 35% entered into marital unions between 5-9 years after having their first child. However, 20% delayed marriage for 20 or more years which suggests that a segment of black Saban women came to view marriage as a social commitment that was only appropriate or feasible after childbearing and childrearing were complete (Figure 7.12).

Despite the fact that a substantial proportion of black women who had non-marital children during the peak of oil refinery migration and in the early years of its decline did marry, 27% of the total population of black women had children but never married and 8% only married 20 or more years after starting their families (Figure 7.13, Table 7.15). Put another way, the prevailing socioeconomic circumstances during the height of the oil refinery period produced a situation where 35% of the total population of black women found themselves raising children outside the context of marriage either permanently or for extended periods of time, usually as single mothers, and where the conditions of non-marital family life became more widespread than at any time in the past. Despite this clear elevation in long-term single motherhood in the black community during the height of oil refinery migration, increased affluence as a result of oil refinery labor and remittances meant that only 35% of black women never experienced marriage at any point in their lives. However, a simultaneous halving of the proportion of celibate black women from 30 to 15% of the total population of black women meant not only that a higher proportion of black women were having families in the absence of a marital partner than ever before but also that celibacy as a cultural response to the difficulties finding a marital partner before childbearing was on the decline in the black community (Figure 7.14, Table 7.15).

In the immediate post-oil period, the proportion of non-marital children in the black community grew by 15% to encompass 60% of all children born during this time and this proportion increased to close to 70% at the height of the welfare state on-island (Figure 7.10). Despite this elevation in the proportion of children being born outside marriage in the black community during post-oil times, the proportion of childbearing women having children outside of marriage declined from almost 80% in late oil-refinery times to 60% in the immediate post-oil period before again elevating to around 75% the height of the welfare state while the proportion of women married after having non-marital children dropped to around 30% in the immediate post-oil period before rebounding to around 60% at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.11). From the perspective of the total population of black women in the immediate post-oil period, 21% remained celibate, 32%

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had children only within the context of marriage, and 47% had children without being married of which just over 30% became long-term single mothers (Figure 7.13, Table 7.15). During the height of the welfare state, these proportions shifted to 20% celibate, 19% exclusively marital, and 61% non-marital with about 29% of the female population becoming long-term single mothers (Figure 7.13, Table 7.15). For black women who started their families outside of marriage during post-oil times but who eventually became married, 75% were married within 9 years of having their first child. Of this group of women who delayed marriage, 30% were married within 4 years of bearing their first child and 45% were married between 5-9 years of becoming mothers while about 40% of all black women in post-oil times have no record of ever marrying (Figures 7.12, 7.14). While the proportion of all women having children outside of marriage dropped to 60% in the immediate post-oil period, non-marital childbearing became an even more common childbearing practice in at the height of the welfare state with 76% of all childbearing black women experiencing one or more non-marital births at that time. Trends in patterns of marriage and the elevation in the proportion of non-marital children born at this time reveal several competing patterns of family formation processes extant in the black community.

It is clear that more black women started having children exclusively within the context of marriage in the immediate post-oil period and that more women who had children outside of marriage never married and remained long-term single mothers. Combined, this indicates that the institution of marriage rebounded as a model of family life in the immediate post-oil period and suggests that more black Sabans experienced the social and economic conditions deemed necessary for marriage during this time. However, the path to eventual marriage became much more difficult for women who had children outside of marriage and just 30% of women who had children outside of marriage eventually married. This radical shift away from marriage after childbearing suggests either that women simply did not feel the need or desire to marry in these situations or that increasingly negative social attitudes about non-marital childbearing in a time of increased marital childbearing made it difficult to recover respectability after having one or more children outside of marriage. Apart from social disapproval,

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many men who might otherwise have forgiven such transgressions may have thought twice about taking on the responsibility of raising another man's child or children and these barriers to marriage are still operating in the lives of many non-marital childbearing women today. As the welfare state came to dominate Sabans' lives in the post-oil period, non-marital childbearing rose substantially but about 60% of women who had children outside of marriage did eventually marry. Many women who had non-marital children were selected into marriage earlier than in the prior periods, usually within 5 years, which contrasts sharply with the decade or more delays experienced during seafaring and oil refinery times. This suggests that, although the practice of having non-marital children was on the rise, the movement into marriage was still a strong social value and just over half of black women did form nuclear families within marriage just a few years after having their first child. However, it is important to stress that almost half of non-marital childbearing women never entered marital relationships or only did so many years after having children which suggests real social differences in the experiences of non-marital childbearing women who were selected early into marriage versus those who either never married or only married much later in life. While black women who married before having children and those who married shortly thereafter followed a similar family formation pattern to the nuclear model that dominated the white community, 27% of black women at the height of oil refinery migration, 31% of black women in the immediate post-oil period, and 26% at the height of the welfare state had children but never had the opportunity or desire to marry (Figure 7.13, Table 7.15). The presence of a high proportion of long-term single mothers and mothers who entered marriage years if not decades after having children meant that about half of black children on Saba grew up in non-marital arrangements for at least part if not all of their childhood lives and that non-marital models of family life were the norm for children born and raised in these homes. In this way, marriage, fertility, and class became deeply intertwined in the childbearing and childrearing patterns of the black community and non-marital childbearing and long-term single motherhood became a marker of lower-class status within the black population and, increasingly, a signifier of race that divided the black and white populations on island.

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The rise of non-marital childbearing and single-mother families in the black community are complex phenomena that took shape within the shifting socioeconomic landscapes of the oil and post-oil periods. Although non-marital childbearing signified socioeconomic disadvantage in many circumstances, mobility and economic independence among young black women did play a major role in the growth of non-marital childbearing in the black community at this time as black women from all sectors of society became both more capable of supporting their own families through on- and off-island labor and less reliant on men for their economic well-being. Increasing diasporic interactions with other Caribbean cultural forms and related family styles also exposed a large number of black Saban men and women to alternative family building strategies not founded on marriage or on men as the primary economic or emotional centers of family life. Although these family building models had always been present on Saba, they began to reemerge forcefully in the black community during oil and post-oil times and began to have a major impact on the structure of black families on-island. As more black Sabans adopted these lifeways they reinforced and sustained an intergenerational cycle of single-motherhood by modeling these behaviors for their own children who, in turn, often repeated the pattern. Since most black Sabans grew up in non-marital households for significant periods of time, it also became more difficult for black Saban women from marital homes to find partners who had similar perspectives on family life and more women from marital homes were either forced or chose to build non-marital families in their own adult lives. However, the fact that many black women became the socioeconomic centers of their families in oil refinery and post-oil times did not mean that black Saban women were in any way socially empowered or free from myriad forms of social and economic patriarchal domination also experienced by their white counterparts or by better-off peers from the black community. The development of an I-can-do-it-on-my-own attitude in a large segment of the black female population, particularly the poor, was largely rooted in the failure of many men to play their traditional provider role in black families and the subsequent recognition that someone was going to have to pick up the slack. In reality, the social and economic marginalization of black women made the road to self-sufficiency very difficult throughout

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most of this period and it is only through hard work, dedication, and economic creativity that many black women found a way to shoulder the burden of supporting their families in the absence of their children's fathers.

Although a trend towards decoupling marriage and childbearing gained strength in the black community in the oil and post-oil periods, the fact that about half of black women who had children outside of marriage ultimately married later in life indicates a strong and persistent desire to enter marriage both as a means to provide support for their children and to have the security of knowing that they had a partner to share their lives with after their children had grown and left the home. The tensions between the ambiguities of women's independence as single mothers and the lingering desire to find a life long partner suggest that many black women still carried a sense of older family traditions and the status they conveyed in the back of their minds and acted on them when they felt the opportunity was right. Lengthy delays often coincided with the belief that marriage was appropriate only after the children had grown or after financial situations improved to support the expense of a traditional wedding or the building of a family home. In these circumstances, marriage came to signify "setting a good example" for grown children, a milestone achieved through financial stability, and the solidification of often long-standing relationships between a man and a woman who looked forward to spending the rest of their days together in peace and mutual companionship. Becoming married, however, was far from universal and about 40% of black Saban women coming of age during oil and post-oil times have no record of every marrying (Figure 7.14).

In contrast to these family formation changes and increased female mobility in the black community, members from the white community either stayed put in their Saban social spheres and family traditions or moved in social circles off island that did not initially challenge their traditional family building practices or the supremacy of marriage and the nuclear family. This meant that all of the social rigidities, particularly those involving "proper" female behavior, continued to be instilled in white women across the island and, given that social transgressions like non-marital or interracial childbearing were rare and swiftly sanctioned, few white women ever questioned the status quo.

While marriage was not possible for many white women during seafaring times, a decline in migration and an evening out of the sex ratio across the island made marriage nearly universal by the close of the oil refinery period and only 10% of white women did not marry post-oil period compared to 40% of black women who remained single (Figure 7.14). Non-marital childbearing did elevate during oil refinery and post-oil times and the proportion of childbearing white women experiencing a non-marital birth moved from 10% during seafaring times to 20% during oil and early post-oil times to 40% at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.11). The proportion of white children born outside of marriage fluctuated between 5-10% across this period of time before dipping to zero over the past ten years which indicates that many of the non-marital births experienced by white women involved interracial relationships and biracial children (Figure 7.10). From the perspective of the total white female population, about 6% of white women had children outside of marriage during late seafaring and early oil refinery times, 13% during the height of the oil refinery period, 17% in the immediate post-oil period and 35% at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.13, Table 7.16). At the height of oil refinery migration, marriage followed non-marital childbearing almost universally but during the height of the welfare state only half of white women who had children outside of marriage eventually married. While marriage formed the foundation of almost all childbearing white women's family experiences, the proportion of single white women raising their own families did increase from less than 5% of all white women throughout the late seafaring and oil refinery times to around 7% in the immediate post-oil period to around 18% during the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.13, Table 7.16). Convergence with black patterns of non-marital family formation now characterizes family life for a many young white women, most of whom are involved in interracial relationships and who have biracial children, and this radical departure from traditional family formation practices in the white community has become the topic of much debate in Saban society. Because the trend has emerged largely over the past few decades, it will be discussed at length in Chapter 9 and it is important to reiterate that white Saban families remained attached to the practice of marriage before childbearing throughout most of oil refinery and post-oil times with the only significant change being that more

white women had the opportunity to marry as male migration rates declined in the post-oil period. In many ways, although black families continued to be formed in the context of marriage or to move from non-marital to a marital state, alternative family forms and non-marital childbearing became a signifier of both race and class in the Saban community under conditions of oil refinery migration and the rise of the welfare state and family building choices began to actively draw lines between whites and blacks and among different socioeconomic groups within the black community.

Throughout the oil refinery period and the development of the post-oil welfare state, social experience on Saba remained very much defined not only by who you were but in where you lived and each community responded to these broad socioeconomic changes in changes in unique yet sometimes overlapping ways. Although the completion of The Road that connects Fort Bay in The Bottom to the airport in Hells Gate allowed for freer movement among villages and easier transportation between Saba and other places, the long history of village isolation had already left its mark on each population and continued to be a salient social force even in changing times. Labor and migration histories, in particular the density of intra-village family-based migration networks, also continued to orient Sabans to the world in ways that reflected the structure of both historical and contemporary socioeconomic opportunities. These experiences of work, movement, and family still resonate in the present tense and give meaning to Sabans who came of age steeped in the history of their villages, their island, and the historical relationships that generations before forged with the wider world.

Oil refinery migration, the emergence of the welfare state, and family life: The Bottom

As the curtain closed on an extended period of seafaring migration, The Bottom was left with a largely black population of varying means, a residual population of aging elite white women and male retirees, and a group of homogeneously poor rural whites who were relocated from the outpost of Mary Point. All of these groups had experienced the socioeconomic transitions related to seafaring migration in different ways and these experiences helped form their relationships to their island and

the world beyond. For the black population, life continued to be a struggle on island despite the increased availability of both land and property in and around the village. The connections that black migrants made were mostly regional and their experiences off-island tended to be confined to lower level jobs that carried high risk and low financial rewards. Still, many believed that these opportunities exceeded those on Saba and members of the black population continued to leave the island in staggering numbers. For the white population, the resident population of elites maintained strong orientation and ties with the United States and took pride in the fact that members of their families had become people of consequence in America and throughout the Caribbean. For those who had never been abroad and for the few who returned, these grand successes highlighted the smallness of their own island lives and reinforced the belief that Saba was a quiet, peaceful but backwards place that lay outside the mainstream of modern life. Mary Point people had been peripherally integrated into seafaring migration but their outlook was less expansive and success-driven than their high status peers. Like the black population, migration became more of an issue of survival than social advancement but the racial affiliation of Mary Point people did give them an advantage in a world structured by beliefs in racial hierarchies and white superiority. This is the historical substrate that positioned each of these groups of Bottom people to engage in oil refinery migration and, after its decline, to participate in the post-oil welfare state. The ways that each group participated in these economic shifts, in turn, had wide-ranging effects on the ways they built and maintained their families over time.

Although permanent migration rates neared 70% for black men and 60% for black women at the height of seafaring migration, these levels raised to nearly 85% for both men and women during the height and initial decline of participation in the oil industries on Aruba and Curacao before abating slightly to around 75% for black men and women from The Bottom who came of age during immediate post-oil times and 65% of black men and women who came of age during the height of the welfare state (Figure 6.2). For the first time, the migration rates for black residents from The Bottom outpaced those found in the white population and, as a result, the loss of population through migration

outstripped the ability of the population to replenish itself through childbearing. As with white seafaring migration in The Bottom, this imbalance in the black community produced a rapid decline in total population from a high of about 450 at the turn of the century to a low of about 150 just decades later. As in the past, the majority of migrant connections in the black community were centered in the Caribbean rather than in the United States or Europe (Tables 7.7 and 7.8). Based on migration data recovered from Crane's 1964 household survey, it is clear not only that the black community in The Bottom engaged in high levels of migration to the oil refineries in Aruba and Curacao but also that they had a slight preference for laboring in the Dutch refinery on Curacao rather than the American refinery on Aruba. On average, each black person from The Bottom had about 2 close family members living in Aruba and 3 living on Curacao with 50% of the population having at least one family member on Aruba and 65% having at least one on Curacao. This migration bias may have been partially due to a belief that the American run company expressed racist ideology openly through their hiring and promotion policies but a similar pattern found in both the white and biracial communities suggests a community wide orientation towards working for the Dutch. About one-third of the black population had relatives living on nearby St. Maarten and, on average, those with kin on St. Maarten had two relatives living on that island. Movement from Saba to the economically booming island of St. Maarten became a popular alternative as oil refinery employment dried up in the late 1950s and this trend continues to be influential up to the present day. A small minority of the black population, approximately 13%, had at least one relative in the United States and only 10% of the black population had a single relative living in Holland. This pattern suggests a continuation of limited opportunities for black residents in extra-regional seats of socioeconomic power and an on-going orientation towards local and regional resources.

In relation to family forms, fertility indicators fluctuated in black community throughout the oil refinery period but the proportion of children born outside of marriage, the proportion of women who had children without being married, and completed family sizes show an upward trend over this span of time. Celibacy rates leveled off at about 30% and completed family sizes elevated slightly

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from around 4 surviving children per family during seafaring times to 5.5 surviving children during the height of oil refinery migration before declining slightly to just under 5 surviving children per each childbearing woman in the immediate post-oil period (Figure 7.15). The stability in completed family sizes in the early period, the elevation in completed family sizes as migration opportunities declined, and the distribution of births by age of the mother suggests that natural fertility was the norm at this time and that controlled fertility through modern contraception only became available and widely used in the later post-oil period when completed family sizes dropped to about 2.5 surviving children (Figures 7.16, 7.17). Age at first birth fell from an average about 25 during oil refinery migration to around 21 in the immediate post-oil period before increasing again to around 23.5 years at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.18). Age at marriage declined from a high of 27 years during the transition to an oil-based economy to 25 years after oil refinery migration slowed, and 24 years in the post-oil period (Figures 7.19). Spousal age differences indicate that women tended to be about 5 years younger than their husbands and this, in combination with falling ages at first birth and marriage suggests that women had little time or space to develop an independent sense of self before entering motherhood and wifehood.

Patterns of marital and non-marital childbearing fluctuated throughout the oil refinery and post-oil periods as men and women built their families in the volatile and rapidly shifting socioeconomic environments of the oil and post-oil periods. The proportion of children born outside of marriage expanded from around 40% in seafaring times to 55% in the early oil refinery days, dropped to around 45% at the height of the oil refinery period, grew to 55% in the immediate post-oil period, and grew again to almost 60% at the height of the welfare state on-island (Figure 7.20). The proportion of childbearing black women from The Bottom having children outside of marriage showed similar fluctuations with 60% of women having children outside of marriage in the early refinery days, 85% at the height of oil refinery migration, 45% in the immediate post-oil period, and 63% as the welfare state became entrenched on Saba (Figure 7.21). From the perspective of the total population of long-term black female residents in The Bottom, 35% of women stayed celibate during

the early days of oil refinery migration, 24% had children only within the context of marriage, 41% of women had children outside of marriage, and nearly 25% remained long-term single mothers. At the height of the oil refinery period, 30% of black women from The Bottom remained childless, just 10% had children only within marriage, 60% had children outside of marriage, and 37% became long-term single mothers. In the immediate post-oil period marriage as the foundation of family life reemerged in the black community from The Bottom with 35% of women staying celibate, 35% having children exclusively within marriage, 30% having children outside of marriage, and about 20% raising their own children in the absence of a marital partner. At the height of the welfare state, marital childbearing again declined as 30% of black women had no children of their own, 25% had children only after marrying, 45% had children outside of marriage, and a quarter of the black female population became long-term single mothers (Figure 7.22, Table 7.15).

While a high proportion of women during late oil refinery and early post-oil times had children outside of marriage, the declining proportion of women having children outside of marriage in the immediate post-oil period suggests both an increase in the conditions deemed necessary for marriage and, perhaps, an awareness of just how difficult life had been for women who struggled to make ends meet without male support and a desire to avoid a similar situation. The movement towards entering marital relationships before having children arose in the context of increasing opportunities for women to work outside the home, increasing levels of education for Saban men and women, and increasing economic buffering through generous social welfare programs. Some of this ambient socioeconomic environment undoubtedly shifted ideas about when and why people should marry and, importantly relieved men of much of the burden of proving themselves potentially worthy "sole providers" before entering into marriage. A movement back towards non-marital childbearing at the height of the welfare state may be related to the loss of some of the historical memory about the difficulties of non-marital childbearing during oil refinery times, a changed socioeconomic environment that now includes even more public and private sector labor opportunities for women, in particular single mothers, negative childhood experiences of disruptive and unhealthy marital homes,

particularly homes where mothers were abused physically and/or mentally by their husbands, the rise

of divorce, the increased acceptance of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage, and the growing

influence of non-local Caribbean people on-island. In addition to these changes, instabilities in

marital relationships now often result in divorce and entry into unsupported single motherhood for

many black women which decreases the relevance of ever-married status when considering the family

experiences of black women and their children in the past few decades.

Although the links between childbearing and marriage weakened over time, particularly at the

height of oil refinery migration, the desire to become married stayed strong and about 45% of women

who had children outside of marriage eventually married at some point in their lives. However, the

space between the birth of a woman's first child and the date of her marriage often spanned many

years and, while some marriages happened within a couple years of initiating childbearing, the

majority of marriages only took place after 5 or more years (Figure 7.22). Despite the clear drive to

marry exhibited by many black women, the ability and desire to marry remained unevenly distributed

in the black population and over half of all women who reached adulthood during oil refinery times

never married and nearly 1/3 of those reaching adulthood in the immediate post-oil period also have

no record of marriage (Figure 7.23). The slight elevation in fertility during this period is likely

connected to the practice of non-marital childbearing as it enhanced both individual fertility and the

overall fertility of the population at large by releasing women from the constraint of having to be

married before having children. The removal of the marital constraint reduced the age at which

women could become reproductively active which allowed for more fertile years per woman and

increased the proportion of reproductively active women which meant that more women were having

more children. In this environment of non-marital childbearing and single motherhood, woman-

centered households became very common and the lives of a substantial proportion of children

revolved around their mother and her efforts to keep the family afloat on limited income. Many

fathers retained a critical role in the lives of their children but through time more and more children

came to suffer from the financial and emotional neglect of their absentee fathers. The bond between

men and women was similarly disrupted as the traditional role of men as husbands and primary

breadwinners gave way to an overall decline in male financial and familial responsibility that often

left women in dire economic straights despite their increasing access to sources of paid labor.

Understanding the impacts of migration on family and community life extend beyond a mere

accounting of the numbers and the reflections of black residents from The Bottom show just how hard

they fought to find purchase during trying economic times and to build their families in the face of

great adversity. Although other non-economic migration motivators existed, the mere fact that the

vast majority of black men and women vacated their island for the often tenuous opportunities that

lay overseas suggests that times, indeed, were hard. While thinking back on his life, a black resident

of The Bottom shared the following memories of the early days of the oil boom in Aruba and his

quest to start his own family:

> I had went when I was eighteen, but I came back when I was twenty-one. I didn't remain continually cause the wages was too small and I considered I was only just wasting time and labor and nothing, so I come home. I was twenty-one and I told the wife—the sweetheart—I been loving her but I wouldn't be able to take care of her. Well, I have a mind, if she can have a mind as I do, and she can wait, I said I should still share the love if she could. Well, then I went back.
> When I got married I was at the age of thirty one, but I got married in 1938, and I remained six months after I got married and I went back to Aruba and I came back again. I tell you what happened. To tell the truth, I came back in '38 so as to get married cause I told the wife that I waited a long time after loving her. Going up to 1933 I said I'll make no different effort, but I still have in mind with health and strength I felt if the world could be brighter with time. I would be back in five years time, if possible. You see, I suggest providing if the world brightened—and at that time she was still young. At the end of the five years, naturally, I was on the beach; I meet the same lil' home, yes, the same three room home. Yes, then I bought some other property, me and my brothers, and so forth. So anyway, I bought my furniture that would serve the purpose. I say "If you're satisfied I come back to fulfill the time that I promised", you know.
> I remained here for a while, I remained for a while and then I went back to Aruba. I went down and I wrote to her, I said "Things is dull. It's best to come home and leave we share the same faith, because what you make you only spendin' and I can't help you, and it's better to come home." (Crane, 1987: 214-216)

The theme of struggle and the lack of substantial economic rewards through migration again plays out

in this accounting of his own personal history and reflects the experiences that many black Sabans

had off-island. Increased cost of living coupled with an economic system that tended to stratify

opportunity by race meant that moving off island often failed to produce any substantial increase in

economic prosperity. In the context of Saban family traditions, it was customary for potential

husbands from both the black and white communities to prove their worth by generating enough wealth to build a home on Saba and this meeting this expectation is front and center in his narrative. After exhibiting their economic prowess, successful men were deemed to be marriageable and capable of supporting a wife and children. Although this was the ideal pattern, sometimes life made it difficult to achieve these milestones and this either led to the dissolution of engagements or the decision of couples to start their lives together despite their less than ideal circumstances. In this case, the process unfolded over the course of ten long years and ended with the realization that the right time for marriage might never emerge which sparked this couple to build a future together irrespective of their current financial status. This tension between the ability of men to prove their economic mettle and the desire of men and women to start their own families played out in different ways and ran the spectrum from accepting life-long celibacy, to marrying irrespective of financial worries, to choosing to live together and raise children in a consensual cohabiting relationship, to engaging in visiting relationships where the women bore most of the financial burden with mostly sporadic help from the fathers of their children.

Even more troubling than equivocal financial rewards, long separations, and indefinite delays in starting families was the prospect of encountering unknown dangers off island and becoming caught up in an unhealthy and hazardous life far from home. The veil of secrecy that shrouded many migrant lives created fears that circulated widely through the village and points to a real difference in the unstable situations that many black residents found off island versus those of the well-off white families. In remembering the departure of so many black men from The Bottom, one resident gave this haunting description of loss:

> Some people who is careful they would more or less try to keep good friends. They would try to get some kind of good company. And they wouldn't be like to go astray. Like, I mean, like on the island when they was here. But some others, they go away too and they went haywire and astray and they didn't get, you know, like too themselves but they never take care good of themselves, and a lot of them never come back because they died. A lot of them. And then I don't know, but they always say, it's an old time saying, maybe it's only just a saying, that many of them got poisoned. A lot of them died, plenty of them, and they say they got poisoned. Poisoned in what way, I never heard. They never come back, they got poisoned. Or maybe it's just a saying. But many from here, I don't know for the white people but for the colored people, went and

never come back. Never come back. They died there. (Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, 2004)

The severing of connections between migrant and community created a fertile imaginative social landscape that sought to make sense of the disappearance of so many young Saban men and women. In the absence of any real information, these losses were explained by reference to a nightmarish external force that nefariously ended the lives of many Sabans living abroad. The image of poisoning, although sometimes taken quite literally and sometimes literally occurring in dangerously toxic work environments, is an apt metaphor for those Sabans who lost their way off island and came to inhabit complicated lives not recognizable to their kin at home. Shame, fear, and ultimately death may have kept them from reaching out to those who knew them at home or from returning home battered from life abroad. Coupled with the continuous themes of struggle and loss is the resilient sense of community and the strong bonds that many migrants kept with their family and friends. After talking about those who were lost, this Bottom resident went on to describe how Saban migrants continued to do what they could to support their community back home:

> In the olden days I know for sure, nearly all of them [kept in touch]. I think that some straight away but I don't know how fast because you know you didn't have no airplane, only sailing vessels now and then, so maybe once in a year they would hear from them but still I think the people still remember the people back home. And still they would send money, as far as I can remember what they did, it was no big amount, and they would always send boxes with eats, I know from myself that I heard about, and also the clothing people would give them and the people here was glad to have them. To help each other. And I know that even if you send it to this family and there was too much, they shared it as far as I can know here on Saba. It wasn't like now. You lived more like, the whole island was a kind of family, you know. But they really kept in touch. Some of them, you know, would fade away as you would expect, but the majority of them look back at their people. (Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, 2004)

Solidarity in the face of economic difficulties continued to connect black migrants from The Bottom to their families and the community at large as the fruits of migrant labor spread first in their own families and then, when possible, to others in need. While most black people from The Bottom had family living and working abroad, the contributions they received varied widely and reflected both the economic successes of migrants and the commitment that migrants had to easing the lives of their families at home. Because of this, it was not possible or wise for people to wait for support to come

in and most black residents in The Bottom engaged in a variety of economic pursuits to sustain their

households.

For families scraping together a living, particularly those where women were more or less the

sole providers, everyone had to do their part. Children from both the black and white communities

were integrated into the world of work at very early ages and tended to perform tasks that aided the

progress of adult economic endeavors (Figures 7.24 and 7.25, data derived from Crane's 1964

Household Census). Boys usually engaged in mundane agricultural tasks like cutting bush for

feeding livestock or ran errands that involved distributing products like candy, bread, milk, meat or

vegetables produced by the labors of their mothers and fathers. Young girls also ran errands and

became involved in the cottage industries of drawn-thread work or other sewing activities, baking,

candy-making, and the production of other female-made consumables within the home. With so

many women left as the primary means of support for their families, many childhood memories are

dominated by the work they did for their mothers and the frugality required to survive. When asked

how his fatherless family made it through the years that spanned the end of seafaring migration and

the rise of oil refinery migration, one resident said:

> Well, you'd just get by. Of course, I didn't do it myself, but my mother—with
> the help of her. She didn't give us any money. She give us the privilege to eat and drink,
> and the money she kept so to buy our wearable and food stuff. That's all, but she didn't
> give us the practice to spend no money. But when you grow you bigger, you know, you
> always feel if you could get a cent, maybe if you make a lil' job and you make a few cent,
> you feel if you could keep it away from Mama cause she'll take it away from you and put
> it up. But it's good to give it to her, it's a nice thing. Sometimes you want to buy a lil'
> sweet outside of Mama, what she's making, you want to buy other lil' candies or
> something like that you can't ask she for. If you ask her she may give it, but then it's
> something to be proud of. (Crane, 1987: 209)

In this family context sons and daughters received conflicting signals about the responsibilities of

men and women had to each other and to their children and set in motion a cycle of fatherless families

that continues to make its mark on modern Saban society. Boys formed strong bonds with their hard-

working mothers and, although some were coddled and catered to as the only male presence in the

home, most did what they could to help their mother's situation and the situation of the family as a

whole. Loyalties to his single mother come out very clearly in the above narrative and similar

sentiments crop up repeatedly in the life histories of Sabans in the past and into the present day. Simultaneously, however, boys were given the clear message that men did not need to be financially responsible for their partners or their progeny in any meaningful way and that their allegiances, if they had any at all, lay primarily with their mother and siblings. Girls learned that they, too, would likely live their adult lives struggling to support their own families in the absence of husbands or partners and, in this way, came to develop a strong sense of personal responsibility in tandem with a prevailing, if sorrowful, expectation that the fathers of their children would continue play no real role in family life. Although individual experiences of these general dynamics took many forms, the overall pattern became a dominant feature of life on Saba during this period of time and continues to shape the childhood and adult lives of a large segment of black Sabans in The Bottom and elsewhere on island. In sharing his feelings about the deaths of his mother and father, one young black man from The Bottom brought some of the tensions of mothers and fathers in non-marital households to the fore:

> Well, I remember I used to go to school, and from school I used to come home with my mother. Well, of course, my mother used to go out and work hard to support us because, you see, we didn't have no father to maintain us. So our mother was more or less mother and father together. He and my mother used to live in the house together. My father died in '63 and my mother died in '66. Just three years between them. He used to tell me he wasn't my father, and other men were my father. He used to treat me more or less cruel, you know, told me he didn't want to see me over his dead corpse, everything so. He wished me a lot of evil. He told me I was going to see the jail, though. Well, his word didn't prevail then. It hurt me when he told me so. He said " I don't want to even see you over my dead corpse". I shouldn't have bothered sure enough either, because I bear him to his grace, and on that day and the next my arm was stiff. I couldn't carry it. I shouldn't have done it, no, I shouldn't have done it. Course, 'twas too late. It'd been done already. (Crane, 1987: 359-360)

Irrespective of actual paternity, it is clear that the father-son relationship in this home was strained at best and left deep emotional scars on this young man. Many black women shared this experience of men denying paternity of their children and, outside of the marital context, it was very easy for these men to defer their paternal responsibilities even when they knew, or strong suspected, that the child was theirs. This is a painful experience for the mother but the impression that it leaves on the child is even more severe and, in this case, resulted in a long-term acrimonious relationship of consistent

paternal rejection and spite. It is interesting and quite sad that the mother tolerated this kind of

treatment for herself and her child but it also highlights the fact that many women, black and white,

went to great lengths to keep a man even if he was not a good provider, an emotionally supportive

partner, or a stellar role model for the children in the home. Although most women are highly critical

of these concessions, the frequency of women choosing men over their children continues to be a

topic of social discussion on Saba even to this day and indicates a continuing desire for securing long-

term male partnership on the part of most Saban women. If disengagement or outright hostility was

the mark of many father-son relationships in non-marital situations, it is clear that mothers, despite

their own flaws, became the emotional and economic anchors of their children's lives. When this

same young man's mother died three years later, his reaction was very different:

> I even didn't know how old I was until my mother leave me. Then I know, I
> mean, then I know everything was up to me then. Then I suddenly started to make plans
> for myself. And now the greatest plot I've made, the greatest step of life I'm going to
> take now, is to rid living alone. I didn't think about it till after she left me. Four years
> I'm thinking hard about it, and now the end o' the fourth year it's stronger than ever. It
> comes stronger to me than ever that I should be married.
> And now, it's worse yet. Now I have to do everything myself. I had my mother
> providing for me. Because when I used to go to work, I'd come and my meals was done,
> my clothes was seen to, and I had nothing to worry about. But when I got twenty four
> years old, she says I can't be with you longer, and she died. Now everything depends on
> Eric alone. To the sea, to the mountains, back to the sea, home, all about. I mean, life is
> too hard with me. I mean, more or less now, I have no help. I handle everything myself.
> I didn't mind it though, because I was trained from small. I was workin' hard, you see, I
> didn't mind. But now I mind it quite a lot because I have to do everything now myself.
> You know, I mean, like I have to cook now myself. I have to be doing this, I have to be
> seeing to something else. Maybe I have to go over to the shop to buy the food, or
> something or other I have to be doing.
> Of course, time grows up and catches with you, so now, I mean, more or less
> now, time is catching up with me now. So I have plans to get married now. Yeah, I'm
> plannin' on settlin' down, get married and settle down, at least get somebody to help me
> in the home. While I'll be away, my wife will be here seeing to the house. When I come
> back, I have no troubles with food nor anything, because she'll be here and have it
> prepared for me, more or less. That will be a ease off my shoulders. (Crane, 1987: 371)

The loss of his mother was felt not only in an emotional sense but also as a loss of domestic support

typically supplied by women. The picture he paints of the difficulties of a man's life on his own can

be seen in other narratives of both black and white men and clearly shows that most men expected a

certain level of domestic support from their mothers, and, eventually, from their wives. In this case,

motivation to marry sprung from a desire to be taken care of after the death of his mother and reflects

the fears that many men had about being able to take care of themselves when they had never been asked to do so before. Although it is interesting that he focuses in on marriage when his childhood experiences did not include marriage as a model for male-female relationships, the fact that he is, in essence, looking for a long-term stable replacement for the labor that used to be supplied by his mother cannot be overlooked. There is little to no emotional component in his description of marriage and the lack of expressed emotional connection is very much embedded in his personal experiences of home life. He also expresses the following feelings about what marriage means in a man's life:

> Well, more or less, the men want to get married to stop their carnal lusts. The women don't mind. It's the men that mind. The women in Saba, if she's a woman already, if she can make five guilders here, it's all right with her. But a man feels, you know, that if he get married, he more or less confined to a woman, he stop his carnal lust, you see, he won't go after six or seven woman. But still, it don't stop him sometimes, so he goes. But he remembers he has one in the house. These women, they can get by somehow, but a man needs a companion, you see. Cause man needs to do something he don't want to do. Being he don't have a companion in the house, he goes out and finds other sex that ends on the doctor's table…From that again maybe the doctor will have to come to you, maybe you'll end up in the graveyard. You get a crop of sickness, you ends in the grave. You does other things that you don't want to do—so man is driven to get married. You see this stuff is carnal lust, cause all that stuff is just lusting after the flesh. (Crane, 1987: 373)

Again, marriage is conceived of as an institution designed for the betterment of the husband rather than as a partnership rooted in love and commitment between spouses. Curbing the dangers of out-of-control male sexuality becomes the function of the wife and of the institution of marriage more generally. Male faithfulness, however, is still not guaranteed even if a man "remembers he has one in the house" and the emotional and financial needs of women are not taken into account to any appreciable degree. Women are viewed as thoroughly independent beings who "get by somehow" without significant male support and, with some consternation and bewilderment, he suggests that this situation is "all right with her". The fact that he cannot see the struggles of single women and fatherless families all around him speaks to a high level of male narcissism in the culture of Saban men while his general attitudes about women give further evidence of the burgeoning I-can-do-it-on-my-own attitude amongst many black Saban women. However, these strong general feelings about

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the value of marriage and the motivating factors that underlay men's decisions to marry were tempered by opposing views in the black community. Another middle-aged man from The Bottom had this to say about his own experiences of marriage and the attitudes about marriage that he saw circulating in his own village:

> Marriage is what you make it, you know. Today you find a girl that you could love and you can marry, you will have someone to cook you meals, you will have someone to do your clothes, and you will have someone when you get old they will see to you. Some young boys in Saba will tell you, colored and white, "I ain't gonna get married, You got to work". But if you're single you got to work, if you's married you got to work. So what's the difference? It's best to be married than single because you know when you come home you'll meet your food…But it depends on who the person are. You could come home and have to cook your own food.
> You see, some people see me doing different things home, they feels it's a disgrace. "Oh Riley, man, what you doing?" I say "Listen friends, when we got married, the pastor told us we was one" And the age you live in now you can't know enough, because when you wait on someone to come and shine your shoes for you, they may not show up. That time you don't think your hands too good to put into polish and shine them yourself. You see, now, when my wife here even is sick, no one don't know, because the same living goes on, the food is cooking, the house is clean and everything. "Where's your wife, I ain't see her for these days? Oh she's sick. Well, Who's doing?" I say "Well, me." (Crane, 1987: 352, 353)

Even though he outlines the same general division of labor expected in marital relationships, he clearly views marriage as more of a give and take partnership where the husband and wife are "one". Unlike most of his male peers, he takes pride in being able to help with the household duties when his wife is busy working or when she is ill. There is no sense of being too good to do women's work and he chastised men who thought themselves too good to learn how to take care of themselves in the absence of female support. In this way he not only disengages from any talk of male superiority in intrafamily relationships but also levels a scathing critique against men who allow themselves to remain hopelessly dependent on women for their daily support. He is equally critical of young men who resist marriage because of the labor demands and social restrictions it would place on their lives. The general attitudes he confronts in his narrative show a growing level of irresponsibility amongst black men in The Bottom because, more often than not, not getting married did not entail moving out of your mother's home to live independently or abstaining from having children until you were mentally and financially able to support them. These patterns and attitudes are still very much alive

in the black community in The Bottom and elsewhere and form a central axis of women's critiques about male responsibility in the context of Saban family life. However, it is important to be clear that many black men, like the narrator above, did and do take their familial responsibilities very seriously and continue to be emotionally and economically supportive of their wives, partners, and children. It is the emergence of these two different streams of thought, typified by the views on marriage presented above, that became very influential in the formation of black families in The Bottom and that shaped the way that men and women viewed each other, the responsibilities they had for one another, and the place of marriage in those relationships.

While black men and women from The Bottom continued to migrate in couples, married and unmarried, labor demands on Aruba and Curacao also pulled a steady stream of single black women into a range of off-island jobs. Some women who left were childless but many single mothers either opted to take their children with them or to leave them in the care of family or friends on Saba. As the traditional economic roles of men came into question in an increasing number of black Saban families, many young black women, through outright economic need or through a personal desire to build a better future, took it upon themselves to fill the void. The off-island jobs offered to black women from The Bottom were usually very familiar to them and tended to revolve around various forms of domestic labor like housecleaning, cooking, and washing clothes but some women found employment in shops or, if they were wealthy and ambitious enough, even started their own small businesses. With the added stresses of single motherhood or the stress of believing that you would one day have to support yourself and your family on your own, many women made the decision to leave Saba and, like men, many left uncertain of what their futures would hold. Like men, some experienced various levels of success, others faded from view, and yet others returned without any substantial financial gains and sometimes with additional children to care for. However, this first taste of life off island and participation in paid employment began to integrate black women into the Saban Diaspora as independent individuals bound by their own sets of responsibilities that may or may not include the presence of a father, husband, or partner. For the first time, women migrants

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began to experience the world directly, through their own labors, and this was a crucial social transition that has had far reaching effects both on- and off-island.

Although oil refinery migration impacted the black community of The Bottom in different ways than the earlier period of seafaring migration, it is clear that many of the same themes that emerged under conditions of seafaring migration continued to stitch together the life experiences of Sabans as they built their lives on- and off-island. Despite the rise in economic opportunities for men and women in oil-related industries on Curacao and Aruba, black Sabans continued to experience the disappointments of an economic system founded, at least partially, on race-based stratifications of both hiring practices and career advancement. As in the past, instability and uncertainty riddled the experiences of labor migration in the black community and the accelerated loss of so many young men and women created rifts in community life and heightened fears about the worlds that migrants came to inhabit off-island. The fact that a sense of community continued to exist between migrants and those they left behind is a testament to the enduring bonds that black Sabans from The Bottom forged with one another and the sense of mutual interdependence they shared even through long periods of physical separation. However, after technological advancements decreased the need for oil refinery labor migration, the direction and tempo of migration flows and the experience of on-island life changed substantially.

As more and more Sabans found themselves shut out of employment opportunities on Aruba and Curacao, the black population from The Bottom began the slow and sometimes painful transition from an oil-based remittance economy to an economy based on educational migration and big-government social welfare spending. For Sabans who had always found a way to survive by their own labors, the movement from the grind of daily life to the cushion of government aid was a double-edged sword. While most were grateful for the help the government extended, many from the older generation were put-out by the new attitudes that the young developed about work and, in particular, the continuing decline of agriculture came to dominate the minds of Sabans who had always maintained a close connection with the land and the bounty it provided through the hard times.

Instead of working in the soil, many men opted to seek out government work in the civil service or in construction projects that usually revolved around the building and maintenance of The Road that slowly began to connect the villages to one another. Over time, government spending became a focal point of islander's critiques because many came to feel, rightly or wrongly, that the redistribution of wealth flowed along lines of family rather than fairness. For those who continued to leave for work and education, life off-island was still fraught with danger but the lure of potential economic rewards remained strong. For those who returned after years of working overseas, settling into a quiet Saban life provided its own challenges and opportunities. For those who stayed away, Saba still loomed large in their social worlds as they maintained connections at home and, at the same time, remained determined not to return. The weaving together of all of these disparate threads of life created the experiences of black Sabans in The Bottom in the immediate post-oil period and continued their long history of adaptation and survival within the Saban Diaspora.

The mid-20th century model of big government in Europe and the United States arrived on Saba at a time where the population was faced with declining economic opportunities abroad, a steady stream of return migrants, and a resident population with minimal means of creating a vibrant private sector economy. While steeped in the logic of spending on a range of social welfare programs, big government on Saba also came to be defined by the spreading of government work among the population at large and both the process of doling out government work and the nature of the work itself became hot-button topics in The Bottom and elsewhere on island. It is understandable that people would get tense about gaining access to an already small pool of available money and outright hostility towards the government was commonly expressed. When asked about the role of government in the economic life of The Bottom, one black resident put it like this:

> Well, the government here, I would say, is a family government. You comes last. Family first, and you last. Yeah, if I'm the government, I has family, my family comes first, and you last, which is usually first. It wasn't the family only put me there, it's the population. The entire population plus their families put me there, so I should look to the population first, the family after, then self last…Politician is too dirty. They want it all for themselves. After they get what they want, the hell with you. They don't want you no more 'til the next four years. Then it's my turn to say "I don't want you"

> Then they feel bad "Oh, why? I been good to you"…Remember that rich man, the rich man was eatin' the best of food. Lazarus was eatin' crumbs. But when Lazarus died, and he was comforted an' the rich man was tormented. Well, that story comes to the politicians. They eatin' their good stuff at the table, an' they gimme the bones. (Crane, 1987: 375)

The role of family in hiring decisions is clearly at issue here and this sentiment is carried through to present day squabbles about political appointments in the civil service. In a very real way, insider tracks on government work tended to reify social stratification as those with good political connections ascended into prominent jobs, or, at a minimum could count on a steady flow of work on The Road, while those without those connections felt that they were essentially hung out to dry by their elected leaders. Without access to longitudinal data on hiring practices, it is difficult to assess the legitimacy of these claims. However, knowing the strength of family bonds on Saba, the generally high status of politically active people, and the racial homogeneity of most Saban families it is easy to see how decisions about government jobs carried overtones of both race and class discrimination and the distribution of public sector jobs in the 1964 employment survey is suggestive of racial bias in the distribution of government work. However, not everyone shared this dim view of government largess and these more moderate views were expressed by another biracial Bottom resident when he shared his experiences of government labor:

> The government gives anyone a job that's able to do it. You know, we get pension now, we don't work. But I used to work for the government, I worked nine years four months with the men that sweep the road. I worked nine year with them. You see, the men that I had just keep the roads clean, like the Bay road or any like that filled up, I take my gang of men and cleaned it up like that so. Windwardside road before they pave it and when the Queen was to come or anything like that, we had to go everyday to keep the road clean, pick all the rocks out and fill it in. I just had a week on and a week off; I worked this week and another fella take my place another week. (Crane, 1987: 171-172)

Work on The Road became a way for the Saban government to redistribute money to those most in need and functioned more as a welfare program than any real program of structured labor that carried certain expectations as to output and progress. This is not to say that working on The Road was not a hard and dirty task for men from The Bottom and elsewhere but that shirking work responsibilities and doing the minimal amount of labor to get by became standard practice on government projects. Furthermore, many people began to receive government hand-outs like old age pensions that started

well before most people lost the ability to work or poor money that was doled out even to those who were not in dire economic need. The work ethic associated with government labor and government social programs stood in stark contrast to the rigors of agricultural labor so dominant in the past. The idea of doing a small amount of work or no work at all for a small amount of cash replaced a prior labor regime founded on the delayed gratification of a harvest and the self-sufficiency of small-scale farming. By the end of oil refinery migration, only ¼ of the black male population in The Bottom worked in the ground and almost half of all black men did not participate in any form of agriculture, animal husbandry, or fishing to support themselves or their families (Figure 7.26). Bemoaning this transition, an older black man from The Bottom leveled the charge that:

> Before time we had our people here you could depend on. You'd take two or three persons along with yourself and you'd do a little cultivating, but today we can't, too much laziness, throws away too much time sittin' on the wall and the rest. Yah! And if you did put 'em on a job, they's loafin' around. You couldn't have them on a job. You don't want to be watching them. Leave him to his principle, if he have any. (Crane, 1987: 228)

Charges of laziness, inefficiency, and a general lack of work ethic began to fully emerge at this time and drove a significant wedge between the old and young, rich and poor, in the socioeconomic lives of black residents from The Bottom. This mental shift from self-sufficiency to government dependency, and all of the changes in attitudes towards work that this brought about, still create a sense of dismay among certain affluent members of the black and white communities in all of the villages while others of lesser means continue a pattern of dependence on low-skill, low-paying, low-expectation government work that requires minimal training or effort on their part.

As in the past, education became a key variable that created and maintained this cleavage as those who were able to pursue studies off-island either tended to move into the higher paying on-island jobs or to establish themselves in careers away from home. The idea of Saba as an intellectual and socioeconomic backwater was first expressed by wealthy white residents of The Bottom during the period of seafaring migration but this attitude soon trickled down to more affluent black residents in The Bottom and, eventually, came to be shared by most of the population at large. Education came

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to be seen as the key for advancement and the ticket to a grand life away from home. Although Sabans continued to love their island for the peace, tranquility, and quiet life it offered, it was seen more and more as a place where big dreams and aspirations could not be fulfilled. Parents began actively encouraging their children to further their studies in order to secure lucrative career paths outside of the traditional skilled and unskilled manual labor performed by most black Sabans migrants in the past. Black residents in The Bottom became keenly aware that education would open more doors for their children and that most of the skilled high-paying jobs required one or more degrees or certain levels of professional certification. Recognizing these changes and encouraging children to set higher goals for themselves became a strong practice in certain segments of the black community and the drive to achieve became a valued family tradition in many Saban homes. One older black man who had very little formal education of his own put it like this:

> Well, all my children has gone away. Well, I think it's wise. I says, you know, "Don't believe that Saba is everything. Saba is behind time, but it's a loving little island". I says "Many of the educated folks comes here from the United States, from Europe, from all over, they love the little island; but there's nothing to keep you". I say "And when we go off we can see that we just behind time. We looks to go away but it being that we have to have this before you can sit in all those places. You see all those folks there on jobs? You got to have a diploma, you got to go to school to have a diploma to get those jobs. It don't mean to say only a little readin' and writin'. You got to have a diploma to know you will master. So this outing, I mean, ain't just so you enjoy yourself, only looking through, I'm tell you what the meaning of it is, and you can do better from that". They kep' it. (Crane, 1987: 219-220)

Unfortunately, in other families the drive towards education did not take root and children from these homes soon felt the sting of their educational limitations. Many became very aware that their mothers and fathers had not given them the educational tools or proper motivation to advance their own socioeconomic position. The young black man who lost his mother and father had this to say about the future his mother envisioned for him:

> Well, my mother didn't have any plans. She couldn't read or write herself. No, she didn't have any plans for me. All the plans had to be predicted by me. I had my own prediction. She used to drink, you see. Of course, an alcoholic can't set an example for the children except more or less to drink, you know. So, but my own prediction I had to predict myself, learn how to guide myself, in other words. She kept me with her, and taught me how to laundry, do my own clothes, how to mend them when they tear, how to mend them, and different things, and of course how to cook. Well, I taught myself that, how to cook. Well, my mother taught me to wash, iron, and more or less, domestic work. All the help that I depended on was from my mother. (Crane, 1987: 363)

Although his mother taught him basic survival skills she remained unaware or unappreciative of the changing structure of opportunity that her son could tap into. Her actions reflect an underlying belief that her sons experiences would mirror her own and, as such, she taught him what she knew about survival in difficult economic times. These two very different perspectives on the value of education came to further divide families into those with a wealth of educational knowledge and employment potential and those with limited education and very restricted employment possibilities.

While educational migration became a hallmark of Saban life, labor migration continued for those who either had no opportunity for educational advancement or who rejected the educational path to success. For these post-oil economic migrants, life on the high seas or in low-level jobs on land provided its own set of challenges and uncertainty, and danger continued to be key themes of black migration from The Bottom. The same young man who decried government employment practices shared how he protected himself when working as a sailor far from home:

> It can be a very clean life too, but oh, a sailor has to be very careful where he goes. He has to be very careful. He can pick up all kind of disease. In other ports I don't have much fun, cause I don't more or less dig in the other ports' fun. You know what I mean, being a seaman, you liable to fall for this one: okay, let's say you see this woman in Aruba, careful as hell. Two more months, doctor got to see you. I'm very careful about that point. When I get in, the first thing I look for is a church, second is the hospital, third is the book store. Because if you get sick, you need a hospital more or less. You may need to get a priest to come to you before you die or something. He can't save you, but still; and you may need a book to read some educational system. So, therefore, those are the three things I look for when I go ashore. Then, after that, the rest follows. Bars and something to eat, an' look up the girls then. But those are the three main things I look for when I go ashore. (Crane, 1987: 369)

This description of the life of a sailor calls to mind the image the danger going astray and being poisoned that haunted the psychological landscapes of so many Sabans at home and abroad. Without the watchful eye of your own community, it is easy to fall into an unhealthy way of life and this young man did his best to avoid those pitfalls that had trapped so many before him. This fine line between success and failure in migration attempts still loomed large in the experiences of black residents from The Bottom and all migrants weighed the internal desire of wanting to "make something of yourself" against the fear of falling prey to a cycle of poor personal and financial decisions when living away from home. These tensions are seen in the following descriptions of

financial decision-making in the lives of migrants and the barriers to economic advancement

contrasted with the deep personal desire to prove your own worth not only to yourself but also to your

native community:

> They have many who have made good progress; they have many who didn't make any progress. It all depends on the mind. You can be there, but there could be, I should say, maybe a barrel of money there, and you don't know how to handle it, it'll go. And you could have a little money there, and if you know how to handle it, it will invest itself. It will develop, it will invest itself because you know how to handle it. But you can have a barrel and you don't know how to handle it, it will go. So that's the way with the States. You can make it and you can spend it, but you must know how to spend it. (Crane, 1987: 221)

and

> I think about making a brighter future, making a life for myself, fix up myself good, trying to keep my head above water, I mean, not to sink, above all the mistakes that you have. The first one is not counted. It is the second that counts, to try and keep yourself always that somebody don't have to point a stick at you "He was this first, he got advantage and did this second, he wouldn't listen then". Always keep a bright future that everybody could at least look upon you and say " I know once he was a rascal, but look what he is today, a gentleman" because he sees some way to see about his future. To build up yourself, you know. (Crane, 1987: 372)

These themes of the community watching and judging and the migrant either rising to high

expectations or failing to attain respectability became part of the dialectic that defined the relationship

between migrants and their villages back home. Despite the severing of connections between many

migrants and their island, many others stayed connected, willingly or unwillingly, through wide

networks of gossip both on- and off-island and everyone at home eventually came to know the

successes and failures of their departed family, neighbors, and friends. Migration and the

socioeconomic advancement that it promised became a means for people from The Bottom to rectify

their own personal blunders or the disadvantages of their family situations by achieving success even

when the community at large had branded them failures. This personal desire to rise above even

when the community expects you to fall poignantly shines through in the second narrative and

provides a personalized counterpoint to the blunt accounting of success and failure given in the first

narrative. The line between personal redemption and the entrenchment of negative community

perspectives was, however, a thin one and the pitfalls of life off-island proved too great for many

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Sabans who set out to exceed the expectations but who, sadly, eventually proved the community to be right in many ways.

After the oil industry jobs in Aruba and Curacao dried up, the issue of return was front and center in the thoughts of many Sabans abroad and members from the black community of The Bottom wrestled with their decisions to either come home or to fully commit to their lives off-island. Because life abroad was uncertain, many planned for their eventual return either by buying available property or by building their own homes on Saba. In fact, Keur and Keur (1960: 114) reported that 37% of oil refinery workers from the Windward Islands of Saba, Statia, and St. Maarten already owned a home on their native island and a further 4% cited an intention to build. Return migrants came to be influential members of the community both in terms of their financial contributions and through their knowledge of life abroad. Many return migrants invested their savings or pensions in not only living quiet and comfortable island lives but also in the establishment of groceries, bars, guest houses, or other community services that had always been few and far between on Saba (Crane, 1971: 101). However, the ability to invest resources in private sector endeavors was limited by both the affluence of the population at large and the financial success of the migrants themselves. For some who returned, Saba simply provided a quiet place to retire where minimal income could go a long way. One retiree from The Bottom shared his experiences of return like this:

> In '55 we came back here. Thirty-two years I worked with Lago, and they say, well, they was goin' to finish with the small boats, you know. So then they want me go work ashore, but I wouldn't bother. I say no, I wasn't going to work ashore, so I left. Fifty-five years you can go home and retire on a small pension, you know. I get seventy guilders a month, every month; and I come home, hang around here now. Me and my wife build up a old shanty. Well, it's like this: I come back here to settle and enjoy my home, less expense. Outside we had to pay more expense. We came home and built up the lil' ranch; we made ourselves contented. (Crane, 1987: 120)

Ironically, in the minds of return migrants from the black community of The Bottom, Saba became transformed into a place where money amassed through off-island labor could be saved and spending demands were minimal. The same economically depressed island that drove migrants away became its own land of opportunity for return migrants who had little and needed to find a way to exist on a

small but steady cash flow from oil refinery and government pensions. In the same story, we can see both the minimal amount of economic gain that some migrants achieved off-island and the mental shift in the minds of return migrants that made life on Saba socioeconomically attractive. Still, for others, Saba remained a place of childhood memories but never became a viable candidate for return, because, after all, what was there to return to? The feelings of social and economic deprivation they associated with Saba froze it in their minds as a quaint wasteland devoid of any real opportunity and, therefore, many never even considered the possibility of coming home. The following sentiments about return migration express this position clearly and draw a sharp contrast between the mental maps of both the young and the old and those who returned and those who chose to stay away:

> In the olden times many of them lefts from Saba with a mind make up not to come back to Saba. Very few that I know come back and when they come back they was old. They never come back as young people to say, okay, they changed the style from where they was living to come to change to Saba style. Because I know many of them when Saba even come, you would say, good days, they couldn't believe that Saba really had changed. They never even come back to say let me see it. A lot of them never come back to change anything, or to get back in the way of Saba living. They went away, many of them, and never, never come back. But they didn't forget Saba, I mean they write, they had family here and they write. But you see it was their custom, many of them, especially the colored people, cause you couldn't tell they that Saba had changed. (Attitudes and Beliefs Survey, 2004)

The black community of The Bottom underwent major socioeconomic upheavals during the period of oil refinery migration and the subsequent transformation into a society heavily dependent on government programs and employment. Migration experiences continued to be riddled with uncertainty, danger, and loss as the population both on- and off-island struggled to keep connected through difficult times. Huge numbers of black residents from The Bottom left the island despite these challenges but, as in the past, most of their destinations were centered in the Caribbean, specifically Curacao and Aruba, rather than in Europe or North America. The nature of family and work also changed dramatically and had varying impacts on individuals and the community at large. Laboring on The Road became a routine embedded in the working lives of many island men and contrasted sharply with the rhythms, delayed gratifications, and self-sufficiency of an agricultural life so much revered by the older generation. In particular, many from the older generation bemoaned a

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perceived lack of work ethic, initiative, and personal responsibility they saw in the young and in others who became dependent on government resources. Most of this dissatisfaction targeted men and their work habits since women were only peripherally involved in government labor and tended to engage in private-sector jobs like domestic work and the small-scale production of consumables of various sorts. The presence of many men doing nothing or next to nothing really created unease in the community and became an open topic of discussion in all sectors of society. With the increase of non-marital childbearing, the economic role of men was further challenged as a larger proportion of families had either no man present or had one or several men who contributed financially and emotionally on an intermittent basis. Although the reasons for this shift are complex, the reality was that many of these female-centered families faced poor economic odds and, out of necessity, single mothers drew on the labor of their children at very early ages. Furthermore, the experiences of women and children in these homes set up an enduring pattern of economically deprived fatherless families in a large segment of the black population in The Bottom. In particular, the economic and social situation itself provided gender modeling that instilled a sense of irresponsible manhood in many boys and a do-it-alone bravado in many girls that ensured the perpetuation of this cycle. Migration decisions were also rooted in this dynamic as women, for the first time, ventured off-island on their own or with their children and became active agents in building their own economic futures. This sense of economic and personal independence in the context of male emotional and economic absenteeism began to characterize the world view of many black women at this time and created a poignant tension between an emerging sense of undaunted feminine power embodied in women who could "make it on their own" and the reality of powerlessness and poverty many single mothers and single women faced both on- and off-island. Education became highly esteemed in most black families from The Bottom and even those who had little formal education of their own began to push their children towards pursuing off-island education to advance their careers and status in the world beyond Saba. Return migrants also began to play a key role in the community during this time although many migrants did everything they could to avoid return because they felt that Saba still

lacked the lifestyle they had come to covet abroad. The small white community in The Bottom shared some of these experiences but maintained their own relationships with migration processes and the changes that these processes had on their families and personal lives.

In the early to mid 20th century, the white population from The Bottom had changed from one of genteel privilege to one of transplanted rural poverty and this had lasting effects on the ways that whites from The Bottom connected to each other and to the external world. Migration rates remained high with around 85% of white men and women leaving The Bottom for good during the transition from a seafaring to oil-based economy and 67% of white women and 63% of white men vacating their native homes during the height of oil-related migration. In the post-oil period, the proportion of white men permanently migrating dropped to 47% and then to 22% while women continued to leave the island at a higher clip at 63% and 50%, respectively. The high rates of white migration shown at the transition from seafaring to oil were quickly surpassed by those in the black community and, because of this, white residents from The Bottom, particularly men, were comparatively immobile through later oil and post-oil times. Analysis of migration connections reflects not only the connections that elites made with the United States, Holland, and Bermuda but also the connections that poorer Mary Point people made with the regional oil industries sited on Aruba and Curacao (Tables 7.7, 7.8). Like the black population in The Bottom, less affluent white men and women left Saba in the hopes of securing oil industry work and approximately 34% of whites in The Bottom had relatives in Aruba and 45% on Curacao. People with kin on Aruba had, on average, about 2 close relatives living on that island while those with kin on Curacao had 1 or 2 family members living there. The percentages of white residents with kin on the oil-refinery islands was significantly lower than that found in the black community and the average number of kin living on these islands was also substantially lower. The racial divide in migration to the United States is clear with over 50% of the white population indicating that they had close relatives in the States and, on average, that they had about three relatives living there. Some of this reflects the connections that the former elite white population made during the height of seafaring migration, but it is also likely that many poorer whites

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from the transplanted Mary Point population also had kin of some sort in the United States. A few residents had family in Bermuda, Holland, and St. Maarten with the Bermuda and Holland connections likely occurring in the residual population of elites whose families left for economic and educational reasons in the early decades of the 20th century and the St. Maarten trend arising from new opportunities offered in the booming tourism industry centered on that island. Of extreme importance, however, is the fact that one-third of the population of whites in The Bottom had no connections of any kind off island. This suggests that the replacement population from Mary Point was significantly less connected to the world than the elites who formerly dominated Bottom society and signals the presence of a comparatively insular white population that carved its existence mostly from either regional or on-island resources.

Family structure continued to revolve around the nuclear model of family building characterized by marriage before childbearing but, unlike earlier periods, the number of celibate white women plunged to zero for women coming of age during the middle of the century due to the movement of Mary Point people into the village (Figures 7.15-7.23). Although non-marital childbearing spiked to 30% as seafaring migration declined and oil refinery migration accelerated, mostly due to a single white woman who had several children outside of marriage and who later left the island, it quickly dropped back to below 10% at the height of oil refinery migration and in the early post-oil period (Figure 7.20). The bump in the proportion of children born outside marriage during this time is reflective mostly of a single white woman from St. Johns who had several children outside of marriage, perhaps interracially, before leaving the island permanently. Because the number of white children being born at this time was very low, the reproductive behavior of a single individual heavily influenced the demographic trends derived from historical records and, in this case, does not accurately represent the childbearing habits and beliefs existing in the broader white population of The Bottom at the time. The fact that less than 10% of white births in The Bottom occurred outside of marriage after the influx of Mary Point people and that no women failed to have children during the height of the oil refinery period indicates the continuing persistence of the norm

of marriage as a basis for childbearing in the white segment of the community and contrasts sharply

with the norms and patterns emerging in the black community at this time. A slight increase in non-

marital childbearing to around 20% occurred in the later post-oil period and suggests that some white

women adopted a childbearing pattern more normative in the surrounding majority black population.

It is interesting, however, that none of the white women having non-marital children in The Bottom

could be identified as original Bottom residents which suggests that these women may have been in-

migrants from other villages on-island. Childbearing trends and anecdotal evidence from

Windwardside and Hells Gate show that white women who had children outside of marriage did not

tend to stay in their home villages and it is likely that some of this handful of women relocated to The

Bottom while others left the island entirely. The white woman from St. Johns who moved to The

Bottom to have her non-marital children also gives strong support to the claim that the power of

social sanctions against non-marital family forms in the white community made life difficult for

women following this path and that movement away from their home villages became common

practice for these women. Fertility rebounded for whites during oil refinery times, to around 4

surviving children per childbearing woman, but still remained lower than the over five surviving

children per family found in the black population during the height of oil refinery migration and the

early days of the post-oil welfare state (Figure 7.15). In the absence of birth control, these

comparably low fertility rates suggest that there was some separation between wives living on-island

their husbands working abroad but the migration statistics also suggest that some families stayed

together on island and shared little in the way of off-island connections. As methods of contraception

made their way to the island, white women opted to continue having children at early ages but to

reduce their childbearing in the older age categories. Completed family sizes quickly dropped from

around four surviving children per family to just over 2 per family in the immediate post-oil period

even though age at first birth dropped from the mid-20s to 20 years old and age at first marriage

raised from the early to the mid twenties (Figures 7.15, 7.18. 7.19). White women were still having

children early but began to marry later and, in some cases, after childbearing had already been

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initiated which mirrors family building trends in the black population (Figures 7.20, 7.21, 7.22). However, marriage for white women was nearly universal and only 15% of women in the white community in the immediate post-oil period had no record of marrying at any point in their lives (Figure 7.23). On average, men were about 10 years older than their wives, which suggests that many women found themselves in positions of relative powerlessness when compared to their older, more experienced, and perhaps more worldly husbands. In combination, these fertility and migration trends slowed the decline of the white population in The Bottom and the population leveled off at about 75 people.

The small and somewhat insular nature of the white population in The Bottom meant that little has been left in the way of life histories or personal narratives from this time. Prior work by Crane included an interview with an older member of the elite white population but no work was done with any of the members of the Promised Land population in The Bottom. The portraits painted by the earlier work of Keur and Keur are less than flattering and are probably not entirely fair, but they do capture some of the hardships of life for poor white residents of The Bottom and shed light on some of the relationships they had with migration trends, the world of work, and their experiences of family. The following excerpt of life in Promised Land identifies some of the challenges faced in this community, and other poor Saban communities, just prior to the decline of labor opportunities in the refineries on Aruba and Curacao (Keur and Keur, 1960: 143-144):

> On Saba, people living in the section of The Bottom known as Niggertown and in English Quarter at Windwardside have about the same economic status as the poorest Negroes "Down Street" in Phillipsburg. It is somewhat easier to procure a variety of fruits and vegetables on Saba, although many women cook only one meal a day, the simplest possible, such as boiled tannias, and do not trouble themselves further to care for their children's feeding. The money earned sporadically by men's work on the roads or on other public works quickly disappears, a large portion of it for rum. This is no matter of race, for the same picture holds for part of the white community at Hell's Gate and the small group of whites in the "Promised Land". One household in the latter community consists of father, mother, and nine children, the tenth, the oldest daughter, is married, with two young children, and lives in another part of the town. The father is out of work, and "not quite right in his head". He receives a small amount of unemployment compensation. The oldest son has a government job sweeping the road to Fort Bay. Since he is known to go on occasional drinking sprees, he was refused permission to leave for work in Curacao. The next child, a pretty girl of 23, already has false teeth. She "quit school long ago". A younger girl was just out of the hospital, having had a

seriously infected foot. A boy was just taken to the hospital with an infected finger. The house was old, its walls badly termite ridden. Cooking was done in a leaky shed in the rear over a wood fire. There were only two rooms. In one of them stood two wooden chairs; and a small table against the wall held an assortment of crockery. The children were unkempt. Of one fat, sturdy boy, the mother said, "He's lazy, he does nothin'; he won't even get wood, he only eats a lot". She summed up her case against the scapegoat government: "We can't plant, we ain't got no land, just the yard and wired off to show where each one ends, like fowl in a coop. The government should have made us new houses. They should repair these. They promises you this and they promises you that before election, but they's terrible hypocrites. They ought to help us."

Although this description is written with little compassion, it certainly highlights the desperation that many white residents from The Promised Land felt at the time and the range of responses that people had to a dire situation. Importantly, it also puts in clear relief the reality that marriage held no promise of male support and shows many overlaps between the experiences of poor married women, black and white, and their unmarried single-mother friends, family members, and neighbors. The fact that the wife in this narrative is portrayed as a frustrated woman surrounded by hapless unreliable men mirrors many of the experiences that black women from The Bottom also endured and it is a tragedy that ideologies of racial hierarchies and racial separation ensured that women, as a whole, remained largely blind to these potential points of shared compassion and action. The men in this narrative have a questionable connection to work and their minimal participation in economic activities of any kind can be interpreted as stemming both from a lack of available work and a lack of highly developed work ethic. On the whole, men's work on The Road is characterized as spotty and much of the money brought in is said to be unwisely spent on alcohol. Drinking and alcoholism are constant themes in all sectors of Saban society but tend to be most obvious amongst the poor who lack much of a social safety net. Certain aspects of Saban men's collective behavior, past and present, also revolve around bar life and social interactions with other male friends within the context of an extensive drinking culture on-island. The lure of alcohol consumption and spending time with drinking buddies often exists in opposition to the demands and requirements of home life and many Saban women continue to complain about the amount of time and money that their men devote to drinking activities. In the case above, labor migration that may have improved the family's financial status was impossible because of a sustained pattern of alcohol abuse by the oldest son of the family

and implied mental illness, perhaps stress induced, on the part of the father. No value was placed on education and yet another route to independence and a better life was barred to the members of this family. The lack of physical separation between the husband and wife expanded the family size well beyond the means that they had to support them. In the above case, and in the population at large, this cycle of elevated fertility in the poorest families proved to be a serious hurdle to economic advancement that tended to perpetuate a cycle of poverty in these homes and expand the number of poor white and black residents in The Bottom and elsewhere on island. The government funds this family through their son's work on The Road and through a small amount of unemployment compensation received by the father but, in reality, does nothing to help break them out of their miserable existence. In particular, the lack of access to farm land and the mental stress of living in essentially uninhabitable dwellings draws particular and understandable ire and points to a government policy of treating the superficial rather than the deeper issues of poverty on Saba. The image of Promised Land people being wired off in their individual coops, cut off from the economic resources on- and off-island, sears the mind and shows the mental anguish that dependency on inadequate government resources created in a large swath of the white population of The Bottom. The only positive subtext of this description is that one of their nine children got out of this section of town and had the chance at building a better life for herself away from the squalor of her childhood.

People from the black and white communities of The Bottom created their own relationships to processes of migration and related family building norms during the period of oil-refinery migration and the period of big-government that followed. Overall, the black population lost more of its community members, had more extensive regional off-island connections, and, as a result tended to be less insular than their white peers. A segment of the elite and poorer white population maintained its connections with kin in The States but the some of the poorer transplants from Mary Point tended to engage in labor migration to Aruba and Curacao while others remained permanent fixtures on-island and lived very difficult lives. Although still a consistent image, America as The Land of Opportunity became increasingly severed from any real ties that either black or white Sabans

had with the place itself. Family forms changed most radically in the black population as the trend towards non-marital childbearing and female-headed households expanded and shifted in form over time. However, the ethic of marriage remained strong and many women eventually married after having one or more children. It was the link between marriage and childbearing that weakened rather than the desire to marry, per se. In the context of declining male contributions to family life, both economically and emotionally, many black women developed a survivalist outlook on life and did what they could to eek out an existence for themselves and their families. Labor migration and the pursuit of higher education became key strategies for black women seeking a means to support their families or for women who believed that they would one day be more or less fully responsible for the their own economic well being and that of their children. Although family in the white community was still defined by marriage before childbearing, some married white women faired no better than black women in female-headed households as marriage provided no guarantee of adequate or sustained support. In fact, the presence of a man as head of the house on-island may have damaged many white and black women's ability to control their economic destinies economically since, more likely than not, husbands and partners would not have agreed to having their women working off-island, especially if they were not there to watch for any sign of indiscretion. While family life and migration came to dominate the chatter of community discussions, the changing nature of work, and arguments about declining work ethic also became hot topics of conversation. Most of the concerns centered around increasing dependence of men on intermittent government wage-work and the declining importance of a self-sufficient agricultural lifestyle. Women's work remained largely below the radar because it continued to exist mainly in the domestic sphere and had little or no connection to government programs. These socioeconomic, migration, and family building processes formed the foundation of life in modern day society in The Bottom and created both overlap and divergence between historical and contemporary life in The Bottom and elsewhere on island.

Oil refinery migration, the emergence of the welfare state, and family life: St. Johns

The sociodemographic history of St. Johns is closely related to the processes that unfolded in the black population of The Bottom but the lack of an in-migrant white population meant that the white segment of the St. Johns population declined to only a handful of long-term residents by the mid-20th century. During the period of high oil-refinery labor migration, the rates of permanent departure in the black community exceeded that of the white community as many in the tiny and aging white population decided to live out their days in their home villages rather than face the uncertainties of life off-island. The small number of young whites, however, continued to leave and, with them, drew the lifeblood of the white community in St. Johns either into the flow of life off island or into lives centered in other villages on Saba. Family forms also changed in similar measure to that described for The Bottom as many in the black population dismissed marriage as a necessary prerequisite for childbearing while, at the same time, maintained a preference for becoming married in the long-term. The small number of white families in St. Johns continued to be formed within marital relationships and very few white people from St. Johns deviated from this social script. Orientations to the outside world were defined not only by past historical experience but also by the present structure of opportunity and this, too, was different depending on your position in St. Johns society.

For the black population of St. Johns, only a handful of people had any connections in the United States and most of the migrant connections indicate a high level of participation in oil-related industries sited on Aruba and Curacao (Tables 7.9, 7.10). The lack of substantial connections to the United States or other places outside the pull of the oil industry suggests that many black St. Johns families who remained partially resident on Saba only became fully integrated into migration processes after the dawn of the petrochemical industries and that those who left before maintained few if any ties to their homeland. As seafaring migration tapered off and oil refinery migration accelerated, the black population of St. Johns lost 60% of its men and 65% of its women. At the height of the oil boom, the black population lost almost 90% of its male population and over 80% of its female population. These proportions only tapered off slightly in the immediate post-oil period to

76% of women and 71% of men and then shifted to 76% of women and just 44% of men during the height of the welfare state. In 1964, almost 70% of the on-island population from St. Johns had close relatives in Curacao and, on average, about two family members were living on that island. About 40% of the on island population had family on Aruba and, on average, those with family on Aruba had about three family members living there. In combination, these trends show a slight favoring of Curacao as a migration destination that was also found in the black and white populations of The Bottom. Almost everyone had some kind of close family relation living overseas and only 13% of the total black population of St. Johns said that they had no in-family migrant connections of any kind. Only 11% of the black population had a single relation in Holland and just 2% of the black population had an average of two family members in the United States. When looking at the overall picture of migrant connections, it is clear that most connections in the black community were centered in the Caribbean, specifically in the southern islands of the Dutch Antilles, and that, on average current on-island residents had about three close kin living away from home.

As in The Bottom the disconnection between marriage and childbearing helped to elevate and then sustain the completed family sizes of women who stayed on island, to around 6 surviving children per childbearing woman during oil refinery migration, even though the population, as a whole, continued to drop in numbers due to the astronomically high migration rates (Figures 7.27-7.29). Completed family sizes dropped to around 4 surviving children per family in the immediate post-oil period and this decline, coupled with the age distribution of births in the post-oil period suggests that some members of the black population began to use modern contraception to regulate their fertility while others proceeded with a pattern of natural fertility that stretched childbearing across the lifecourse. However, the age at first birth stayed very young, at around 20 years, while the age at marriage centered around the late twenties which meant that black women began taking on parental responsibilities at a young age and only solidified male economic and emotional support through marriage about a decade after having their first child (Figures 7.30, 7.31).

The structure of black St. Johns families reflected a consistent pattern of non-marital childbearing and delayed marriage (Figures 7.32-7.34). In the transitional years when seafaring migration waned and oil refinery migration was on the rise, about 60% of all births in the black community of St. Johns were to unwed mothers. This high proportion remained constant during the height of the oil refinery period but, unlike the other villages, dropped slightly to around 50% in the post-oil period before spiking to 80% over the past decade. The propensity to eventually marry also stayed high throughout the oil refinery period as reflected in the 70% marriage rate of women who had one or more births before marriage but dropped to zero in the immediate post-oil period before elevating to around 50% at the height of the welfare state and then dropping again to zero for women under the age of 30. Even though many black St. Johns women did eventually marry, the space between the birth of a woman's first child and the date of her marriage was often quite long and the majority of marriages only took place after 5 or more years. This fact coupled with low rates of consensual cohabitation during oil-refinery and post-oil times meant that long stretches of family life were overseen by single-women household heads who experienced varying degrees of economic and emotional male absenteeism. From the perspective of the total black female population of St. Johns, 27% of black women stayed celibate during the transition from a seafaring to an oil-based economy, 13% had children only within the bounds of marriage, 60% had children outside of marriage, and 26% of women became long-term single mothers. At the height of the oil boom, no black women from St. Johns remained celibate, 17% had children only after marriage, 83% had children before being married, and 34% became single mothers throughout the bulk of their childbearing years. In the immediate post-oil period, 20% of women remained coming of age during this time remained life-long celibates, 40% had children only within marriage, 40% had children outside of marriage and all of these women became single mothers for the duration of their childrearing activities. At the height of the welfare state, 20% of women opted for celibacy, the remaining 80% had their children before getting married, and 44% raised their children without the in-home presence of a long-term partner or husband (Table 7.15, Figure 7.34). As non-marital childbearing expanded as a family building

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practice amongst the black population in St. Johns, the experience of single motherhood came to dominate family life in certain sectors of the community and very few black women now marry their partners before starting families. With reference to the trends noted in The Bottom, the proportion of women raising their children alone for extended periods of time was similar in both villages during early and late oil-refinery time but diverged sharply in the post-oil period with St. Johns women being almost twice as likely to become long-term single parents than their peers in The Bottom over the past 50 years. Although marriage remained an important social goal for many black St. Johns women, even if delayed by years or decades, about 40% of black women from St. Johns have no record of ever marrying during the oil and post-oil periods which means that nearly half of the black female population in this village lived their whole lives without the presence of a marital partner in the home (Figure 7.35). These powerful changes in the family formation practices of black St. Johns women were not without consequences and many women found themselves in an economic pinch as they tried to raise large families with little help from the fathers of their children.

Life was hard for the men and women who remained in their home village and many of their life histories reflect the day-to-day fight for survival and the pride that black people from St. Johns took in their ability to adapt and adjust to the changing circumstances of life. Sometimes loneliness dominated their experiences as so many of their friends and family vanished from view. Two black St. Johns residents shared their feelings about this depleted social environment:

> Ooh, we had plenty people [on St. Johns], wouldn't be able to number. We had plenty people, plenty houses. Some of the houses has been taken down; but every house that you see shut up now in St. Johns was packed full of people. They had plenty, but they's all gone to Aruba. The colored ones is gone to Aruba. Some white ones, too, has gone to Aruba. But most of our color so, that was our friends and that we used to keep up with and all them so, they's gone to Aruba. It ain't many of our sort has gone to America nor nowhere so; but the white ones, they is gone all about so. St. Johns had a bit majority, but owning to the circumstances, you had to go away. You had to go away to be able to make a living because there wasn't nothing here that you could do. (Crane, 1987: 331-332)

and:

> If you have never been out of the country, off St. Johns, then I don't think you'll find it so lonesome. Of course, then you are accustomed to it. If you go off and then you come back, then it's lonely because you miss so much of the things that you got accustomed to abroad. But when I was a child we always made life so we didn't find it

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so lonesome here. Then I had so many brothers and sisters around, and there's always something to do, so it wasn't so lonesome. (Crane, 1987: 439)

The first narrative describes how the physical landscape of boarded up houses and empty spaces where houses had been served as a constant reminder of those who had gone. The sense of desperation that underlay these decisions to leave also comes through as does the race-based structure of opportunity that barred most black residents from making their way to or finding success in the United States. In the second narrative a young return migrant struggles to adjust to a quiet life back home and shares the palpable pain and loneliness that stems from the absence of so many of his own brothers and sisters. As in The Bottom, a feeling of present absence of migrants is described as a fact of life for the small community of St. Johns and each person tried, in his or her own way, to come to grips with this tremendous and on-going loss.

While the social impacts of migrant loss weighed heavily in the hearts and minds of St. Johns residents, black men and women living on island still had to find a way to support themselves and their families in very challenging economic times. Black women, in particular, found themselves bearing most of the burden for keeping their families together financially and emotionally and became initiated into the world of work at early ages. As in the past, work in the black community was physically demanding and confined mostly to domestic labor like washing, cooking and cleaning for women and skilled and unskilled manual labor for men. Carrying loads from Ladder Bay to various locations across the island was one prominent job available to the black community and, although generally done by men, some women also participated in the long and arduous delivery runs that kept the island well stocked with provisions. In describing the labor of carrying loads, one Windwardside resident remembers how hard porters worked to move goods around the island and, in particular, reflects on the labor of one of his female friends, originally from St. Johns, who worked down at The Bay:

Oh, it was hard times in them days. You wouldn't believe without you seen it with your own eyes—and then I suppose it would be hard to believe it—to see them poor black people bringing them burdens—women, men. Now you knows what a sack of flour is; and there was some of them could bring two of them together, tied together, the

whole barrel of flour, you know, from the Bay. They got one woman there now in The Bottom. Her name is Rebecca. And then, you see, there was the pianos and the organs and all o' that. My sister had one though, one on each end, ye see. Them would come to the Fort, but there'd come things to the Ladder. Oh, them poor things! A half a barrel o' beef—that had to be on their heads for a burden, you know, and only get about a few cents for it—about sixty or seventy so. Black people, a few white people. And look, it was only the St. Johns people that could bring them heavy burdens, the water runnin' out of 'em! I used to pity them any time. That Rebecca will tell you—ask she to tell ye—me a she's good friends. (Crane, 1987: 92-93)

Although he admits that some white people engaged in this activity, the description itself is racially specific and dwells on the physically taxing demands that this work made on the bodies of black people on island. Despite his obvious compassion for his friend and others who made these journeys, the subtext remains that this kind of work was only fit for black residents on Saba or, in some cases, for poor whites. The racial division in labor is clear and people actively segregated work into jobs that were fit for white Sabans, like farming and drawn-thread work, and those that were fit for black Sabans, like carrying loads and cleaning houses. Importantly, work outside the home became ingrained in the identities of black women from St. Johns and across the island in a way not seen either in prior generations of black women or in the white community. The St. Johns woman described in the labor sketch above shared her own experiences with work and family life in the following way:

He [my husband] was always on the island, bringing up loads from the Bay. He didn't want me to do it neither after we got married; but I told him like this, I say "You know I'm accustomed goin' to the Bay for loads, and when I stop and anything happen that you ain't able to do it, and I go to do it, they goin' call me Captain of the Bay too, as I had a cousin they used to call Captain of the Bay" So I say I don't want that, so, therefore, I rather go now, and I continued going. But I had to steal, the first time I had steal the chance to go, because he didn't want me to go, he didn't' approve of it. So I continued going and then after he get accustomed, he didn't say anything more. After the children was born, about six weeks or so, I would leave them and go to work. My mother would come and stay with them when I would go to work. And then I thought it hard, that we had it hard, but it's much harder now… But I likes to work, and as long as I can work I don't like to be a trouble to the children. I like to work; I was always brought up to work and earn my bread by working. I likes to work. (Crane, 1987: 127,131)

Before she ever knew or came to marry her husband this woman had already developed a keen sense of who she was through her own hard physical labor and she refused to give that sense of identity and independence up even in the face of extreme disapproval from her husband. This tension between the desire to work and the necessity of women working to provide for the family played out in many

black households as gender norms surrounding the proper place of women in the world of work slowly transformed. It was lucky, too, that this woman continued to work because her husband became totally blind during the last ten years of his life and was unable to contribute much financial support during that time. Her insistence and foresight meant that the family was buffered somewhat from her husbands disability through her continual participation in the labor market. She continued her thoughts on the economic and social responsibilities of black men and women in their families by discussing her own experiences with her husband and her later experiences as primary care-taker of both her husband and her elderly mother:

> He was good; we lived together for thirty odd years and never one day was he disagreeable, always loving and affectionate with the children. And even if I wanted to go out anywhere and I would just say to him "You going stay home with the children tomorrow? I want to go either to church or I goin' a fishin' or somewhere or other" He'd say "All right. If you think so, I'll stay with em". He would stay with 'em…
> When I reached home [the day my husband went blind], he say "Oh, Becca" He say "what's on you" he say "look, I'm here totally blind!". I say "You don't mind that!" I say "You worked for me when I couldn't work for myself. You helped me, so I got to help you, so you don't leave that worry you". And we worked together just the same. For the ten years he was here, he didn't need for anything because I was working, I tried to work. The biggest children was away, and they would send him some cents, and we'd make it meet together and that was that. Yes, so he didn't need for anything for the ten years he was sittin' aside here. I had my mother on me for one year and some months. She used to live to St. Johns, and when she needed me most I brought her down [to The Bottom]. I say "You'll go with me. There's nobody up here to take care of you, so come along, go with me." Oh, they all ripped cane that I had brought her down here. I was her child, she was my mother and the onliest child she had here, and the onliest girl; and I took and brought her with me, and I kept her with me. And I seen to my mother as I seen to one of my children. And my husband the same, and I keeped them with me as long as I could. When God saw that the burden was too heavy, he take them. Well, I was satisfied then, I could do nothing. When my mother died, I felt like I was a bird on a limb, I didn't know where to fly. I didn't know where to go and oh, I don't know, I never forget that day, the day as I seen my mother dead. Yes, that was the first of my dear ones died, so you can imagine, oh, yes. (Crane, 1987:127, 129-130)

The sense of duty runs through her decision to take on the responsibilities for caring for her husband and her aging mother. Her husband is described as a compassionate and understanding man who had always done his best to support his wife and children. Her forceful personality comes through when she requires childcare from her husband but his own sense of obligation also leads him to accept roles that were not typical for most Saban men. This give and take relationship made for a solid and happy marriage and inculcated a sense of responsibility and caring in both the husband and the wife. This

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carried over into the woman's assertion that "you helped me, now I got to help you" and shows a great degree of love and affection in this particular union. These positive experiences of marriage and partnership permeated the relationships of many black families and show another side of black family life not riddled with problematic male-female relationships and the overall lack of paternal involvement in their children's lives. In addition to caring for her disabled husband, this woman also took on the responsibility of caring for her elderly mother during her final days. Although it is not completely clear who "ripped cane" about this decision, it is likely that resistance came both from within her own family and from the family of her husband. People may have felt that she was spreading her emotional and limited economic capital too thin and that the rest of her family, namely her husband and her children, would have suffered some level of neglect. However, she stood strong, as she was apt to do, and showed a real allegiance to her mother in her time of need. It is interesting to note that she felt the responsibility naturally fell to her as the only on-island child and the only girl that her mother had. Again, women, in this case daughters, are seen as the obvious candidates for supplying domestic support to their families and this pattern of women taking care of their aging parents was very common in the black and white communities on Saba. Ultimately, the loss of her mother was felt as both a release from a heavy burden and as a time of complete emotional disorientation as the woman who had brought her into the world, cared for her in childhood, and continued to play an active role in her adult life was gone forever. The closeness between mothers and children is highlighted here and the curious absence of any discussion of a father is also quite telling.

Although vastly different emotionally, the experiences the woman above had after her husband's disability are very similar to the situations women faced when the fathers of their children failed to support their families. The development of an unyielding work ethic served many black women well as they scrambled to make up for the economic inadequacies of their men. In many black homes, work as a means of survival was instilled in children at a very early age and they grew up with the knowledge that they shared much of the responsibility for their family's survival. These

kinds of early memories imprinted the mental maps of adult residents of St. Johns and come through in the following story of childhood work experiences for another black woman and her transition to economic self-sufficiency:

> Well, I lived with my grandparents. My grandparents took me when I was a year old from my mother, and I lived with them. She had quite a few. She had about fourteen children, and I made fifteen. Well, after they got big, they all went away and left me one, and I was in the home with my grandfather and grandmother. Used to go up in the mountains. He had up in Rendezvous about. That place we used to go. And he used to plant. Would go up there in the morning. Before I went to school, I would have to go up; and then when I came home from school one o'clock, I would have to go carry him something to eat, then I would be up there until half past three and I'd come down. Well, we wasn't in good shape, but anyhow, we made it. Because he was getting old; he was my grandfather, so you know he was getting old, and my grandmother, I lived with them until I got fourteen years. Well, and then I had to go out, to help work for myself. And I start going about working with different ones at St. Johns in their houses, like I do now. I start that when I was fourteen years, to go out and wash and scrub the floors and iron, and if they wanted a message done, wash up the dishes. That was always my line. (Crane, 1987: 327)

The theme of self-sufficiency looms large in this narrative and the threat of absolute economic collapse hangs over all of her childhood memories. The last in the line of a very large family, there were very few resources left to sustain her and, in fact, she was not even able to grow up in the same home with her mother or siblings. As in The Bottom, large family sizes and poverty are often found bundled together as families with almost nothing make difficult decisions about dividing up the small number of assets in the family trust. For all of her family, migration proved to be the only alternative and she was left alone to fend for herself with little in the way of social or economic resources. However, she found meaning and sustenance through domestic work, like so many other black women from her time, and made her way in the world without much of a helping hand. After starting her own family, she began to view her own situation and the world around her in a different way. She describes her changing attitudes like this:

> So, I just do my work and the religious. Well, there's no other way out. It's best to make up your mind, and the Lord will help you through everything. I've come to that opinion. I'm getting older anyhow; and when you get older, you thinks different. And I feel that I have Naomi and them, their future is before me, so I have to try and live up. I have to live up for their sake because they ask questions. Both Betty and Naomi. (Crane, 1987: 335)

> I tell you, the most important thing in my life was when I got these children. That's the most important. I feel that you has to battle life alone. It's so tiresome

sometimes. So I feel that that's the most important, you know, what happened in my life because through that, well, I have to go harder. I have to because I am alone. You can't do different. I feel that that is the most important. And then when Sister Spence and them came here, they showed me a better way of living. Well, that's the next important part because that part made me to see that the way I was going wasn't the right way. And it tried to stable me and bring me where I am today. Because, otherwise, who knows? I may not have been on the top side because you never know what would have happened. (Crane, 1987: 337)

The feelings of loneliness, isolation, and burden as a single mother come through in her description of life but these feelings are merged with a sense of responsibility and purpose that motherhood conferred on her. A desire to "live a better life" stems from her sense that she must become a positive role model for her little girls and that she should do her best to live an upright life in the eyes of The Lord. This narrative of fall and redemption is clearly linked to non-marital childbearing and religion plays a central role in finding a "better way of living" after making some youthful mistakes. Many women, even today, talk about single motherhood in these terms and point to examples of women who had children outside of marriage at young ages but who later proved themselves to be stellar mothers and upstanding community members despite these early stumbles. However, counter examples are also offered and many single mothers are not able to change either the direction of their own lives or community perceptions of their situations. Single motherhood, then, carries both the possibility of collapse into a shameful life or the possibility of personal redemption in the lives of women while men seem to pay little or no price for entering into early non-marital fatherhood. While the economic hardships are clear for single mothers, the emotional hardships are equally compelling and played a major part in the lives of many women from the black community in St. Johns and elsewhere on island.

Attempts to reign in and monitor women's sexuality go hand in hand with a high level of community disapproval of non-marital family relationships even in a climate where non-marital childbearing was on the rise. As in the white community, gossip and fear of "what the people will say" served as an effective means to contain the spread of undesirable unions between daughters and potential suitors. The young began to aggressively challenge what they saw as old-time ways but

sharp tongues still kept some black women from St. Johns from engaging in free and open

relationships with members of the opposite sex. One young girl described the situation like this:

> Well, my parents teach me "mustn't do that, mustn't do that…". But I can say
> mostly my aunt raised me, you know. She was a pleasant woman, but sometimes she was
> very strict. She never used to like for me to go out. She used to always tell me "It isn't
> everything that you are invited to that you should go". Not that she was really strict; but
> she was a straight person, and she always liked straightness. I can't complain how
> neither my mother nor my aunt raised me, but they all liked to walk the straight way.
> You see, in the States I fancy the young people is freer than here. You see how it's small,
> and the parents are also afraid if the next person say something about you. And they
> always tell you "Take care because you know how Saba people are" because here it is
> very hard. You can't stand to speak to no one cause then they put to some…you know,
> that's the bad habit here in Saba. A young person can never stand to speak. Say a young
> girl they see you speaking to a young man, he's not from Saba or he's from Saba self, it's
> a big history, see, and that way people find it's very stupid here in Saba…You see, it's
> just olden-time stuff. They come like the olden-time habits. Yeah, say if you go to a
> party and a young man sit down beside you, oh! The next day "You was to the party with
> this young man!" I don't go for all that. I let them talk, you see. If you always study
> what they speaking, you would go crazy. (Crane, 1987: 427-428)

Although a growing access to and use of birth control meant that pregnancy could be avoided in illicit

sexual unions, the black community, like the white community, always had its eyes open and ears to

the ground when it came to rooting out questionable liaisons. Ideas about social and sexual freedom

in other places, like the United States, also became topics of discussion both for those who rejected

these social transformations and for the youth who gravitated towards the personal liberty that these

lifeways seemed to offer. It is still common to hear young people talk about the "freedom" they

experienced living off-island in the States or elsewhere in contrast to the restrictions that they feel re-

integrating into Saban society. The line between personal freedom and social responsibility is

constantly being renegotiated between the younger and older generations and continues to be an

influential dynamic in island life.

   After the oil industry decline, the black community encountered many of the same problems

expressed in the life histories of Bottom people and the themes of advanced education and desire for

government and non-government related economic development come through in many of the

perspectives shared by black St. Johns residents. When describing her own access to formal

education, the same hard-working woman who carried loads from The Bay said:

I only went to school a year and six months cause my mother got sick and she couldn't help me no more. So then I had to go out to work. When you reached a certain class, when you'd get to the sixth class, well, then they would learn you the Dutch. But I never reached the sixth class. I was only from the third class in the place of a next girl that went to Barbados. But for the time that I was there, I used it; I really used it all right. You see, I took in all I could get for the time being. And what I didn't know then, I would borrow books; and I keep reading and doing, and I keep trying. I used to pay a neighbor of mine, a friend, to help me write my letters when I want them written out; and so she tell me "Oh no, I'm not going to write for you today, you got to try and do it yourself". And she wouldn't write, all I tell her, I say " I'll give you twenty-five cent to write for me" "No, you got to do it yourself". And from that day I started, and I write my own letters. (Crane, 1987: 125-126)

Although faced with socioeconomically dictated barriers to learning, this woman did what she could to advance her own knowledge and, no doubt, instilled the belief that education mattered in her own children. With the rise in opportunity for off-island education and the declining need for children's labor in the fields or at home, many parents who did not get to finish their educations made formal education a family priority by encouraging their children not only to complete on-island coursework but to go off-island to finish their secondary educations and, perhaps, to move on to college. The sense the education mattered comes through in this narrative and reflects not only the ambition of this woman but also the changing attitudes towards the value of education as a whole.

Apart from education as a way out, black people form St. Johns also focused on changes that they saw or desired to see in the local economy. Tourism became a topic of intense debate and anticipated many of the changes that Saba would see through the development of the on-island tourist economy. As people started coming to Saba, the economics of the island shifted to cater to their needs and, in particular, service industries and crafts like drawn-thread work changed in response to this small but steady influx of foreigners. The woman who was forced to support herself by the age of fourteen shared her thoughts on these changes as follows:

First they had to be sending so much [drawn-thread] work to America to try to sell it. Sometimes you get word from it, sometimes you wouldn't get no word. And now the tourists come here. You can do this amount of work; you can go up there, we have a place up there that when the tourists boats come we call sell the work. And then with the tourists passing from Flat Point, you can get work sold. I mean there's plenty American money in circulation. The Dutch money is just for those that work in the government and, you see, if they give you some help from the government. But you that have to make your daily bread, you have to live by the sweat of your brow. You know what it means. And it's very nice for them to come in. It's good for everybody, but it's more better for the laborin' man and then things will go on. (Crane, 1987: 336)

She later continued her thoughts like this:

> The place needs uplift. The way how I think about it is that the place needs to be helped. We need help. Plenty. And the only way by getting the help is for strangers to come in. The Americans came in St. Maarten—well, Americans and other things, but there's most stress upon them. And St. Maarten has gone up, St. Maarten has gone up a good bit. And always the strangers has helped St. Maarten and a whole lot. Saba needs it too. In my way of thinking, I feel that the strangers need to come in, to be able to help. They helps in each way. They help the laborer, and then they help the government, too, because after they comes in they have to pay their taxes and have to do what we do who's living in. We need help in the island, that's my way of thinking. (Crane, 1987: 336)

While orientation to the United States remained strong in the migrant connections of a large segment of the white population, particularly in Windwardside, soon the island itself became host to a wide range of ex-pats who settled on Saba for both economic reasons and in their personal quest for a simple and quiet life. In the post-oil period, American entrepreneurs came to see Saba as an island paradise where they and other tourists could escape from the grind of the busy world that lay just off-shore. First the attentions of the tourist industry turned to the white sand beaches of nearby St. Maarten but eventually Saba entered the radar as a place of quiet serenity surrounded by stunning natural landscapes and a wealthy of underwater treasures for a growing community of divers. So, just as the personal connections to family in the States began to attenuate, more Americans began the journey down to Saba and became permanent and semi-permanent fixtures in island life. Sabans from the black and white community in St. Johns and elsewhere looked to ex-pats as sources of information about life in the States and much of what they knew of The Land of Opportunity flowed either through these indirect channels or through various forms of media that filtered into the on-island communities. Americans, like their country before, came to be seen as sources of economic hope and opportunity for islanders who had little in the way of economic capital or business savvy. Over time, however, some of this initial gratitude turned to simmering anger as people who had deep roots on Saba found themselves outside looking in on the expansion of the tourist industry in their communities. Soon, selling drawn-thread work or providing labor to build a guesthouse did not make up for the fact that most Sabans did not take central roles in either the direction or profits of the

burgeoning tourist trade. Inflation also started to make an impact on island life and many older

people shared sentiments similar to this black St. Johns woman:

> Really, I think that it's much harder now as then because money was more. You
> get more money now, but things was cheaper and you could see more from the money
> then as what you see from it now, yes. Although 'tis more, but you could see more out of
> it in them days as now. I tell you, it was pretty tough, but still we made it, with the help
> of God, we still made it, yeah. (Crane, 1987: 217)

Dependence on low intermittent wages garnered through government work and participation in the

largely low-level jobs that Sabans held in private sector work sat in contrast to the increasing cost of

on-island living. The elevated cost of living stemmed from both a premium placed on property

through various forms of speculation and the increasing dependence on importation of food due to

declining production in the agricultural sector (Figure 7.36). Inadequate supplies of money were

stretched very thin and modernization seemed to signal a decline in living standards for many caught

between the self-sufficient world of agriculture and the wage-earner where potatoes and peas were

bought in American dollars. Knowledge of life off-island and the consumeristic attitudes sported by

many ex-pats also reminded Sabans of what they did not have and created a range of consumer

desires that could not be met through the average wage earner's salary. These tensions continue to

play out in modern Saban society in St. Johns and in all of the other villages where Sabans' consumer

desires are manufactured with reference to the values of American consumer society but where the

ability to fulfill those desires remains partial at best.

The white population of St. Johns escaped any form of characterization either by The Keurs

in the late 1950s or Julia Crane in the 1960s and 1970s. Their small size made them partially if not

completely invisible to these two waves of researchers and no record of their individual thoughts and

experiences remains in published materials on Saba. All that is left are the demographic dynamics

that shrank their population to virtual extinction by the middle of the 20th century. Due to high

celibacy rates that depressed fertility during the seafaring period, the white population of St. Johns

developed an aging population of unmarried white women and older male retirees much like that

found in The Bottom. Only a few white families remained reproductively active during the early

parts of the 20th century and, of the children born at this time, migration rates for men dropped from 90% during the transition from seafaring to oil refinery migration to just about 55% during the high point of oil refinery migration. For women, the decline was substantially less and migration rates moved from 84% of the population during transition times to around 70% during the height of the oil industry's labor demands. A drop in emigration rates in a community that had clearly established good connections with the United States is puzzling and indicates either that a certain proportion of the younger generation simply made the decision to stay or that the increased difficulty of entering the United States left some faced with the choice of striking out on their own in the oil refineries or doing what they could to survive on island. A look at the places of residence for off island relative in 1964, however, suggests that many young people chose to rejoin their family members in the United States while only a few moved on to work in the oil industries of Aruba and Curacao (Tables 7.9, 7.10). About 65% of the white population had an average of about 4 family members living in The States while around 12% had an average of about 2 relatives living on either Aruba or Curacao. Very few members of the white population were left without any close kin living overseas which reflects both the high level of migration experienced in the population and the fact that very few white families severed all connection to their island homes. However, these connections were soon to die out along with the older generation of St. Johns whites who chose or were required to live out their lives in their native community. Despite their small numbers, each individual member of the white community had an average of 4 close family members living abroad which exceeds the number of connections found in the black or biracial communities. In one case, five family members had relocated to nearby St. Maarten which also gives evidence for the increasing pull of Saba's rapidly developing neighbor. Through migrant connections, print media, and radio shows, the people of St. Johns received waves of information about life in St. Maarten and it is no wonder that they came to believe that the development of the tourist trade would be a good thing for their own island.

As with the white community in The Bottom, the processes of family formation showed no significant alterations during this time (Figures 7.27-7.35). Unlike the black population, no white

children born in St. Johns were registered as having been born outside of marriage either during the oil refinery period or in the period that followed (Figure 7.32). Although the small remnant population of native white women from St. Johns did begin to have children outside of marriage at a higher rate through time (20% in late seafaring times, 30% during oil refinery migration, and 50% in the post-oil period), like white women from Hells Gate and Windwardside, they tended to do so while living in other villages. This suggests a level of social disapproval of non-marital childbearing in the microcosm of white St. Johns society. Marriage remained a strong social value for white women in St. Johns and the proportion of never-married women in this small population dropped from a high of around 60% during the transition to an oil-based economy to 25% during the height of the oil boom to zero in the immediate post-oil period. As an example of how marriage continued to influence the lives of white St. Johns women, during the oil refinery period only one woman originally from the small white population of St. Johns had a child outside of marriage, with a black man, and she opted to marry a white man later on in life and had several more children. The handful of reproductive age white women from St. Johns all started their own families and their fertility spiked to nearly six surviving children per woman but quickly reduced to two as birth control became readily available and culturally acceptable. This temporary spike, however, was not enough to change the downward plunge of the white population on St. Johns and now there are only a few white residents in St. Johns that have any historical roots in the community. Because the majority of vital community members either left Saba entirely or migrated to other communities on island by the close of the oil refinery period, the discussion of white family forms in the St. Johns community becomes very circumscribed and consists of only three or four households where most people are over the age of 50.

The combined effects of seafaring and oil industry migration decimated the white population of The Bottom and St. Johns and shifted the majority of the white population to the eastern side of the island. This split became important in the history of the island because, although black and white people had always lived together on Saba, the development of population compositions across time segregated the island as a whole into the white population that retained a majority in Windwardside

and Hells Gate and the black population that comprised over 80% of the combined population of St. Johns and The Bottom. In many ways, the loss of so much of the white population in two of the four villages and, in particular, the loss of most of the white elites left a lasting impression on the remaining white population. Based on prior research on Saba and on new ethnographic data presented fully in later chapters, it is clear that some sectors of white society came to see the decline of the white population in The Bottom and St. Johns as a generalized assault on their own European heritage even as they increased their proportion of the population in their home villages. White Sabans who believed the their own separateness (at the best) and their own racial superiority (at the worst) developed something of a siege mentality, a propensity to circle the wagons, and, at times, outright hostility towards Sabans who were not of their own racial group. The segregation of the villages into black and white did nothing to help alleviate these divisions and, in a very real way, allowed unfair stereotypes to develop in the absence of any honest intensive daily interaction. Despite the sincere efforts of most black and white Sabans to listen to their better angels, fears over social change, particularly fears over the loss of power in the white community, and the decline of certain cultural values, particularly those related to the family norms, continue to interject themselves into the relationships that black and white Sabans share with one another. In this sense, it is the sudden lack of white families in The Bottom and St. Johns that created a cause for alarm rather than any variations in standard family formation practices that existed in these communities.

However, it is important to consider how family formation practices came to signify race in the minds of many white Sabans irrespective of their own class status. The rapid increase of non-marital childbearing in the predominantly black communities of The Bottom and St. Johns stood in contrast to the enduring pattern of white nuclear family formation within the context of marriage. This divergence in family building practices emerged as one way to mark the boundary between us and them in the minds of many whites and to claim a level of sociocultural superiority. Needless to say, the black population also had a long tradition of marriage before childbearing but this tended to be used to sort out "respectable" members of the black community from those who were not rather

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than as a signifier of a shared cultural history of nuclear family-building between the white and black communities. These issues of race and family rise to the surface when particular circumstances, like interracial childbearing outside of marriage, challenge the boundaries laid down by the older generations and will be addressed at length in Chapter 9.

Oil refinery migration, the emergence of the welfare state, and family life: Windwardside

By the end of seafaring migration, the population of Windwardside had transformed into a predominately white community with a shrinking black minority. In the oil and post-oil period, the black and white population loss continued to outpace the ability of the population to replenish itself through fertility and the population, as a whole, dropped from over 400 people just after seafaring migration declined to around 250 by the close of the oil refinery period. The population composition, however, had crystallized with white Sabans retaining around 65% of the total population and black and biracial people equally splitting the remaining portion. At the height of oil refinery migration, black men and women were fully integrated into the labor migration patterns found in the black population of the other villages but the white population became less involved in labor migration over time and continued to maintain an orientation to the United States rather than to more regional locales. These divergent patterns are indicative of historical opportunities that were structured by race and of people's perspectives on evolving opportunities in the Caribbean oil industries. As labor migration declined by the early 1960s, the total population stabilized at just under 200 and the remaining islanders began to transition from an economy based on labor migration and agriculture to one based on government work, government subsidies, and higher education as a vehicle for career advancement both on- and off-island.

The black population from Windwardside continued the exodus started under conditions of seafaring migration and the loss of women soon caught up to the loss of men in the black community. During the transition between seafaring and oil refinery migration, the black population lost approximately 85% of their men and 75% of their women but these astonishingly high rates of loss

were raised further during the height of oil refinery migration as almost 90% of black men and over 85% of black women left their island forever. The compression between male and female migration in the black community is important and shows a growing demand for the labor of black women in the domestic service industries that supported the growing migrant populations on Aruba and Curacao. In the immediate post-oil period, the proportion of permanent black migrants dropped slightly to 76% of men and 70% of women but at the height of the welfare state, migration accelerated to 81% loss of black women while male migration dropped to around 65%. Looking at the migrant connections reported by black islanders from Windwardside, it is clear that oil industry migration created the densest off-island links between migrants and their families back home (Tables 7.11, 7.12). About 60% of Windwardside blacks reported having close family members living on Aruba and 70% on Curacao and the average number of migrants in those locations averaged around 5 and 3, respectively. So, although a higher percentage of black people had relatives on Curacao, people with kin on Aruba tended to have more of their people living on that island. Although the proportion of people with kin in Curacao is higher, the density of connections to Aruba exceeds that of Curacao and suggests a slight favoring of Aruba as a migration destination. This is an interesting divergence from the slight favoring of Curacao found in the communities of The Bottom and St. Johns. Connections to the United States are minimal in the black community but those with connections to the States had about 2 family members living there. This pattern is difficult to interpret given the high levels of early seafaring migration in the black Windwardside community and suggests either a complete severing of early migrant ties forged by black people who left for the United States or a more regional focus in seafaring migration in the black community that then converted into labor migration to the oil-refineries on Aruba and Curacao. Similar to the lack of connection to the States, very few black people had connections either to Holland or to nearby St. Maarten and, on average, only one close family member lived in each of those locations. Although their connections were highly regionally focused and primarily targeted the oil-producing islands of

Aruba and Curacao, very few black people from Windwardside had no off-island connections as only 13% of the population reported having no close kin living off-island.

Changes in family formation practices show an initial decline in the proportion of black children being born outside of marriage from the period of seafaring to oil-refinery migration followed by a rapid acceleration of non-marital childbearing in the post-oil period that focused most of the burden of economic support on women in single-parent households (Figures 7.37-7.45). Although the proportion of children born outside of marriage declined from 60% at the height of seafaring to 45% during the transition to an oil-based economy to just 40% during the height of oil refinery migration and early post-oil times, the proportion of childbearing women having children outside of marriage showed an upward trend and grew from just 30% during seafaring days to 100% by the end of oil refinery migration (Figures 7.42, 7.43). As non-marital childbearing spread as a family formation practice among black Windwardside women, so, too, did the propensity to marry after having one or more child outside of marriage which indicates the continued importance of marriage in many black households during this time. While there were no black women who had children outside of marriage during late seafaring times, half of women having non-marital children married during the transition to an oil economy and nearly 70% married at the height of oil refinery migration and during the early days of post-oil Saba. From the perspective of the total population of black Windwardside women, 30% stayed celibate during the rise of the oil industries on Aruba and Curacao, 40% had children only within marriage, 30% had children non-maritally, and 17% of these women became long-term single mothers (Figure 7.44, Table 7.15). At the height of oil refinery migration, these proportions shifted substantially with 40% of black Windwardside women remaining life-long celibates, 60% having non-marital children, and 27% of black women raising their children in the absence of a husband for extended periods of time (Figure 7.44, Table 7.15). As shown in the previous chapter, the black population in Windwardside lost a significant proportion of its population during seafaring times and they continued to lose more men than women in the early oil refinery period. While marriage was clearly a prerequisite for many black Windwardside women at the dawn

of oil refinery migration, the early departure of so many black Windwardside men made marrying before childbearing a much more difficult task and black women had to make the decision either to bend their social restrictions on childbearing or to adhere to those tenets and remain unmarried and childless. The high proportion of celibate black women from this community in both the late seafaring and oil refinery times, the declining proportion of women who had children only within marriage, the elevation in the proportion of women following a non-marital childbearing path, and the growth in long-term single mother homes all suggest an ideological schism between women who strongly believed in family formation traditions based on marriage before childbearing, on the one hand, and women who either rejected marriage as the ideal form of family building or who held marriage as the ideal foundation of family life in certain ways but could not realize that goal or could only do so years if not decades after starting their families. In the absence of marital partners, the former group of women remained single and childless while those with more flexible ideas about the relationships between marriage and childbearing continued to propagate and pass on their ideas about family life to their own children. Despite the expanding practice of non-marital childbearing, it is important to stress that marriage remained a powerful social institution in the black Windwardside community at this time and that improved economic conditions through oil refinery migration and remittance monies allowed more than half of all women who had children outside of marriage to eventually marry. The elevation in the proportion of childbearing women having children outside of marriage and the declining overall proportion of black children being born outside of marriage also suggests that these marriages occurred after only a few years had passed and that these couples continued to have children after solidifying their bonds with one another through marriage. A steady stream of black migrants from Hells Gate may also have helped reduce the proportion of children born outside of marriage during oil refinery times because Hells Gate people, black and white, continued to insist on marriage as the foundation of family life. They not only would have brought this marital ethic with them into the Windwardside community but also would have increased the proportion of marital births in the community as a whole by continuing to have their children within

the bounds of marriage. However, about 40% of black women from Windwardside who stayed on-island never married and this, coupled with delayed patterns of marriage, indicates that many black women and their children lived in fatherless families for extended periods of time (Figure 7.45).

In the post-oil period, marital family arrangements soon gave way to non-marital childbearing practices and the propensity to marry after having children also weakened. The proportion of black Windwardside children being born outside of marriage expanded from just 40% by the end of oil refinery migration to 65% in the post-oil period, to 80% during the height of the welfare state on-island (Figure 7.42). Part of this incredible increase is due to the fact that women are now having fewer children and that delayed marriage often comes after women have reached all or most of their desired family sizes. However, the almost universal practice of having children outside of marriage in the post-oil period and a drop in the proportion of women who married after having children from around 70% at the end of oil refinery migration to around 45% in the post-oil period also suggest that this trend shows a real increase in the proportion of children being born into non-marital homes where mothers bear most if not all of the responsibility for their children (Figure 7.43). From the perspective of the total population of black women from this village, 14% remained celibate during the immediate post-oil period, 15% had children only within marriage, 71% had children outside of marriage, and 46% of women becoming long-term single mothers (Figure 7.44, Table 15). These trends stayed fairly constant at the height of the welfare state with just 15% of women never having children of their own, no women having children exclusively within marriage, 85% having children outside of marriage, and 47% of women raising their children with no marital partner (Figure 7.44, Table 15). It is clear from these trends that non-marital forms of childbearing came to dominate the black population of Windwardside and that marriage is no longer seen as a prerequisite for childbearing in this small community even if it remains a definite social goal that some achieve later in life. The trajectory of childbearing practices among black women in the Windwardside community shows a gradual weeding out of childbearing ideologies that demanded marriage before childbearing during oil refinery times. This movement away from marriage as the foundation of family life was

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due, at least partially, to the fact that women with these beliefs failed to reproduce and to pass on their marital traditions in a changed socioeconomic environment that transformed many black men and women into temporary or permanent migrants. For women who remained flexible in their ideas about marriage and childbearing, many in the oil refinery period had children outside of marriage and later married while others, through choice or circumstance, never experienced marital life. The fact that almost no black children grew up in homes where parents married before having children and the fact that long-term single mother homes almost doubled in the post-oil period show not only the expansion of non-marital childbearing ideologies but also the total decimation of marriage-before-family traditions that were once very strong in this community. In reference to family building trends in the black communities of The Bottom and St. Johns, black Windwardside women retained a stronger commitment to marriage, especially before childbearing, in the early days of oil refinery migration but soon relinquished these restrictions and became much more closely aligned with the non-marital traditions that dominated the family formation history of the black St. Johns population. In particular, the proportions of long-term single mother homes grew significantly in Windwardside and St. Johns in the post-oil period and long-term single-mother homes are now almost twice as common in these villages when compared to The Bottom. Additionally, about 25% of black women from The Bottom retained a tradition of marrying before having children over the past few decades while women from St. Johns and Windwardside abandoned these traditions almost entirely.

Whether starting marital or non-marital families, few remaining black women who had children in Windwardside under conditions of oil refinery migration began to have children at younger ages and, by the end of oil refinery times, had very large families compared to previous generations. During the late seafaring period, age at first birth elevated slightly to 24.5 years and then to 28.5 years as oil refinery migration took hold before dramatically plunging to 20 years under conditions of heavy oil refinery migration (Figure 7.41). Age at first marriage declined from 29 years in late seafaring times to 27 during the transition to a oil economy to just 23 years as oil refinery migration tapered off and husbands were, on average, about five years older than their wives (Figure

7.40). Early entry into motherhood, marital or non-marital, meant that family sizes doubled from around 3 surviving children per family during late seafaring and early oil refinery times to an average of over 7 surviving children per childbearing women at the height of oil refinery migration (Figures 7.37-7.39). In the immediate post-oil period, age at first birth elevated to 23.5 years before dropping to 22.5 years and age at first marriage increased to 26 years and then to 30.5 years (Figures 7.40, 7.41). The growing gap between age at first birth and age at first marriage supports the assertion that more women were living for substantial periods of time without the constant presence of a marital partner although the rise of cohabitation over this period of time may have mimicked nuclear family life in at least some of these homes. Completed family sizes dropped from a high of over 7 to four in the immediate post-oil period and just two during the height of the welfare state which indicates the widespread acceptance and use of modern contraception (Figure 7.37). The lack of compression of childbearing into early age categories in the post-oil period suggest either that some women were using birth control and others were not or that women were using birth control to increase the spacing between children rather than to terminate childbearing after having several children early in life (Figures 7.38, 7.39). This is the only population on Saba that shows this pattern as all other groups appear to have used birth control to limit the number of children after having two or more in early adulthood.

Ballooning family sizes under conditions of heavy oil refinery migration intersected with non-marital childbearing and increased economic stress for black Windwardside women who were trying make ends meet at a time when the financial contributions of fathers were often shaky at best. Whether their partners or husbands were on island or overseas, black women both on- and off-island continued to take on the labor responsibilities necessary to keep their families together in the absence of significant male economic assistance. When asked to reflect on her experiences, a young black girl from Windwardside told stories that reflected a deep feeling of familial responsibility developed at an early age and a sense of absenteeism on the part of her hard working mother and heart-breaking abandonment by her non-existent father:

> Every night Mommy used to go out and leave we home by ourselves, so we had to mind each other. When one would get up and cry, I get up and put she back asleep. One Christmas we had church twelve o'clock—I think it was one—and Mommy got up, and she thought I was still asleep. I got up, bathed, and dressed, combed my hair, and we went to church; and she was surprised to see we in church. She thought we was asleep, and she wanted to leave we home. We still went. (Crane, 1987: 477)

and:

> My father is in Curacao. He wrote me once. Every week I used to write him letters. He wasn't to answer, so I stopped writin' him He was here, only once I saw my father. (Crane, 1987: 483-484)

When talking about her mother, there is a sense of dissatisfaction with the her mother's tendency to defer her parental responsibilities onto her children and a sense of defiance when she rallies her siblings to get down to the church on time and in an orderly presentable manner. It is unclear whether this is a midnight or midday mass, but the message sent is one of "you shouldn't leave us behind, mother". Many children from poor families, both black and white, learned to care for themselves at an early age because their parents were not able to manage all their children either because they had to work long hours to support the family or because they had personal problems, like alcoholism or depression, that prevented them from living up to their parental responsibilities. In this case, the father is clearly not even in the picture emotionally or financially and this has left a mark of deep sadness and rejection on the inner-world of this young girl. Unfortunately, this kind of abandonment became all too common an experience for many black children and left them at high risk for repeating these negative patterns in their adult lives.

The experiences of migration for black people in Windwardside continued to be mentally, emotionally, and physically taxing and uncertainty and fear weighted heavily in the minds and experiences of migrants from the black community. In the midst of these worries, though, men and women exhibited an amazing ability to adapt to difficult circumstances as they tried to make a better life abroad. One Windwardside man from the black community remembered the difficulties he encountered in the early days of labor migration to Aruba:

> [I came from] a very small family. All of my men family was all sailors, yeah, all sailors. And they's all dead out; I'm the onliest man in the family left. Yeah, I spent the most of my time out, and the last now is, I worked in Aruba there with the Standard

Oil Company there in Aruba for twenty-one years down there. In Aruba, the good days down there was all right, very good. But I mean to say it wasn't all right so far because when we went to Aruba you couldn't get a house for you to live in. You couldn't get a house to live in down there. And we went down there, and we was working with the contractors that was buildin' the Eagle Refinery, and we got jobs down there with him. But now when they finished work in the afternoon, they had nowhere to go, because you couldn't get a house nowhere in the place to hire, neither in San Nicolas nor in Oranjestad, you couldn't get a house to hire nowhere. So the first week we put in there, there was myself, my brother and a fella Levenstone there from The Bottom and I think it was three or four fellas from St. Maarten. We was all together and we couldn't get nowhere to live; and we used to go behind the American Consul's office and the big cases that the machinery used to come in had this straw into it, you know, and at night we'd go in there. We'd go and get in those cases, you know, and lay down; and we'd sleep in there.

  Well, finally my brother met an Arubian fella that he used to sail with around Curacao; and he was talking with him and he told him that he had come down there and he had got a job and he had nowhere to live, couldn't get nowhere to live. He said "Well, my father is building a tank" he says "there in the yard" he says "and if you satisfied I'll ask him to hire it to you". He says" All he has to do is cut a door into it" he says "Because the roof is galvanized, a galvanized roof is unto it". So my brother told him yes, it would be all right. So we went o'er to the house and was talking to his father about it. And he told him, well, this was a friend of his that he used to sail together with in Curacao and he had come down there and had got work but he had nowhere to sleep, nowhere to sleep. So he asked him "What about taking this tank" he said "and cut a hole into it and make a door into it and hire it to him?" So the old man agreed. He said " Well, that can happen" he said "I'll do that tomorrow" he says " I'll cut it open and make a door and a window in one end and I'll hire it to you". (Crane, 1987: 152-153)

In the first part of his narrative, he details how early processes of seafaring migration involved all of his male relatives and, although we don't know if they ever returned to Saba, this revelation supports the validity of the demographic trends that showed high levels of early black male migration from Windwardside during seafaring days. When this man details his own history of sailing the high seas in other parts of his life history, he speaks of his involvement in regional trade routes that extended as far north as Cuba and as far south as Demerara and, interestingly, his quest for housing on Aruba ends when his brother taps into the connections he made with a local when he was sailing around Curacao. His own experiences and the fact that his brother spent a good deal of time sailing around Curacao suggest that at least some of the many black men who left Saba in the early parts of the 20th century did, indeed, remain regionally focused. Transitioning into oil refinery migration continued this regional trend in black labor migration and suggests that most of the social interactions that Sabans had with people off-island were with other Caribbean people. When he enters Aruba, he finds a social environment that is not unlike other boom towns were employment opportunities vastly exceed

the ability of the local population to provide housing and services for incoming laborers. Housing becomes the key example of this, as he and his circle of family and friends find themselves sleeping in boxes and, later, on the cold floor of a converted water tank that was never meant to be used as shelter. These trying times also anticipate emerging labor demands that will propel other men and women from their native homes to participate in rapidly developing construction and service industries that sprung up to support oil-worker's daily needs. While men entered as potential laborers in the factories, ships, and construction projects, the women soon followed to feed them, do their laundry, and clean their houses as wives, partners, or paid domestic laborers. After the early years of the housing crunch, the Lago oil refinery on Aruba built low-rent housing for their workers in planned developments and encouraged men to bring their families to live on island (Crane, 1971: 78). This, in part, reflected the belief that families grounded laboring men by keeping them out of trouble and, therefore, made them more reliable and responsible workers. Family, then, was of interest and importance to both the workers and their employers and was seen by both as an important element promoting social stability.

As in the other villages, the small black community in Windwardside was slowly shut out of the labor market in the oil refineries of Aruba and Curacao and either returned home, stayed put on their little island either because they had no where to go or no desire to leave, or continued to migrate in the hopes of finding a better life abroad even though off-island jobs were relatively few and far between. The rising importance of cash in the Saban economy, dependence on low-wage inconsistently available government work, and a general decline in the number of people willing to engage in agricultural pursuits characterized the local world of work at this time and created a lot of dismay in the older sections of the community (Figure 7.46). Work ethic, in particular, was seen to be on the decline among those younger Sabans who did stay on-island and older men and women who had made it through the tough times by working hard both at home and away looked at their current situations with mixed emotions. While they saw the benefit of government relief as a way to alleviate poverty, they also came to feel that this safety net was being abused by people who had the ability but

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not the desire to work hard and on a consistent basis. In decrying the fact that the young eschewed

agricultural work for work provided by the government, one black woman shared her perspectives on

the change:

> Well, Saba now is changing up. The young people don't want to work. It's the truth. This old man, he tries his best over here, Mr. Martin. He try his best. Sometimes 'Becka carry him, and Eugenie she comes for him. He works. But the younger people, they don't want to plant a slip. Now this morning I sell a slip for a guilder. They don't want to do. If you don't plant something…I buy sives from Dinda and I plant. And Bobby got there thyme slips he plant. Watermelons he got; young trees, you know, planted. But the children so rude here sometimes they go to pull up some, and then their parents get vexed if you have to speak to the children. You see, where the children come so rude. They know if the parent take their part. The child know by the parent, you know, so you have to leave them. In the years past, Muriel father, Chrissie father, all of them used to work all over. Mr. Lampe find that when he came his last time. He said the young ones don't want to work. To hoe or anything is a disgrace to them. The other day Miss Teenie had there growin' up so. Now she had to get Samuel, and he was workin' so lazy. Often I've sat on a box and cleaned there, been by Miss Teenie and cleaned the garden with a box. They think it too hard to work. They don't want to work. Now they feel like to get, you know, higher up in the world, and they'll all go and be in the office. They want to get more money. (Crane, 1987: 52)

Her openly disapproving tone shows the depth of her concern and she is clearly perplexed by the

work habits and perspectives on work found in the younger generation. Working in the ground had

always been an effective survival strategy for many black and white families all over Saba and the

ease with which these practices were abandoned created a lot of anxiety among the "older heads".

Her narrative uncovers the tensions involved in the shift from a history of subsistence farming to an

aesthetic of modernity defined by elevating to a status of paid employee in a government office. In

her mind, there is a clear division between the real labor required from the work of planting and the

labor required of a person putting on airs in a comfy office. Class and class aspirations are also at

issue here as she conveys the sense that many young people, irrespective of their own financial status,

had lost respect for hard-working poor people and the old farming ways that kept Saba viable during

tough times. In a slightly more tempered approach, the older black man who shared his Aruba

adventures above also shared the following thoughts about work, in general, and, in doing so

intimates that some are not living up to the standards he sets for himself or others:

> Well, life in Saba I can't complain. I can't complain at all because it's just how you make it. See, some people say they got life so hard and this, that and the other; but life is just how you make it. Because if you make up your mind if you's going to work

for your daily bread, you got to do it. But it ain't no use to do a day's work today and then, well, "I'm tired and I ain't going to do no more work tomorrow". You got to make up your mind to do it, if you wants to, for your daily bread. You got to do it every day. You can't do it today and stop tomorrow, got to be a continual thing. So if you got to work for your living and got to work hard, many a day you have to work hard to make that day's work. You work a easy day today, tomorrow you work a hard one, the following day, well, you got it more better, see. But where I'm concerned I can't find no fault for the time I been home. There's sometimes I'm, well, hanging on someone's house painting, or being in the ground doing a lil' farming, something or the other to keep me going. But I can't find no fault for the time I been home. (Crane, 1987: 159)

In his description of current work disciplines, he makes the soft accusation that many on Saba are willing to complain about their hard lives but few are willing to do what it would take to improve their own economic situations. He suggests hard work done on a regular schedule is not part of the labor aesthetic of many modern day Sabans and, undoubtedly, his own experiences of struggle and sacrifice on Aruba and elsewhere color the ways he interprets new labor practices that took root on island during the post-refinery period. These concerns were expressed elsewhere on island and also came to the surface when white Windwardside residents spoke about their thoughts about economic life in the era of big government.

The majority white population in Windwardside experienced its peak level of permanent departure during the transition from seafaring migration to a pattern of labor migration to the oil refineries in Aruba and Curacao but migration rates steadily declined after that time. During the transition from a seafaring to an oil-industry economy, the white population lost about 80% of the men and 70% of the women who came of age during these years. At the peak demand for labor in the oil industries, about 70% of men and women left Saba permanently and, for the first time, migration rates for women were equivalent, if not slightly higher, to those of men. The proportion of whites from Windwardside lost to permanent migration declined steadily over the post-oil period with about 60% of men and women leaving in the immediate post-oil times and about 50% of women and 45% of men leaving during the height of the welfare state. Although the proportions of permanent migrants in the oil and post-oil periods are very high, they are still significantly lower than those found in the small black population in Windwardside which suggests that more white than black residents from Windwardside found the socioeconomic opportunities of village life untenable and

decided to take their chances with life on-island. Crane's 1964 migration survey shows the continuing impact of early seafaring migration and the later migration pull of the oil refineries on Aruba and Curacao (Tables 7.11, 7.12). Three-quarters of the white population in Windwardside stated that they had close kin in the United States and those with relatives in the U.S. had an average of about 6 family members living there. Both the proportion of people with connections to the United States and the average number of family members living there are the highest reported in any group on Saba and reflect an extreme American orientation in the outlook of the general white population of Windwardside. The delay in family migration when compared to The Bottom or St. Johns may explain some of the strength in these ties since those departures remained present in the memories of the living family members that migrants left behind. In fact, the biggest drop in total population happened during the later stages of seafaring times as the white population of Windwardside declined from nearly 500 people to around 250 before the opening of the oil refineries. When seen in this light, these numbers probably reflect the proximity of seafaring depopulation in the white community, however, the increased focus on family reunification in the migration laws of The States certainly gave Windwardside whites a migration advantage over other islanders who had either no or very distant connections to family living in America. For other families, oil refinery migration became incorporated into daily life experiences and over 50% of the population had an average of about three relatives living in Aruba and around 30% of the population reported having at least one family member in Curacao. It is very clear that the white population, as a whole, favored working for the American-run Lago refinery on Aruba and this preference is likely rooted in their general favorable attitude towards their influential northern neighbor. So, even those who did not or could not gain entry into the United States directly still had intimate contact with Americans through their labor in the American oil refinery and in their interactions with American ex-pats in the community at large. A small minority of people reported relatives in Bermuda and St. Maarten but nearly 1/3 of the population said they had a close family member living in Holland. The number of people in these locations, however, was small and, on average, people had two or fewer kin in Bermuda (2.27),

Holland (1.32), and St. Maarten (1.76). Only 2% of the white community reported no kin living abroad and, on average, people had about eight close family members living off island. In sum, Windwardside people from the white community were very well connected through their long history of international migration and maintained a high level of orientation towards the United States.

Until quite recently, Windwardside families in the white community looked very similar to those found in earlier periods and were founded on the practice of marriage before childbearing (Figures 7.37-7.45). Celibacy rates stayed high throughout the period of oil refinery migration and about half of all reproductive age women who stayed on-island have no record of having any children. As migration opportunities tapered off, the proportion of celibate women declined to just 20% in the immediate post-oil period which shows an increased ease of entry into marriage and marital childbearing not experienced since before seafaring migration took hold of the community. Interestingly, never-married women declined from 48% in late seafaring and early oil refinery times to post-oil times to just 15% at the height of oil refinery migration and during the post-oil period while the proportion of celibates moved from 56% to 58% to 50%, respectively (Figure 7.45). The fact that 50% of white women who were long-term residents on Saba during the height of the oil refinery period remained childless but only 15% failed to marry suggests either that some married-and-childless or once-married-but-childless women at this time had children off-island and returned home only later in life or that many of these women were abandoned or widowed under conditions of high oil refinery migration. This pattern is also present for the black Windwardside community, although less extreme, as 40% of women remained childless and just 25% failed to marry at some point in their lives. Neither the black population as a whole nor any of the black populations in the three other villages show this pattern of married-but-childless in oil refinery times or in other periods. However, the weakened links between marriage and childbearing, the high proportion of women having children outside of marriage, and the high proportion of childbearing women who never married obscure the relationship between celibacy/childlessness and marriage in the black community. In the white community, where childbearing and marriage remained tightly bound, entry

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into marriage generally meant entry into childbearing while failure to enter marriage generally ended in life-long childlessness. Within this social context, any excess in the proportion of celibate women over never-married women reveals a population of women who either experienced a childless marriage or who only had children when living away from Saba. When looking at the gap between proportion never-married and proportion remaining childless, the aggregate white population reflects the oil refinery trend cited above and the white populations in The Bottom, St. Johns, and Hells Gate show this same relationship between celibate and never-married proportions at different periods of time. Not surprisingly, the proportion of once-married childless women in The Bottom peaks during late seafaring times while St. Johns women experienced similar conditions during the late seafaring to early oil refinery transition. In Hells Gate, the proportion of childless but married women during seafaring and oil refinery times never edges much above what could result from natural infertility of husbands and wives (5%), but 13% of married white Hells Gate women did remain childless in the immediate post-oil period. Although it is difficult to pin point the reasons for fluctuations in the proportions of once-married but childless women, the fact that increases in the proportions of these women coincide with periods of high permanent migration in The Bottom, St. Johns, and Windwardside does suggest that many white women suffered through the death of their spouse or the pain of abandonment by husbands who lived the rest of their lives away from Saba. Return migration after childbearing is also a possibility but the numerous stories of death on the seas captured in Saban life histories makes tragedy and loss the most likely culprits in creating these demographic trends in the white community and likely touched many lives in the black community in Windwardside and elsewhere as well.

For white women who raised families in Windwardside, fertility declined slightly from end of seafaring times, to just under 3 surviving children per childbearing woman, rebounded to about 4.5 at the height of oil refinery migration, and then dropped to an average of two surviving children per family in the post-oil period (Figure 7.37). The reduction in completed family sizes during the late seafaring and early oil refinery period suggests that many couples spent extended periods of time

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apart while the increase in completed family sizes at the height of oil migration indicates a reversal of this pattern and a trend towards couples spending the better parts of their lives in close daily contact with one another. Declining fertility throughout the post-oil period indicates the advent of modern contraceptive use in the white Windwardside community and an increasing desire to control fertility after oil refinery migration came to a close (Figure 7.38, 7.39). Age at first birth elevated from around 23 years during seafaring migration to 26 years as oil refinery migration accelerated before declining to 25 years at the height of oil refinery migration, 22.5 years in the immediate post-oil period and just 22 years at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.41). Age at first marriage hovered around 24 years during the transition from seafaring to oil refinery migration, dropped to 22 years at the height of the oil boom, and dropped further still to just under 21 years in throughout the post-oil period (Figure 7.40). In addition to the early and nearly universal entry of white Windwardside women into marriage and motherhood in the oil refinery and post-oil periods, the 4-year age difference between husbands and wives also suggests that men carried more authority in their homes based on their higher degree of life experience and that much of a white woman's social world continued to revolve around home and family. In some households, these power dynamics have shifted over the past few decades at a time when the number of children per family has shrunk considerably and more women have begun to find personal fulfillment through combining the responsibilities of family life and the rigors and challenges of working outside the home.

Trends in non-marital childbearing in the white Windwardside community have changed over time and the proportion of white women raising non-marital children without a husband is now higher in Windwardside than in the white populations of any other village. This change came about quite abruptly in the post oil period as only about 5% of all white children were born outside of marriage during seafaring and oil-refinery times. This low proportion spiked to 15% in the immediate post-oil period but then declined to almost nil thereafter (Figure 7.42). In late seafaring and early oil refinery times, about 15% of white Windwardside childbearing women had children outside of marriage and this proportion elevated to just over 20% at the height of oil refinery migration and in the immediate

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post-oil period before skyrocketing to over 40% in the past few decades (Figure 7.43). During oil refinery times, half of the handful of unmarried childbearing women married at some point in their lives while for the other half there is no record of their ever marrying. However, just as the proportion of unmarried white women having children increased in the post-oil period, the proportion marrying after having children hit a low of 25% and one in four white women who came of age at the height of the welfare state are now raising children in the absence of a marital partner (Figure 7.43, 7.44). From the perspective of the total white female population in Windwardside who came of age during the height of the welfare state, 20% remained celibate, 48% had children only within marriage, 32% had children outside of marriage and 24% of women who had children outside of marriage became long-term single mothers (Figure 7.43, Table 7.16). While earlier patterns of family formation were dominated by high levels of celibacy, marital childbearing for those who were selected into marital unions, and the occasional extra-marital birth, family building practices in the white Windwardside community are now converging with patterns of black family life as just half of all white women are having children only within marriage and an unprecedented one-third are having children without being married and, for most, remain unmarried (Table 7.16). To add to the social deviance of non-marital childbearing in the white community during the oil and post-oil periods, many of the children produced outside of marriage were fathered by black men and a few were even born outside their mother or father's existing marriage. Although some of these women and children stayed in their home villages, others chose to spend the remainder of their lives living in other communities on-island or to vacate the island entirely. It is very interesting that many Sabans in this subpopulation of white non-marital childbearing women did not stay in their home village, which mirrors some of the trends that are apparent in other villages. This suggests that cultural rigidities that demanded marriage before childbearing made life very difficult for these women and that they found little refuge or forgiveness in their native communities. This situation recalls the narrative presented in the previous chapter where a white woman who had a child outside of marriage eventually fled the island and spent the rest of her days scraping together a meager existence for

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herself and her children on oil-islands of Aruba and Curacao. Although the movement away from

marriage as a prerequisite for childbearing is a very important recent phenomenon that will be

thoroughly discussed in Chapter 9, it is necessary to emphasize that, apart from the few who "went

astray", the majority of white men and women from Windwardside continued to follow the script of

marriage before childbearing during the oil-refinery and the immediate post-oil periods. Furthermore,

almost all white women who could not find appropriate marriage partners found it preferable to resign

themselves to a life of permanent celibacy rather than commit the social taboos of non-marital and/or

interracial childbearing. Evidence for the persistence of these strong culturally informed feelings

about the importance of women's sexual purity came to the fore after a U.S. magazine carried a story

about Saba as an "Island of Women". Keur and Keur (1960: 268-269) recount the community's

reaction as follows:

> Sensitiveness to any criticism of their island is acute. This was demonstrated by
> the case of a notorious American magazine article which aroused a terrific furor and a
> storm of righteous indignation throughout the population. Someone's sister in the States
> had copied the article in longhand and sent it, neglecting to name the magazine from
> which she had taken it. It was cheaply written and falsely gave the impression that
> beautiful Saban girls were eager to fall into the arms of every male visitor. Many
> believed the National Geographic Magazine was the culprit simply because it had once
> published an article on Saba in 1940. All worried that it would bring Saba great harm
> and shame and that tourists would shun the island in consequence.

and Crane (1971: 72) continues to describe the Island of Women controversy as follows:

> Saba, in this period, was presented to the outside world in a film and several
> magazine articles in the 1930s, all of which laid stress upon the fact that it was an island
> of women, and some of which were exceedingly exaggerated in their description. The
> film was produced for the American men's magazine True, and presented in a rather
> untrue fashion an exaggerated picture of the ratio of women to men on the island. In
> 1937, one issue of Hearst's International Cosmopolitan contained two articles entitled
> "Saba, Land of Women" and "Land of the Lindbergh Circle". The St. Maarten
> newspaper of the period de Slag om Slag, reported as follows (1937:2) concerning the
> results of the publication: Shortly after the appearance of this article, letters occasionally
> accompanied with a portrait, showered in on the poor Gezaghebber and the Postmaster,
> with the polite requests, to kindly place the senders in touch with one or the other Saba-
> beauty, who, unlike her American sisters had not yet degraded that essence of femininity
> so much admired in 'womanhood' by the use of cigarettes, cocktails, etc.

The interplay between Sabans feeling betrayed and ashamed by an outsider's lascivious and culturally

unacceptable portrayal of Saban women and American men looking for a woman not yet "degraded"

by modernity is particularly interesting. It foreshadows a coming wave of women's liberation that

had not yet hit this tiny island in the middle of the Caribbean sea and shows just how difficult these

transitions were for men who clung to the belief that a woman's place was one of subservient prim-

and-proper domestic support for their husbands and children. The desperate desire of American men

to secure a Saban women as of yet untouched by the changing times anticipates some of the

reactionary attitudes that Saban men will show when their own women take steps to venture out on

their own. However, as evidenced by the dust kicked up by these representations, gender norms of

female domesticity and sexual purity and faithfulness still dominated the minds of white Sabans in

Windwardside during this time and any other form of female behavior remained antithetical to white

Sabans' conceptions of how a woman should act in her family and in her community. While many

white men felt that these restrictions on women were part of the natural order of things, others were

far more empathetic about the difficulties of being a woman in Saban society. One older white man

from Windwardside shared his thoughts on the matter:

> Women in Saba, I can assure you, don't mind talking about themselves. They love it. They love it because there's not much else to do, not much else to discuss. Somehow, they like to talk about themselves, their problems, their troubles, sickness, and homes and all that. A woman's life here is kind of restricted. As compared to other countries like the States and all, woman's life here is kind of tough. A woman, she likes to have the nice things for her home, and she likes to buy nice things for the kitchen. She likes to go shopping, whether she buys the things she sees or not. That is a woman' s greatest pleasure, and here they don't have it. In the States a woman gets up and she goes around the corner and she goes to a supermarket and she can buy practically anything that she has in her mind to eat or cook for her husband.
>
> Here you can't do it. Here she has to get up in the morning and stick her finger in the corner of her mouth and wonder "What are we going to get?" And three-quarters of the time it's something that maybe she doesn't want but she has to buy because there is nothing better. She may want something for the home, she can't get it. She doesn't have that pleasure of going in department stores and shopping. She can't go in supermarkets, all those things that give a woman a hell of a lot of pleasure. She can't do it. So the only pleasure a woman has here, according to me, is cleaning her house, going to church, and caring for her family. You can call that pleasure. But the other things like in other countries, belonging to clubs and moving around and taking a part in the community life and all, they don't have it here. And many of them, the majority of them don't kick. I never hear them kicking. I mean some of them say that life in Saba is slow. They accept it and they make the best of it. But when they go away, like to the States, and live there, ninety-nine percent of them don't want to come back on Saba and live again because they've seen the other side of the fence. They don't want to come back here. No one can blame them. (Crane, 1987: 283)

While his perspectives on grocery and furniture shopping as one of a woman's greatest joys does

nothing to break prevailing ideas about female domesticity, his description of scarcity on Saba and

the feelings of social confinement are continuing concerns for many Saban women today. This is particularly true for many return migrants who had their consumption patterns and desires shaped by life off island and who participated freely in a range of social groups when living away from home. The fact that few island women "kicked" during this time emphasized the high degree of social control exerted on women. This level of control over female behavior was achieved through a system of on-island gossip and social sanction coupled with a low prevalence of white women's interactions with the wider world either through various media sources, interactions with migrants, or personal experiences of living away from home. As this man suggests, most women who lived off-island certainly did learn to "kick" and, although some preferred to return to their island home, many others rejected the idea of returning to the lives they had known on Saba. Despite changing attitudes in the States and elsewhere, gender norms in the white community on Saba remained largely unchanged throughout this period and continued to be reflected in the division of labor that centered white women's work in the home, mostly in the form of unpaid domestic labor and low-pay drawn-thread work, and men's labor either outside the home in the fields, shops, and government offices or off-island in the oil refineries or The States. Although some white women continued to forge their own connections with the outside world, either through personal movement or the sale of Saba Lace, their island lives, for the most part, remained confined to the home and beholden to a rigid code of ascetic morality.

Unfortunately, prior research only a captured a few stories about the experiences that white Windwardside people had during the oil refinery days, but several migrants shared their reasons for returning and the experiences they had in learning to adjust back to life on Saba. One very engaging Saba man talked at length about why he left Saba and the tensions that continued to exist between his desire to live a quiet life at home and the difficulties of adjusting to a small place after living away for so long. When asked why he chose to leave he said:

> I think I went because of the very thing that motivates every young man living in a small town or a rural community like this. To get out. You want to see something of the world. You want to see other people, you want to see how things are going on the

outside and you want to get out in the stream and move with it. Well, if I had known what I know now, I wouldn't have gone away. Because I think the happiest people in the world, we can call them simple or we can call them backward or whatever we want, but I think the happiest people in the world are the ones that stayed on Saba, never went away and don't yearn for anything because they know nothing better to yearn for. I think they are happier than they even realize. But I went away just like every other young man from Saba. We went to work for some money, we wanted to see life, we wanted to live, we wanted to come back home when we were older. (Crane, 1987: 256)

Caught between the trauma of living away from home and the trauma of returning, this white Windwardside man is both frustrated by the lack of worldliness in his peers that never went away and jealous of the apparent serenity and groundedness that non-migrants seemed to have in their lives. This is an important dynamic between migrant and non-migrant and it continues to be a factor in the ways that these groups relate to one another in Windwardside and in the other villages. Education- and off-island experience show Sabans the things that exist away from home but, in doing so, often make it difficult to return to a place that comes to represent backwardness and being "behind times". While many migrants long for a return to simplicity, dealing with the insular mentality of those who stayed often begins to feel like a heavy burden. Many return migrants find that you really can't go home again while others continually struggle to adapt to on-island life. This struggle is very clear for the man who shared his thoughts above and becomes even more poignant as he expands on his experiences of return migration in the following excerpts:

> All the years that I was away, I was looking forward to the day when I could come home and do what I am doing now. I say, well, that isn't much of a goal for a man to look forward to, to come home and have a little garden and keep a flock of sheep and keep chickens and birds and peacocks and fish and all that. But it is a very peaceful existence, and that is something that after so many years in politics, with all its intrigue and treachery, I learned to value the things we have here in Saba more than a man usually does who is not involved in the rat race. And I was keeping company with men who dabbled in all sort of things that I didn't approve of, and we were battling it out all the time. So I yearned all the while for Saba and I looked forward to the day I could come home and live as I'm living now. (Crane, 1987: 266)
>
> [On Aruba], I was living a very, very, active life. To slam the door on it and change completely, come here to Saba and live in isolation, many people thought I couldn't do it. They argued with me. My friends told me I couldn't do it. So, what I did, about a year before I left Aruba, I stopped going to the movies. I resigned from the commissions until, in the end, I pulled myself completely out of all activities. I'd stay home at night, I'd paint, I'd read, or I'd go to bed early. I withdrew completely from all activities. I had started toning myself down to the point where I could change over without the repercussions which would have come if I just changed and moved over to Saba. (Crane, 1987: 267)

So I made it, and to the present, I'm not dissatisfied here except sometimes I long for some intelligent person to talk to. And here I mostly live alone. We're very quiet, and I like company…I get lonely as the devil sometimes. You see, it's hard. In the beginning you can do it. You can do it for a time even. You can drop yourself down a level, moving around with people here and talking with them. I don't mean to belittle them, but you have to drop yourself down to a certain level to meet them, to reach them, when you're mixing with them and talking with them. (Crane, 1987: 268)

The thing of it is this. I do not call Saba people unintelligent. I think that they can hold their own per person against any other race in this world. People here may be simple or may not appear bright because they have never had the opportunity like other people have. Actually, Saba people are intelligent and they are darn shrewd and quick to catch on; but the thing is that when you live in a small community as we are living in, isolated, the things you talk about are the things you see and do every day. (Crane, 1987: 268)

I think in an isolated place like this that you are not in contact with the things people see and hear on the outside world; people should read much more than they do—read and improve their speaking because they don't even try to do that. I can talk Saba talk too, any time I want. But my God, man, why should I? (Crane, 1987: 269)

You fall into the way of life here. You're to speak the Saba way, you slouch around, you wear messed up clothes like I do, and all that. That is fitting into the pattern here, life here. If I go away, I have to be a little bit more businesslike, more brisk, more alert, and more active, and speak better, more grammatically and all that, act different, everything. Not completely different, but you have to change. More sophisticated, let's call it. But a man should be able to adjust himself to his new surroundings (Crane, 1987: 270)

The sentiments expressed above carry a certain level of arrogance, to be sure, but they are brutally honest about the problems that many highly educated Sabans faced when trying to reintegrate into Saban society. In the current era, the issue is cast as one of "brain drain" where most educated Sabans live most if not all of their lives away from home. The small number of return migrants who have achieved a high level of education and who know what it means to live and work in other places often express the same feelings of social loneliness and isolation found in these excerpts. The image of being dragged down into a way of life on Saba also persists as an intergenerational experience of return, as does a focus on the peace and quiet that Saba has to offer those who felt the pressures and demands of fast-paced off-island lives. The fact that these conflicting feelings span more than three decades indicates an on-going problem that many educated return migrants have in adjusting to the intellectual, conversational, and material limitations of life on Saba and the schism that exists between those of the educated class and those with limited formal education. There are those, however, who had far more practical reasons for return and, for them, Saba provided an inexpensive

way to enjoy their retirement years. One white woman from Windwardside had this to say about her decision to return:

> Well, my husband got sick and he died; and after he died I felt I didn't want to live up there [in the U.S.] and have to go out to work anymore 'cause I was getting old. So I thought the best thing was to come back home, and I can get my Social Security and I can live happy off from that there in Saba, you know. If I had continued to live up there, well, at my age I couldn't work anymore. They would have retired me, and what would I have done? I had no children, no one to help, so the best place was to come back to Saba. We had our father and mother's home here, the home we were born and raised in. Don't have to pay rent. (Crane, 1987: 112)

Although living in The Land of Opportunity, the specifics of her own life course made staying in The States a virtual impossibility. Her homecoming released her from the socioeconomic stresses of keeping everything together by herself and allowed her to return to the family home that she had known as a child. For this woman, returning was not only a matter of survival but also let her get back to living a quiet life among her remaining family and oldest friends. Her experience of a smooth transition to life back on Saba contrast sharply with other narratives of return and may be partially generational. Unlike younger return migrants, she was born in the last decade of the 19th century and raised during a time when education, as an expression of worldliness, was not as highly valued in her community and, as such, the cleavage between the educated and the uneducated was not as extreme. Gender may also play a role since the drive to achieve a high level of formal education and career advancement as a measure of worldly success tended to be instilled in men rather than women at this time. The lack of these filters may have facilitated her transition and probably eased the return of many black and white Sabans who did not ascend to positions of power off-island based on their high educational status. Life at home may have felt more limited from a materialistic perspective, but the sense of loneliness and isolation that stemmed from "being different" did not really enter the equation for many return migrants.

For those living on Saba throughout this time, life was simple, if taxing, and the majority of white Windwardside residents lived modest but economically adequate lives. The absence of a white elite class during this time meant that most whites from Windwardside were not highly educated and,

as suggested above, usually focused their attentions and energies on the things that cropped up in their daily lives. The lack of an indigenous intelligentsia proved frustrating for some who returned but these frustrations give us insight about the social environment that dominated life during and just after the oil-refinery period. As with Promised Land people, Keur and Keur (1960: 144-145) presented the following sketch of a typical family in Windwardside:

> One white family at Windwardside, with five children, lives in a four-room house, very worn and bare. The children are bright at school, although the youngest, now in kindergarten, is markedly rachitic. It is said that the mother is seldom at home, and loves to gad about. She is one of the very few gay and light-hearted personalities encountered. She tries to sell some drawn-work to help out. The father periodically comes home in a drunken stupor, whereupon the mother strikes him and locks him out for the night, and he can be heard howling like a dog. But he is known throughout the island as an expert fisherman and an excellent hunter of wild goats. For fishing, he uses a kind of raft of about six poles lashed together, with boards fashioned crosswise. Although he cannot swim, he often goes out alone. He fishes with hook and line, and has been known to catch over fifty fish in one day. Hence, the family has plenty of fresh fish to eat, and the remainder is sold in Windwardside. If any are unsold, the mother salts them down for future family use. The goats he hunts are much in demand, since meat is rather scarce. They must be shot in the head—no simple feat when hunting on the precipitous Saban slopes—because people here don't want bloody meat. He brings them home, butchers, and sells the meat. The mother formerly had a small vegetable garden beside the house, but now prefers to keep chickens, from which she gets eggs. The chickens had eaten all her cabbages and tomatoes, so she gave up planting. The children do not like to drink milk, and they are not forced to do so. The family purchases small cans of evaporated milk for use in tea and cooking. Such staples as flour, sugar, coffee, tea, margarine, rice and potatoes are purchased at the store. "And so we have to make ends meet".

Despite some of the less than flattering images conveyed in this sketch, overall, it delivers an honest and complex picture of how many white Windwardside families survived through a mixed economic strategy founded on small-scale production of goods for sale and self-sufficient agricultural and animal husbandry practices. The children bear some of the physical signs of poverty but they are attending school and are said to be very intelligent. Reading between the lines, it is clear that educational advancement, encouraged by the parents, may have been one way for these children to break out of their current circumstances. This early educational path was blazed by many Windwardside residents throughout this period and established an on-going emphasis on the value of education in this community. The woman is represented as one of the only free-spirits in the village and, because of her non-conformist ways, becomes the topic of much closed-door gossip. This provides evidence of community involvement in trying the reign in women who deviated from

standard codes of female behavior and, even today, fear of what "people will say" keeps many women from transgressing certain social boundaries. As always, though, some women simply didn't care what other people had to say and this is still true today. Like many Saba men, the husband spends a little too much time drinking with the boys but his skills in fishing and hunting garner respect from the community at large despite his human foibles. These skills help to feed the family and generate a small income to purchase staple items that are not locally grown. The wife also does her part economically by raising chickens and participating in the drawn-thread work trade. The picture that emerges is one of honorable poverty where human weaknesses and human strengths combine to sustain the rhythms and needs of family life. Although the specifics of each family situation surely varied, this sketch effectively highlights some of the main features of white families in Windwardside at the height of oil-refinery migration and provides some of the only qualitative evidence for what family life was like during these times.

With so many white people from Windwardside either losing all or most of their own family members to migration or never having any family of their own, many older people were faced with the lonely possibility of spending their final days in empty houses that once bustled with life. In seeking social comfort and a helping hand, older men and women who lived alone often took in and cared for children from large families of lesser means. Mutually beneficial and loving relationships formed between these older residents of Windwardside and children born into poverty and several people from the white community shared their own positive experiences with this kind of arrangement. An older white woman expressed a protective love for her young charge by sharing the following snapshots of their life together:

> It isn't like I'm afraid to sleep alone, but I likes to have somebody company because I sits here till eleven o'clock, and where is she? On her bed asleep. But still, it's all like I know she's in the house, you know? One night Under the Hill when we was home there—she was smaller then, a little small girl—and I called her. I had the flu. She had had it. And I called her to get me me medicine, the tablets that I was to use off o' me bed. And out o' her bed in the night she got up. She screwed the light up—the lamp up—and she got me the tablets, she got me water to drink with it, and then she got me juice to drink. Nice, yeah…
> She's a deuce. Sometimes she's good, sometimes she's a holy devil! Nobody don't say nothin' about me before her. She's comin' right straight and tell it to me.

Whenever she gets a sweet, you know, if she has two, she brings me one. Well, she knows if I have sweets come from America, she has her share from the time I opens the bag. I mostly takes 'em and eats 'em night time, when I'm sittin' here. And when I has mine, I takes em out of the bag, I give she hers too. An' she knows that. The gingersnaps, she loves them to death. I had a pack open on the table there last night. "Oh, Miss Elsie, look. You got gingersnaps. Where's my share?" "Well," I said "you'll have to wait a bit till I gets it".

She likes money. She had five guilders, an' I was keepin' it for her. I told her leave me go put it in the bank, to ask Miss Elaine to go put it in the bank, an' keep savin' it. Well, different people gives her money, you know, to do their messages for 'em, and I gives her. An' every time movies is, she wants to go, you know. And I fuss at her because she can't afford it, she's a poor girl. I tells her, "Save it." I says, "Suppose you get sick and you has to go home to your mother. You can give it to your mother, and she can buy something out of it for ya" I says "If you get sick down here, you's all right". Because I sees to her….

She gets migraine headaches, you know, and throws up and all. Where do you think she comes? She don't go home. She comes to me. I sees to her, buys her the juice to drink. She can't take much o' nothin', only juice. Sometimes that can't keep on her stomach. Buys her her cakes and buys all those oat flakes for her, and all that. And I says, "Who's your mother? Me." "No, you ain't me mother," she says, "Me mother's black." "Well," I says, "I treats you better as your mother". (Crane, 1987: 19-20):

In her description of this relationship, the older white woman reveals a lot about the life of the young black girl that she takes care of and who takes care of her. It is important to note that this close relationship crosses racial lines and reminds us that love and affection was often color blind even if interracial dating, marrying, and childbearing remained socially taboo. Intermixing of black and white lives was very common and the relationships that evolved were both close and caring. The young black girl described above came from a very poor home and it is clear that her mother was trying to keep her family together with very little in the way of economic resources. Living with someone else part-time became a way to ease the burden in her own family and may have released this young woman from some of the daily stresses that poverty brings. When looking at it from the perspective of the older white woman, she now had someone to care for, to keep her company, and to be her eyes and ears out in the community. Although this relationship served an economic and social function for both parties, the genuine feelings and love expressed by both are very touching and offer a fine example of the strong bonds that black and white Saban people formed with one another through difficult times on-island. Caretaking relationships also existed between older men and young boys in the Windwardside community and one older white man shared his experiences with this kind of relationship like this:

Outside of the family, I haven't had very many friends, only the boys that stayed with me, Frank and Richard, and well, Donnie. Donnie really is the first one that came to me, because I used to live alone. But one day he asked me if he could come and stay with me. I told him it was okay, provided he wrote his grandmother, and I would write his grandmother cause he was only a child. And it was okay. And he stayed with me about four or five years. He went to school from there. I used to have to get out and make his lunch every morning and send him off to school, and then I'd have to get up to come down to work and so forth. And it must've been about three years. Well, Richard is his cousin. They are all related. And then he stayed with me then for about the same, four years; then his cousin came here, and he wanted to go down to Aruba, so he left. Well, Frank came then with me. He was working for me then at the time, and he stayed with me. He's still here, and he as been with me nearly five years. Then Elias came. I've worked for them all, but also they help me, you know. I figure if there's anything I do for them that they have already helped me in the store and different things that I may never have been able to do or I'd have to pay someone to do it for me extra, you see what I mean. And I need someone to speak to, and if we don't even speak, there's times we sit down and never a word passes, just watch TV, go in, "good night", gone. I like to be quiet at times. (Crane, 1987: 205)

Like many white women, the social world of this older white man was very small and confined mostly to interactions with his own family. However, as time went on and family members were lost to death or permanent migration, he found himself living a very isolated island life. Taking in a string of poor white children from large families eased his loneliness and established working partnerships that helped him run is shop and maintain his home. During periodic absences of fathers, older male companions, much like other on-island male family members, often became surrogate male role models who guided these young boys through the difficult journey to manhood on Saba. Together these care-taking relationships criss-crossed lines of age, race, and class and showed the creative ways that Sabans learned to ameliorate their own economic and social circumstances through the bonds of friendship they formed with people outside their immediate families.

The overall dearth of narratives about on- and off-island life during oil refinery times stands in contrast to the wealth of perspectives that white Windwardside residents shared about the changing nature of and attitudes towards work, the decline of agriculture, and the possibilities for developing a tourism industry on Saba. As in the other villages, the harshest critiques were reserved for changes in patterns of men's work and centered on the incongruence between modern labor disciplines defined through government work and historical labor disciplines based on a self-sufficient agricultural lifestyle. Women, particularly white women, are largely invisible in this debate since they rarely

worked outside the home and, if they did work for money, tended to maintain the historical pattern of laboring in cottage industries, like drawn-thread work, in their own domestic spaces. As such, there was no real rupture in white women's work disciplines at this time or the gender norms that underlay them. However, work took on an entirely different character for a large number of younger men who opted to abandon agricultural labor in favor of working shorter hours for low intermittent government wages (Figure 7.46). This became viewed by many not only as an assault on the old ways of a farming life but also as a challenge to the fundamental role that men played in the economic lives of their families and of the island as a whole. The hard agricultural work that defined manhood in the past gave way to a labor regime that not only demanded less in the way of time but also laid bare just how dependent many men, and their families, became on the government dime. Critiques of laziness and abject dependency on external sources of support exposed the anxieties that people felt over the disintegration of the self-sufficient agriculturally grounded labor regime that valued hard independent work as a mark of true Saban manhood. One older white man in Windwardside reflected on the way life used to be when agriculture dominated men's working lives:

> The whole place used to be worked. Yeah, the whole place used to be worked. You see down on the field all down there, all them old Hell's Gate men has told me all that used to be worked, fields of cassava and corn, sweet potatoes and all that. That's what we lived off from then. There never used to be much. There only used to come a sloop here with cornmeal to sell. Off and on. Oh, I got a wish to have like we used to have in them times. You can call it ground food. That's what I like… You know what we lived off in them times? I can tell you: from products from our own country, ye know. (Crane, 1987: 88,89)

Another reflected on those days and contrasted that self-sufficient life with the life of dependency brought about through government work:

> Formerly, a man would go out and he'd plant his ground and he'd reap his peas and his potatoes and all his greens and things, and kept his cows, get his milk, kill his goats and sheep, get his meat, his chickens and all that. He'd be eating fresh food and the island would be sure that that's a sign of prosperity. When men were working their land, people were doing something. But politics comes in the picture, and we cant to win the votes of the working men. So we create jobs. We decide we want better roads. It's not better roads, we want the legal way to spend money, plenty of it. And we give jobs to these men and they don't have to work so much after they go there. If they sit down on the job, we pass and we talk to them or talk to their foreman, they get offended—they and their family don't work for us. So they get away with that.
> In my young days, this was an island with all its farms and everything planted, everywhere, and food you could get anywhere. Well, that has come to the point now

where these men work for the government for a low wage. The land remains uncultivated. They go home and they buy canned peas, canned potatoes, canned meat, canned milk and they feel that they are living nice because they are not producing this. They have their cash in their hand. They feel good when they receive thirty five guilders, or forty guilders because the cash is there in their hand. And when they were planting their own land they didn't have so much cash in their hand to look at in joy. Well, they are not remembering before they go home, they go to the merchant to pay all their cash for things which they themselves could have been producing and they go home poorer.

I haven't seen one man here in Saba build a house from working on the government's road; but over in Hell's Gate most of those houses were built by men who planted and kept animals. And they would come over here on the Windwardside and sell their greens and the vegetables and meat and all, and they built their homes from it. Since the road started, I haven't seen one man do that because the wages they make are just enough for the high cost of living, to pay Flossie and the others, the Club, for their milk and their peas and everything that they could themselves produce. And meanwhile, the island's a jungle. So, it hasn't done us any good. I don't approve of it. I approve of the government keeping a certain amount of men at the road for road repairs or if there's some particular thing that needs to be done; but I don't believe in the government's putting too much stress on giving jobs to people because they're unemployed. Because I think on an island with the climate that we have and the soil that we have there should be darn few unemployed people, I mean people who are sitting down because there's nothing to do. (Crane, 1987: 275-276)

As in other narratives about the transition to a cash economy, the issue of inflation and rising costs of living are of concern as people increasingly found themselves in the position of having to pay more for less. Inflationary problems still invade modern life on Saba and, as in the description above, make it very difficult for low-wage workers to make ends meet. However, the core of the issue remained the conflict between a state of increasing dependence and the historical spirit of independence that defined so much of the Saban character and Saban manhood in the past. Sabans who grew up at a time when hard-work proved a man's worth and allowed him to make a good life for his family had a very difficult time accepting the transition to a cash economy rooted in government labor and government hand-outs. There was a sense that life was more stable and richer in the past and that even the poor lived in an honorable state of poverty through the work of their own hands. People who carried these beliefs reacted strongly to the fact that many Sabans came to think that they were owed a living by the government rather than thinking that it was their duty to make their own way in the world. Piecing together an income through work on The Road, old age pensions, poor money and the like became a full-time occupation for those trying to play the system and the political structure of the island, the threat of withdrawing political support, and the pressures of family obligations made it

very difficult for government officials to rectify the situation. The same man who expressed his

unease above described how this link between government handouts and the political system evolved:

> Let's say, for instance, people who are poor, supposed to be poor, they get six guilders per week, an allowance from the government. And that applies to people with frigidaires in their home, with their children holding government jobs. That is going on, all of those things and applies to men who are working, families are working because when they started that individual person didn't have a job. Circumstances weren't as good as they are now. And the government authorities are afraid to stop it because they will offend the person, that person will not vote again, or will not vote for the person in power now. So that's the way the racket runs. Welfare should be very much more strictly controlled, much more. (Crane, 1987: 276-277)

The idea of milking the system to shirk personal work responsibilities and putting a man's fate and

the fate of his family in the hands of the government was anathema to historical constructions of male

identity in both the black and white Saban communities. This divergence in attitudes slowly began to

carve a divide between those who relied on what was essentially welfare and those who continued to

try to make their own way in the world through honest labor. A third older white man from

Windwardside summed up this general feeling by saying:

> I think that every man should work who is able to work. I can say right now I don't have to paint pictures to sell. I could get by probably on my pension; but I think that if a man got talent, he should use that talent. Even if he don't have talent, I think he should work to keep himself busy. What's the sense of walking about dead? When you don't work, you're dead. It's just as though you're dead. I think you should work. I don't mean kill yourself or anything like that, but I think you should keep your mind occupied on something. A person who don't do that a lot of times can lead you into wrong things. You have nothing to study and just walk around, then you wander around and get mixed up with some friends—especially drinking. Boys going out drinking can get in a drunken brawl or something, and all that kind of thing can happen. A working man don't have time for all that. (Crane, 1987: 300)

This narrative really conveys the sense that work gives a man meaning in life and, without it, a man

would have no direction, no focus, and no reason for existing. In this state of separation from the

world of work, he worries that the younger generation will head down a negative path and these fears

are still very prominent in modern Saban society. Both the dependency on government sources of

revenue and the divide between those living economically dependent and independent lives continues

to make its mark on Windwardside and across the island. Sabans, both black and white, wonder how

one can become a man if he doesn't work and much of the critique leveled at men surrounds their

perceived lack of motivation to prove themselves through labor and to do what is necessary to support their partners and children.

With the death of agriculture, the new debate about independent and dependent work also surrounds the division between entrepreneurship in the private sector versus publicly-funded work in the civil service. In the white community, many feel that those working in the private sector, like those working off-island, are really trying to "make something of themselves" while those in the civil service are seen to have settled on low-pay, low-demand government work. The racial overtones of this are undeniable as civil service jobs are often used as a way to mitigate against poverty that is more openly apparent, if not more prevalent, in the black community. Intergenerational wealth amassed in white families, sometimes garnered, at least in part, through manipulation of the local political system, tends to give them the capital needed to invest in private sector ventures more quickly than many people from the black community although many families in the black community have also achieved a high level of business success on-island. Gender and family life also play a part in shaping these perceptions since office jobs in the civil service are now dominated by women, many of whom, through divorce or single motherhood, are the sole source support for themselves and their families. Many civil service jobs, even those that demand a certain level of qualification, have been recategorized into the realm of women's work, often black women's work, and are, therefore, devalued in the minds of many Sabans from both the black and white communities. By confining criticisms about government dependency to criticisms about how the poor and single/divorced women tap into government money, many wealthier Sabans, black and white, and men in particular, fail to acknowledge the ways that government favor generated wealth in their own lives and, in doing so, move their own relationships with government support beyond the realm of social critique. The issue is not that one group of Sabans depends on the government and the other does not, but that one group, largely men and until recently mostly white men, has been able to harness political power to generate wealth while the other group, mostly black and increasingly female, depends on the government for economic survival rather than advancement.

While the world of work was changing, so, too, were the opportunities to engage in tourist related economic endeavors and processes of modernization more generally. As in the perspectives voiced by Sabans in other villages, much of the focus on development in Windwardside centered around attracting non-local capitalists to establish a tourist industry on Saba. Saban people expressed little confidence in their own to take hold of this processes or to assume leadership roles in the development of the private sector on island. Without drawing on their own initiative or skills to lead, the real benefit for Sabans was seen as the increase in jobs that this type of ex-pat development would bring to the island. Again, economic dependency on outsiders was problematic and cut to the heart of proud Sabans who already felt that their independent ways of life were threatened. This sense of being outside looking in is clearly expressed by a white Windwardside man as he reflects with bemused clarity on the current state of things:

> There is so much here that could be done, but, like in most other places, the people who live in the place seldom are aware of what can be done. It takes somebody to come from the outside and see the opportunities which we are blind to. You always notice that, especially in small places like this. A stranger comes in, he sees opportunities which we didn't even know existed, he exploits them. After a while, he's having it good and we's sitting up wondering, well, why the devil didn't I see that? But then it's too late, it's already happened. (Crane, 1987: 273-274)

This trend of looking to outsiders to develop on-island resources was a new phenomenon at the time because until the close of oil refinery migration whole generations of Sabans had exploited the resources of other countries to support their lives at home and abroad. Now, as with government dependency, they found themselves in the position of relying on others, non-Sabans at that, to provide their means of survival. The belief that non-native people, particularly Americans, held the key to economic development further enhanced the overall sense of dependency on-island and created a source of revenue that was beneficial to but not controlled by locals. Still, though, the people in Windwardside showed a close affinity with Americans who saw Saba as their own little Land of Opportunity and their general openness certainly helped to establish Windwardside as the center of the tourism industry. The same man who was torn about what he interpreted as a lack of vision in his

fellow islanders went on to draw a clear line between his feelings about Americans, who tended to come to the island as adventurers or investors, and the Dutch who funded the island government:

> I should feel very loyal, but, I am afraid I don't feel the loyalty I should feel. I feel grateful to Holland for the economic help she has given us lately. I don't feel grateful to her for the undeveloped way she left these islands in the past, in every possible way. If I must say it, I have found them kind of cheap, as compared to Americans. Their way of life, maybe it is they have to economize in Holland, they're tight-fisted. Give me an American any day. We understand each other better. There is something about Hollanders, I just don't get along with them like I would with an American. My father was the same. His father was a Hollander, but he never liked the Dutch too much. (Crane, 1987: 286)

The comparative wealth of Americans and the direct and indirect emotional connections that people from Windwardside had made with the United States made it logical that American investors should take the lead in the economic development on Saba. Although anti-Americanism is certainly on the rise, the white population in Windwardside continues to have a favorable impression of the United States and many hold on to the dream that their children might go to study, work, and perhaps settle there. This was also true in the early days of tourism development and even led one black Windwardside native to blithely remark: "Well, you see, the Sabamen wants to get to America and the Americans wants to come down here. Make an exchange" (Crane, 1987: 161). However, this form of problematic development based on non-local capital, and all the tensions that surround it, was found in its incipient form in the late 1960s and the dynamics set in motion then exert heavy influences in modern Saban society. Specifically, Sabans express very ambivalent feelings about the presence of a proportionally large and diverse ecotourism industry and the emergence and expansion of a Medical School that has placed very few local people in positions of real power. This is not to say that Sabans have not profited from these industries, only that profits are unequally distributed and tend to come in the form of providing variably lucrative services that cater to tourists and students. The roots of these issues took form in the post-oil period as Sabans scrambled to find a way to survive without the safety valve of labor migration.

Embedded in all of these development strategies was the underlying desire to become "modern" and, although processes of modernization eased life in some ways, they also created

tensions between the past and present and the ways that Sabans viewed their own history and place in the world. In the push to modernize, it is common for people to devalue not only traditional culture but also the people who cling to those cultural practices as the touchstone of their identity. Instead of assuming a revered place in society, as in the past, many older people came to embody resistance to progress and the young simply looked at them as vestiges of a backward past. One elderly white resident of Windwardside even pointedly devalued her own personal and labor history as modernity washed over the island by saying that:

> We never knew nothing about this and that and the other long time ago. We was too foolish. The world wasn't enlightened like it is now. All we done was do drawn-thread work. That was the most we did. Learned to play music, some. I tell you there's a lot happening now. In the future I think that there'll be more. I won't be here though. (Crane, 1987: 21)

Another older white woman is more reverent of the past and, although she acknowledges some of the technological and educational advancements of modernization, she still expresses reservations about what it will mean for the psychological health of the younger generation:

> Really, there is a change in Saba There's a lot more new houses than there was in those days, and we have electric lights and we have cars and trucks and all of that that we didn't have them in our day, in our young day. If you wanted to go in The Bottom or St. Johns, you had to hoof it. It was hot, too. You'd get so hot, oh! And there wasn't a dry thread on you. I tell you, if some of the old folks could just come back and take a look they'd wonder where they were. They wouldn't know Saba now. I sometimes have to think "Well, is this the same little island?" Children are blessed today in certain ways, but yet I think our life was better, happier and better, I believe, when we were children. We were contented. We didn't know anything different, you know. So we were happy in our way. (Crane, 1987: 112-113)

This breach between a romanticized "backwards" past and the hectic tempo of a cash-based consumer-oriented life runs through much of the way that Saban people from Windwardside and elsewhere understand the shift from a rural to a "modern" existence on Saba. For older people who experienced it first hand, changes that fell under the rubric of "modernization" created a sense of acute social alienation that coexisted with a pragmatic understanding that progress, however defined, was both inevitable and necessary. Despite certain advancements on island, many felt that these changes came at a heavy cost and that they stretched thin the dense social fabric that had held Saban society together through long periods of want and separation. Increased participation of women in

the labor force and the subsequent clash between the overlapping responsibilities of women as mothers and workers, the rise of single motherhood, the perceived decline of work ethic in a large proportion of the male population, limited opportunities for work abroad even in the context of increased education attainment, and the increasing awareness of what Sabans were "missing" on island rather than a focus on what they had combined to produce a general social malaise that accompanied the drive towards modernity. Children, in particular, were thought to know too much too soon, to want too much too early, and to become dissatisfied with island life when their sometimes unreasonable social and material desires were not immediately met. The sadness and frustration expressed by both children and their parents, the older generation and their younger counterparts, is it a recurrent theme in life on island today. Many Sabans find themselves reflecting on the distant past as a carefree time when people were happy because they "didn't know any different". Others, though, are content to consign the past, and all that it represents, to the status of a quaint casualty of the forward march of progress.

Oil refinery migration, the emergence of the welfare state, and family life: Hells Gate

The comparative immobility of white Hells Gate residents during seafaring migration and the concomitant clear out of the black population, particularly black men, meant that the people of Hells Gate came to live in a racially, religiously, and economically homogenous population by the start of the oil refinery period. Although a large proportion of the expanding population of whites and some of the remnant population of blacks made their way to Windwardside, Hells Gate, on the whole, remained the most isolated village still in existence after the closure of Mary Point in the early 1930s. Before the development of the island's infrastructure through the building of The Road, the harbor at Fort Bay in The Bottom, and the airstrip in nearby Flat Point, Hells Gate people more or less kept to themselves and enjoyed a peaceful, if sometimes difficult, rural life. It was only at the end of oil-based migration that remaining population in Hells Gate became fully integrated into the changing

economics of modern life and this unique history has shaped the way that people from Hells Gate view the world and the place of their community in island life.

The already small black population of Hells Gate had been reduced further in size through seafaring migration and had lost many more of its men than its women during that time. However, during the transition to an oil-based economy the proportion of black men and women leaving Hells Gate evened out to about 60% and at the height of the oil-based economy and in the post-oil period permanent female migration vastly outstripped male migration as almost 90% of black Hells Gate women permanently left their home village while about half of all black men opted to stay on island. Having lived through hard times in the absence of men, it appears that many women from the black community made the decision to strike out on their own and to see what the world might have to offer. Simultaneously, black men were becoming more and more sedentary which suggests the entrenchment of a minority black male culture based on small-scale agriculture. Black men who desired a different life from that of a farmer or those who had no land of their own had rapidly vacated the island during seafaring and early oil refinery ties. This selective migration left a small group of farming men who went about the serious business of harvesting a living from Saba's fertile soil. The fact that many black people and black families left early and never returned is quite apparent from the high proportion of remaining Hells Gate blacks who had no close family members living abroad (Tables 7.13, 7.14). At 42%, this is the highest proportion of people with no migration connections found anywhere on island and is similar only to the migrant-less proportion found in the destitute population of Promised Land whites in The Bottom. Many black people who remained in Hells Gate were completely disconnected from the outside world and knew of life abroad only through the stories they heard from their friends or the interactions they had with occasional outsiders. However, those who were connected had a large number of overseas relations with Aruba and Curacao being the ports of choice. As in Windwardside, there is a strong preference for work in Aruba as 55% of the total population had relatives there and, those with connections to Aruba had an average of about 6 close family members living there. The gulf between the density of connections in

Aruba and the density of connections in Curacao is quite marked as only 23% of the total black population had relations living in Curacao and averaged around three close family members living there. Almost no black people from Hells Gate reported significant migrant connections in the United States which suggests either that most of the early seafaring migration was localized to the Caribbean, as was found for some of the Windwardside black population, or that the individuals and families that left for the States severed all of their connections to their island home. However, an American orientation may be signaled by the preference of laboring in the American-run Lago refinery on Aruba although this may also indicate a preference for working in an English-speaking environment. A handful of black people had relations in Holland and on nearby St. Maarten but these connections tended to be relegated to one or two migrants living in those places.

Under conditions of oil refinery migration, patterns of marriage and childbearing stayed very similar to those found under conditions of heavy seafaring migration and point to an enduring emphasis on marriage as the foundation for childbearing in the native black community of Hells Gate that only waned in the post-oil period (Figures 7.47-7.55). Completed family sizes increased through time for an average of 5.5 surviving children in seafaring to oil transition times, just under 7 during the height of oil refinery migration, and a high of 11 surviving children per family in the immediate post-oil period (Figures 7.47-7.49). This latter figure represents the childbearing behavior of a single identifiable native Hells Gate woman who actually raised her family in Windwardside after marrying a man from that village. Her marital children represent nearly half of all black Windwardside children born within marriage during the height of the welfare state and helped to maintain a minority presence of black marital families in that village (35% marital births with this family, 18% marital births without). This fact is a good reminder that a small number of reproductively active women in a society experiencing extreme population loss and fertility suppression can radically skew fertility indicators and give a false sense of reproductive behavior more generally. In this case, the family-building behavior of the native black Windwardside population would have been even more weighted towards non-marital childbearing in the absence of this single family whose roots and childbearing

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traditions are more reflective of the family formation processes of Hells Gate. Conversely, the rapid rise in non-marital childbearing during the post-oil period in Hells Gate would have been much less dramatic had this family stayed in the mother's home village (32% born martially with this family vs. just 5% born martially without). During the height of the welfare state, all identifiable native black Hells Gate women left the village for foreign shores and this movement signaled the end of the native black population in this village who were born to Saban mothers even though in-migration from adjacent villages and unions between black Hells Gate men and off-island or other-village women kept a minority black presence in this white majority community. Age at first birth elevated from 23 years during the transition to an oil economy to 28 years during the height of oil refinery migration but dropped suddenly to 19 years after oil refinery migration waned (Figure 7.51). Age at marriage steadily declined throughout the period and moved from an average of 26 years in the early oil days to 21 during the height of the oil refinery period to just 18 for women coming of age in the immediate post oil period. Across this span of time husbands were, on average, 6 to 17 years older than their wives and nearly all black Hells Gate women married at some point in their lives (Figure 7.50, 7.55). In the oil refinery period and in post-oil times, black women from Hells Gate entered motherhood and wifehood at a very early age and tended to be in relationships where husbands had more life experience and, in some cases, more experiences interacting with the world away from Saba. This situation is similar to that experienced in the white community where childbearing and marriage remained tightly linked. This coupled with the fact that Saba was already geared towards vesting power in men meant that many Saban wives, black and white, were expected to and often did take a subservient role to their husbands.

Trends in non-marital childbearing indicate that native black Hells Gate women maintained a strong link between marriage and childbearing throughout oil-refinery times and that non-marital childbearing only became the norm in the post-oil period when most native black women from this village moved to other on-island villages, or off-island entirely, and after in-migration from other Saban villages or other Caribbean islands brought non-marital traditions into the mainstream of black

Hells Gate culture. During the transition to an oil based economy, only 20% of births were listed as having occurred outside of marriage in the small black Hells Gate community and this number dropped to zero during the height of the oil boom before spiking to over 90% right after the decline of oil industry migration (Figure 7.52). Women from outside of Hells Gate clearly carried non-marital childbearing traditions with them from other places and this is partially responsible for creating the dramatic spike in non-marital births in the early stages of the post-oil period and sustained a pattern of non-marital childbearing until very recently. Although this change was partially related to movement of non-local people into Hells Gate, mostly from Windwardside, it is important to note that 50% of black Hells Gate women who came of age during late seafaring and early oil refinery times did have children outside of marriage but that they did so while living outside of their home villages (Figure 7.53). This pattern is very typical of the white community as a whole where sanctions against non-marital and interracial childbearing made life very difficult for native women who transgressed these boundaries. The lack of black men in Hells Gate and in Windwardside under conditions of seafaring and early oil refinery migration meant that opportunities for marriage were slim and this imbalanced sex ratio forced many women to choose a path of celibacy or to risk social sanction through non-marital childbearing. During the transition from seafaring to oil refinery migration, celibacy rates spiked to nearly 30% while, as stated previously, the proportion of women having children outside of marriage grew to around 50%. These reflect two very different strategies in handling the lack of marriage opportunities and the fact that Hells Gate women who had children outside of marriage did so while not living in their home village suggests either that they were influenced by the more permissive social environments of the other villages or that they felt that living in Hells Gate was not a possibility after breaching that deeply held cultural value. Marriage after having children, however, was almost universal which shows that women who remained flexible in their reproductive strategies still sought to solidify a long-term relationship with a man. Long-term single motherhood was unusual during oil refinery times and less than 5% of native black Hells Gate women found themselves raising children in the absence of a marital partner for an extended period of time (Figure

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7.54, Table 15). Through a combination of these influences, the black population of Hells Gate during the oil refinery period came to consist of a handful of married couples and their children who likely lived an agricultural lifestyle similar to that found in the surrounding white community. However, this changed radically in the post-oil period as over 90% of black children were born outside of marriage and the links between marriage and childbearing were almost completely severed (Figure 7.52). Single motherhood grew astronomically during the immediate post-oil period and during the height of the welfare state and 40% of black women living in Hells Gate during these times became single mothers for the majority if not all of their childrearing years (Figure 7.54, Table 15). Although following a path of marriage before childbearing or marriage soon after the birth of a first child defined the experience of most black Hells Gate families during oil refinery times, the trend towards non-marital childbearing without eventual marriage in the post-oil period is very much like the pattern seen in both Windwardside, where marriage before childbearing was also once a widespread practice, and St. Johns but differs from the declining trend of non-marital childbearing and single motherhood witnessed throughout most of the post-oil period in The Bottom (Table 7.15). However, a recent swing back towards marital childbearing is suggested by the fact that all of the small group of black children born in Hells Gate over the past decade has been born to married parents. A similar trend is detected for both Windwardside (88% marital, up from 18%) and The Bottom (55% marital, up from 40%) but a decreased proportion of black St. Johns children are now born within marriage (20% down from 55%). It is difficult to say exactly why these recent trends towards marital childbearing in the black community have emerged in three out of the four villages but it is important to keep in mind that the number of children born during this time is quite small (n=40) and that extending the time of observation for this cohort may reveal different patterning in the future.

Of two black Hells Gate natives interviewed by Crane's life history project, one had lived part of her life away from Saba and the other had spent his life dedicated to his family's on-island farm. However, these two individuals tackled a broad range of issues related to life in the small black

community of Hells Gate and both had a lot to say about their past experiences and the changes they saw building on their island home. After marrying a Hells Gate man and having a child on Aruba, this woman and her husband decided that it would be best to relocate her growing family back to the safety of her island home. She described her experiences of work and marriage like this:

> Well, when I grew up-course I grew up-I came down and I got in the business, you know, and went to school as far as the sixth grade, you know. After then I grew up, and when I made sixteen years I went to Aruba. Then I went to Aruba and I worked in the Colony, you know. In Aruba in the Colony, by the Americans over in the camp. I had to iron, wash, clean the woodworks. I worked three days with one women and I worked three days the next. The called me the six days. I stayed there long. I got married then. I got married eighteen years. I worked all the way up until I was ready to get married…
> After I got married, I made a baby, first baby I made. I just made the one in Aruba. I got married in 1936, 1936 I got married. I was eighteen when I got married. And then after I got married, with the husband bringing in the means, I send up and we built a home. After we build that, finally, I said it was nearly through and I came home. I didn't go back in Aruba for years. I didn't like Aruba so much. I'd rather to be home. After we built the home, I still remained with my mother until our home was entirely finished.
> Aruba was plenty hot sun, you know. The village was dirty, nasty, you know. Aruba's built up. Nothin' doin' in Aruba. You worked for hardly anything. I just worked for a dollar a day, a Yankee dollar a day. And then you had to come down and you hardly get anything for it, because the money was down. American money then was down, but the things in the stores, you see, was cheap. Bad times. Hard times. (Crane, 1987: 320)

After she finished what schooling was available on island, she migrated to Aruba at a very early age and began a life of domestic labor. Working the dirty low-paying jobs of a domestic servant would have been very familiar to most black women at the time and her experience mirrors that of the thousands of migrants who traded their sweat for small earnings in foreign lands. However, unlike many of her peers who labored in these jobs for most of their lives, she only worked for about two years before she married an older man who she had known growing up in Hells Gate. In her narrative, she is very deliberate in making it known that she was married before having children and that the amount of money her husband brought in allowed her to stay home. He further proved his worth by building a home on Saba and thus, fulfilled one of the key requirements of manhood in traditional Saban society. Completion of a family home on Saba gave her the chance to escape the dirty towns of Aruba for the clean and quiet life in her home community. As their family developed,

she was able to follow dominant cultural norms that demanded marriage before childbearing and was

lucky enough to find a man who could play a strong provider role in family life.

For those who stayed on island during the oil refinery period, life was full of hard-work and

uncertainty. Black men and women continued to pursue their separate but complimentary economic

strategies with women involving themselves in domestic labor or drawn-thread work and men

continuing their long-held tradition of working in the ground. Children, too, were brought into the

world of work at an early age and were expected to contribute to their families as much as they could.

The woman who told her story above remembered what work was like in her youth:

> When we grew up, you know, in those days you had to do all kinds of laborin'
> work 'fore you could earn something. My mother had to work for other folks, to wash
> and do laundry, you know, and cookin' for other folks, you know, that had more means
> as her. All that so. I had to work. I started work from the time I must have made six or
> eight years till I came up to now. Worked hard, yeah. (Crane, 1987: 317)

Work ethic was instilled in black women from a very early age and the kinds of labor available to

most black women meant that they moved much more freely in society than their white counterparts.

This sense of independence and self-reliance, even if rooted in necessity, still comes through very

strongly in most black women from Saba and contrasts with the experiences of white women in very

important ways. Specifically, the prolonged confinement of white women's work to the home has

made it more difficult for some white women to break out of traditional norms of domesticity and

gender inequality while many black women are not as burdened with this historical baggage. This is

not to say that black women do not face gender-based discrimination or unequal male-biased power

relationships within their own households, but simply that black women, for many reasons, tend to be

a little less reliant on their men and a little freer to express themselves in public and private domains.

This, though, is changing with time as many white Saban women are partially or fully rejecting ideas

of womanhood that center solely on their domestic roles as wives and mothers.   For black men in

Hells Gate, working in the ground was the most viable economic option and fathers and sons pooled

their efforts to wrest a living from the soil. One native Hells Gate man remembers how he became

integrated in agricultural work as a child and eventually came to run the family farm:

> But most I had to be with the old man because I was the only one that he had
> what was big enough to follow him, you know. And so, therefore, the first brother he
> wented on and he left early, and then I had to stop with him [father] and I was the one
> that had to be with him in the farm. And I worked into the farm with him up till this
> present day; and I was quite glad he learned me the farm because I didn't have no
> learning and, therefore, I took the farm then for my living. I didn't do bad in the farm.
> Well, you see, I wented to school and my father had to take me away from school in the
> first class, so now you know I couldn't do anything in the first class. I didn't learn much,
> I never learned much in school. I learned about the farm and I know a lot about the farm.
> Well, I worked my degrees up into the farm. (Crane, 1987: 137-138)

As the sole remaining male heir, this man's farming father made the decision to take his young boy

from school at a very early age and to prepare him for life by imparting his knowledge of the land to

his son. The changing educational climate comes through clearly in this description of initiation into

a farming life and, although this man received very little formal education, he makes the point that he

did "work his degrees up into the farm". With more young Sabans from Hells Gate and elsewhere

receiving advanced degrees off island, those who remained, both young and old, began to feel a sense

that their knowledge was becoming devalued in this brave new world and farmers, in particular,

became a paradoxical emblem both of a proud self-sufficient history and an impediment to

"progress". This sense that the old ways were passing comes through in his later reflections on the

difficulties of obtaining cash in a small self-sufficient agricultural community and the future of

farming on the island as a whole:

> It was hard in Saba to make handy money, you know. We have to go to foreign
> countries to work to inherit some change, because in Saba you had potatoes and I had
> potatoes, and you had tannias and I had tannias. Each man had his own; you couldn't sell
> yours, I couldn't sell mine. So there's how people had to go to foreign countries and all
> like that. And in them days provisions was plentiful cause everybody worked, but today,
> now, the old heads dies out now, Saba won't have much provision in it. Cause you see,
> the young folks is not working. As I tell you, the old mens is playing out; and when the
> old mens retires that they can't work anymore, well, then we have to import provision
> then. (Crane, 1987: 141-142)

Dependence on subsistence agriculture was often a risky proposition and, because most families

farmed, there was little in the way of local markets to sell the surplus generated from Hells Gate

farms. However, as the number of men engaging in farming declined, the population of Hells Gate,

and most of all, the population in the less agriculturally-oriented villages, became dependent on the

dwindling number of locally grown provisions and the high number of imports that filled the gap

between supply and demand (Figure 7.56). This, alone, began to raise the price of food for the

general population and stretched their government salaries and government support checks very thin.

The irony, then, is that as the prospects for obtaining cash for agricultural produce elevated, fewer and

fewer Sabans had the knowledge or motivation to capitalize on the needs of the local market. This

trend is still true today as most of the sparse fresh fruit and vegetable offerings in local shops are

purchased from off-island vendors and tend to be both overpriced and of low quality. In a very real

way, as the farming life died on island, the "modern" diet of Sabans deteriorated in overall quality as

it came to center on unhealthy processed foods with occasional splashes of fresh produce. This

transformation eventually affected the physical health of Sabans, as witnessed in their high rates of

obesity and obesity related diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. However, in its incipient

stages, this change was seen as the death of a way of life predicated on the pride of self-sufficiency.

The black farmer quoted above had this to say about the tide of "modernity: sweeping over the island:

> Well, as far as I can see, and it's far aback, as I told you, that minute things is
> going to be very bad in Saba when you see everybody put down the farm. Farming is the
> biggest important thing in the world. Without farming you can't do anything. I tell you,
> the biggest important thing in the world is farming. Whatever you eats comes through
> the farm. And the old heads is pretty close to calling their time in; and the young folks is
> only working with the government for the ready cent, and they says they's forgetting
> about the farm. They's not working in the farm; they can't wait, like us, four months
> before they can reap. They work for you today , they want to be paid today; but when I
> was working, I worked on strength on the run of four months before I could reap. At the
> least it would be four months before I would reap; but still I finds that I live better by
> working in the farm as to work with the government or anybody to work outside. I done
> better in the farm…You can bring in such as I told you is two kinds of potatoes and
> tannias and bananas, all like that so; and you can feed your family more better out of the
> farm as you got to put your hand in your pocket to take out your ready money to go to
> buy things by the pound. So, therefore, that's why today I works in the farm all the time
> and I feel real happy working the farm, always my own boss. No man bosses me.
> (Crane, 1987: 142, 143)

The sense of freedom coupled with hard work defined manhood in the minds of many black men

from Hells Gate. This strong independent spirit is the outcome of the long historical relationship that

many Saban men, black and white, held with their land and the breach between this kind of life and

the life offered through government labor is acutely felt by this agriculture-minded man. Patience,

connection to the soil, a sustained pattern of hard-work, and self-sufficiency defined the life of a Hells

Gate farmer and these qualities, on the whole, are seen as irrelevant, if not anachronistic, in the new labor regime. In his mind, life is somehow diminished by these changes and, although poverty touched the lives of farming people in the past, the image of a poor, dependent wage earner putting his hand in his pocket to buy a potato runs counter to the ideas that he holds about the nature of Saban manhood and the foundation of Hells Gate society. The underlying message is this: The farm can feed your family through good times and bad but your government paycheck may not always fill your children's bellies. Is this the risk that you, as a man, are willing to take?

Although Sabans had been working for wages since the early days of seafaring migration, the transformation from subsistence farming to paid employment on-island represented a radical shift in the local economy and restructured the relationships that Sabans had with one another. For those unsatisfied with taking up the farm that their fathers had worked or learning the craft of drawn-thread work from their mothers, paid employment offered them one means to break away from the past and elevate themselves to a desired status of modernity. However, there was always a clear separation between those who worked unskilled or low-skill jobs for low government wages and those who used advanced education to achieve their desired status in the world. Even those with little or no formal education of their own came to understand that career advancement on- and off island depended on a obtaining advanced degrees and certification. In summing up the need for academic achievement, the black Hells Gate woman from above had this to say:

> Now they got a big opportunity. Children got it like just, okay, eating bread and cake—or bread buttered on both sides. In our day we had no place to go. Maybe if we'd o' had a place to go the children'd o' went away, but that wasn't in then in the law. No place. If you learned to school, you learned; and if you didn't, you come home. The girls'd take up their drawn-thread work, the boys'd go plow in the mountains. And that's it. (Crane, 1987: 322)

The slight bitterness about the lack of educational opportunities in the past is moderated by the relief that Saban children now had access to a range of educational opportunities offered through government sponsored degree courses off-island. The confinement of life to predetermined gender-based socioeconomic roles is seen to have dissipated in favor of a more diverse structure of

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opportunity tapped into through educational achievement. However, not everyone either desires or is able to take advantage of these opportunities and poverty and declining work ethic remain hot topics of conversation in the black Hells Gate community. When asked about poverty in Hells Gate, she goes on to say:

> Some poor is here. There's just been a boy there asking, and I just give him some things. The government will help if you go and ask. If there was gentlemen, you know, don't have work, maybe they go and ask the government to give them another week on the road, or raise their pay or something like that. (Crane, 1987: 322)

The separation between those who are living a modern life based on educational attainment and high status wage work and those who are squeaking by at or below the poverty line becomes very clear in her description. These are the two sides of the push towards a modern cash-based economy on Saba and they continue to segregate Saban society into those who are able and willing to capitalize on educational opportunities that pave the way for developing strong on- and off-island careers and those who settle into a low-wage government work that does not demand a high level of education but has little or no room for advancement. As with black and white Sabans in the other communities, she also worries about a perceived decline in work ethic amongst young men and expresses these concerns through an interaction that she had with some visiting Americans:

> Well, now in Aruba, anywhere in these small countries, you could be better off with education, or you gets no job. If you gets a job, what kind of job is it? Had better stay home as just to go away and just plow, something like that. That's why the children here is backward. They should go to school. You see the children that lays along the road, huh? There was a family came there, the owner of the shop. His father is the owner of the place that I leases there. I leases there from the Johnsons. And he had some folks come there, a set of children; and he had a nice little set of children come, you know. So now one day the boys was sitting around and sitting around. She called them a set of bums. She said "Oh you set of bums". She said in America when they need work, you know, and you're laying around, they calls you "bums". The grown-ups, see, she meant, not the children. She meant the men and boys sitting around the road not working. Said they look like a set of bums. But in America you can't see people sitting off like that along the road. (Crane, 1987: 322)

The issue of education becomes one that separates those with drive and ambition from those with no clear aspirations in life. The latter group is then cast as "backwards" community members who become a detriment to the community at large. While educational opportunities were not as omnipresent in the past, the general awareness that times had changed left little sympathy for those

who failed to "make something of themselves". However, the existence of opportunity and the ability to seize opportunity was still structured by family situation as those with money and connections could afford to send their children to study in Aruba and Curacao while others either did not have enough money to fill the gap between government stipend and cost of living off-island or did not feel comfortable sending their children to live away from home with family, friends or, in some cases, with complete strangers. Today, Sabans from Hells Gate and elsewhere are faced with similar dilemmas because educational costs often far outstrip government stipends and because the pitfalls of life off-island can still be very daunting for children and their parents. In her narrative, unemployed male youths who did not advance their educations, for whatever reasons, are transformed into a "set of bums" who spent their time sitting on the wall and who made no positive socioeconomic contribution to their families, their communities, or the island as a whole. American attitudes about work filter into her description as she comes to see the situation through middle-class American eyes that are unfamiliar with seeing poverty and unemployment expressed openly in their communities. However, the image of unemployed youth was also jarring to Saban sensibilities where work was an integral part of life and where young and old were rarely left idle in the past. It was this combination of traditional Saban values and the influx of American perspectives that transformed these men into a social problem for Sabans in Hells Gate and in the other villages. To this day, concerns over idleness and a perceived lack of personal initiative in respect to work or education continue to crop up in public and private discussions about a range of social problems Sabans have identified in their home communities. In particular, the on-going inability or unwillingness of many men to fulfill their traditional provider roles through work, government or otherwise, presents a clear challenge to the socioeconomic well-being of many Saban families and has become a prominent issue for many women in the black and white communities.

A lack of heavy involvement in early seafaring migration had expanded the white population of Hells Gate significantly during the early parts of the 20th century and, even though migration rates climbed with the development of an oil-based remittance economy, fertility rates remained high

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enough to stabilize the white population at around 120 people. As seafaring migration tapered off and

oil-refinery migration gathered steam, the white population lost roughly 50% of its total population.

These rates actually declined slightly at the peak of the oil economy to a rate of 45% for men and

35% for women and then to around 30% for white men and women in the post-oil period. Despite the

availability of paid employment off-island, it is clear that white men and women from Hells Gate

made the decision to stay on-island more often than any other social group from any other village on

Saba. This suggests that a core group of Hells Gate whites settled into a slow and steady agricultural

lifestyle and, in doing so, preserved a way of life that the people of this village had experienced for

generations. However, it is quite possible that the expanding population exceeded the availability of

land in the village and that many male migrants from Hells Gate left because they did not have access

to an adequate amount of land to support their own families. Subdivision of family property amongst

children was common practice in many European cultures and this pattern of partible inheritance

existed side by side with a winner-take-all system of primogeniture that bequeathed property to the

eldest surviving son. Although there is no collected demographic data that specifically addresses the

issue of land tenure and population growth in Hells Gate, it is likely that the large family sizes present

at the time did not allow for either the continual division of land or that a system of primogeniture

ensured the development of a surplus population who had no viable means of starting their own

families. In fact, the movement of many Hells Gate people to the shrinking population Windwardside

at this time suggests that land pressures did exist and that within- and off-island migration became

one way to alleviate the unbalanced relationship between Hells Gate people and their land.

The migrant connections data from the 1964 Household Survey show the influences of both

seafaring and oil-refinery migration (Tables 7.13, 7.14). The small proportion of the population with

close kin in the United States (21%) and in Bermuda (29%) suggest that involvement in seafaring

migration for Hells Gate whites was at a lower level than their peers in Windwardside and, perhaps,

more regionally focused. People who reported having close kin in the States had, on average, about 3

people living there while those with kin in Bermuda reported an average of about 2 people living

there. The concentration of migrant connections to the States and Bermuda in a small number of

families suggests a pattern of selective early migration amongst Hells Gate whites that may have been

based on status or, simply on the family relationships or friendships they had with America- and

Bermuda-bound migrants in neighboring Windwardside or the other villages. The densest migrant

connections existed with kin living on the oil-refinery islands of Aruba (73%) and Curacao (63%)

and, as in Windwardside, a small preference for working in the American-run Lago refinery is

suggested by these numbers. So, although people from Hells Gate did not share the same level of

direct personal connections to America that was apparent in Windwardside, they still chose to work in

the English-speaking American refinery on Aruba and likely had frequent interactions with a range of

American ex-pats. About half of the population identified close kin that lived in Holland but, on

average, people only had one close relative living there. Less than 10% of the white Hells Gate

population had kin living in nearby St. Maarten and, on average, only one family member was living

on that island. Although concentrated in the Dutch Leewards, Hells Gate whites were connected to a

diverse set of locations off-island and those with off-island connections had about 6 close relatives

living abroad. This average number of off-island relatives is second only to the white population in

Windwardside and reflects the large size of most Hells Gate families and the close connections that

many migrants maintained with their immediate and extended families back home. Only 2% of the

population said that they had no close relations off-island which meant that the vast majority of Hells

Gate whites were connected to the outside world through the migration of a significant number of

family members.

Family building strategies that emphasized marriage before childbearing remained dominant

in the white Hells Gate population during oil refinery times but shifted slightly towards a pattern of

non-marital childbearing followed closely by marriage in the post-oil period (Figures 7.47-7.55). The

proportion of unmarried white women, most of whom were life-long celibates, stayed consistently

low across oil and post-oil times which suggests that those who wanted to marry and start a family

found no real barriers to doing so (Figure 7.55). Age at marriage fluctuated from 25.5 years during

the transition to an oil-based economy to 22 years at the height of oil refinery migration to 24 years in the early post-oil years and then to just 21.5 years at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.50). Age at first birth closely followed these trends and moved from 26 years during the transition from seafaring to oil, to 22.5 years at the height of oil refinery migration, to 23.5 years in the immediate post-oil period, to just 21.5 years at the height of the welfare state years with men being, on average, about 6 years older than their wives (Figure 7.51). These patterns suggest that women began having children almost immediately after marriage and, in some cases, may have even entered marriage because of a pregnancy. This was probably not atypical in the white population where marriage was held as the only legitimate foundation for childbearing and anecdotal evidence indicates that these were widespread suspicions in the black and white communities. Again, the age difference between husbands and wives may have intersected with existing power dynamics that favored the dominance of men in Saban society. However, the age difference itself was also a function of the man being able to meet certain economic expectations that remained strong in the white community, like building a house for his potential wife, before entering into a marriage and starting a family. Time was a necessary component of this process and many men simply were not deemed marriageable until they reached these milestones.   While the proportion of white children being born out of wedlock stayed at zero during transition times in Hells Gate, it rose to around 2% at the height of oil-refinery migration and again doubled to nearly 5% in the post-oil period (Figure 7.53). The low levels of non-marital white children coupled with the elevation in the proportion of white childbearing women having children outside of marriage from less than 10% at the height of oil refinery migration, to just under 20% in the immediate post-oil period, to a high of almost 40% for those born between 1956-1975 indicates that many of these non-marital children from white mothers were fathered by black rather than white men (Figure 7.53, 7.54). This suggests that either slightly imbalanced sex-ratios made it hard for some women to marry, particularly within their own race, that long separations from spouses resulted in a handful of children born outside of marriage, or that a segment of white women in Hells Gate began to cross the color line and gravitate towards traditionally black family formation

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processes not founded on marriage before childbearing. It is also possible that some fathers simply refused to marry women who became pregnant or to recognize their children either because they were already married to someone else or because they did not feel any sense of loyalty to the woman or her child. However, 2/3 of the native white women from Hells Gate who had children outside of marriage in the post-oil period were married at some point in their lives which again posits marriage as a normative value in this community. In addition, the proportion of white Hells Gate women who became long-term single mothers reached just 5% in the immediate post-oil period and 11% at the height of the welfare state which suggests that the experience of raising children alone outside of marriage was quite rare in this village (Figure 7.54, Table 7.16). As in other communities, all non-marital childbearing white women who could be identified as Hells Gate natives actually had their children while living in other villages or off-island. Whatever the cause of these deviations, it is clear that most men and women adhered to the social norm of marriage as the foundation of the family until very recently and that this strict mandate was taken seriously by the white population in this village. Due to an almost universal practice of marriage and the fact that many of the couples were not separated by temporary male migration, the fertility level of Hells Gate whites, as in Hells Gate blacks, rose at the peak of oil refinery migration to an average of over six surviving children per each childbearing woman but then dropped to 2.5 when contraception became widely available and acceptable (Figures 7.47-7.49). This initial high level of fertility staved off the population decline that marked the experiences of all other subpopulations on island and meant that a substantial proportion of the current white population on Saba can trace its lineage, in part or in full, back to these high-fertility farming families in Hells Gate.

Given its rural nature and seemingly unchanging social environment, the white population of Hells Gate developed a perhaps unfair reputation for insularity and isolationism. This tendency to keep to one's self and to interact only within the sphere of one's on-island family was a trait shared by many other groups on island, particularly in the white populations of the various villages, but seemed to reach a very high level amongst Hells Gate folks. When Keur and Keur studied Saban

culture in the late 1950s, they relayed two stories that shed light on just how introverted, village-oriented, and stationary some Hells Gates residents had come to be:

> One example of what might be termed cosmophobia is offered by a man from Hell's Gate, employed as a policeman and stationed in the town of The Bottom for duty. After a single week, he appeared at the Administrator's office, turned in his saber and said "I am too nervous, I may have a breakdown" because he was away from his home at Hell's Gate, a distance of three miles. His duty was thereupon changed to only three days' service weekly in The Bottom with the remainder in his native community. (Keur and Keur 1960: 267-268)

They described another situation like this:

> A considerable amount of white Saban women live their entire lives centered in, and confined by, their immediate households. Even the dead my bind people fast to the spot, as when a white women of Hell's Gate declared "I cant move from here, for here lie Mamma and Papa" indicating two graves, side by side, in her front yard. There are several examples of the tyranny of aged parents over unmarried daughters who were forced to remain at home to care for them, while siblings escaped to the larger world. (Keur and Keur 1960: 270-271)

For Hells Gate people who stayed on Saba, the sphere of daily interaction was usually very small and confined to intensive contact within family groups. Even when The Road facilitated movement among the villages, the pattern set down over years of social isolation continued to shape the ways that Hells Gate people interacted with fellow islanders. The push towards modernization, then, was particularly emotionally taxing for many Hells Gate people who had only known the safety of their home village and the company of their closest kin. Opening up to social interactions with people from other villages proved to be a challenge and this fact makes one wonder at the difficulties that Hells Gate migrants may have encountered abroad. However, migration may have been selective in that those with the most adventurous spirits and the best coping skills may have left while others who were less willing to change settled down to a familiar, secure life in their home village. The above narratives also suggest that problems adapting to strange surroundings and a resistance to begin a new life off-island crossed gender lines but that white women, in particular, had a very limited understanding of life in other villages much less life in other countries. One older white woman who never had a family of her own had this to say about the rhythms of her own life and her relationship to her family:

Well, shortly after I came back from Aruba, me and my brother-in-law Ulric had this lil' business together. With a rough guess, it's about fifteen year. Well, he does the ordering, you know. He orders from Curacao. He gives all the orders, and they come over with a jeep and then he places them in the shop. I does the rest of the selling…I like to clean up around the yard and plant flowers and things. Always keeps my home cleaned. I have some carrots my brother-in law Julius planted for me. Well, the most is carrots I plant. Some tomatoes, sometimes, some lettuce 'cause its always good to have around, 'cause it's sometimes you can't buy it so easily. When I has those things, I shares them with my sisters when they don't have none. Well, the rest of the time sometimes I've been home with my mother and them, and sometimes days I've spent with my sisters. Some days to The Bottom, and some days to the Quarter and shares up the time, you know, so. When I was more younger and all the family got married, I would go out and help all of them, ye know, help them laundry the clothes and help them clean when I was there. Well, it's ten years since my father died, and seven since my mother. I seen to 'em both till they passed away. Well, after my mother died, I took Robina's boy Mike to sleep with me. He was five, he's in his twelve now. I didn't mind it, though. I likes to be alone, but it's all right to be with people once they's good company. I mostly sit there with Maggie Johnson till eight o'clock at night before I go to bed. Sometimes I go to see Mercedes if she gets sick. The rest part of the day I sits home doin' my drawn-thread work. (Crane, 1987: 313)

Although she had lived with her sister's family in Aruba for six months to help with her new-born nephew, the vast majority of her life was spent circulating amongst a small group of relatives, most of whom lived in her own home village. Trekking to The Bottom did not necessarily entail moving beyond the family since her sister had married into the small Promised Land population that used to reside in Mary Point. Again, even this was not a social stretch since this woman's family was one of the few families that relocated from Mary Point to Hells Gate instead of to The Promised Land in The Bottom. Based on these historical and familial ties, her family still maintained close connections with Mary Point people in The Bottom and her family continued to intermarry with other Mary Point people even across this seemingly vast distance. Within the family she played the role of caretaker for her parents and also chipped in to ease the childcare and domestic labor burdens of her married sisters. After her parents passed, one of her sister's children came to live with her both as a way to ease loneliness and as a way to disburse parental responsibilities in large families. This practice of "taking a child" was very common in the black and white communities particularly for elderly men and women with no families of their own. The rest of her time was either spent visiting with family and a handful of close friends, selling in her small shop, or doing drawn-thread work to pass the time and bring in a little money. Since her world revolved around family and her experience grew from a

past defined by hard work and hard times, it was difficult for her to come to terms with the changes she saw happening in her own community. She expresses part of this discontent by saying:

> Now the people don't have to work; in our days you had to work hard. We had my father disabled for nine years. People now is changed to years gone by. First, they was more lovin' than they is now. Now children don't worry much with their parents. I'd o' crucified my own body for my parents. In fact, all my family. (Crane, 1987: 311)

Although this sense of family duty and self-sacrifice is still very much alive in some segments of the white Hells Gate community, the overall insularity of Hells Gate people began to breakdown with their increasing participation in labor and educational migration, the increased interactions among villages facilitated by infrastructure improvements, and the building of the airport just below the village itself. This older characterization of Hells Gate people, though, still exists in the minds of some residents in other villages and Hells Gate is often described as "country" despite the fact that none of the villages would be considered urbanized by western standards.

Part of the process of change in the white population of Hells Gate derived from their involvement in developing an on-island tourist industry, the on-going participation of women in the manufacture and sale of drawn-thread work, and their increased emphasis on the importance of education. All of these elements of change also combined to increase the general orientation of Hells Gate people towards the United States as Americans continued to pour much needed money into the Saban economy. When discussing their feelings about the growing American presence on island, the white Hells Gate woman from above described the state of women's economic opportunities like this:

> It's all right where the ladies is concerned. There's about fifteen that works for the government, in the offices, some teachers and some in the hospital, and all the rest of the ladies does their drawn-thread work. So we have to thank the Yankees for buyin' it, because it's a good help to the island. Without they we could never o' lived cause they come here, they buy up some and they take it away with them; and sometimes they write back to order some, and then we send it by mail to them. And they have been wonderful, the Yankees. I prefer them to my own Dutchmen. It's very good of them, you know, cause people you have never seen before they come here and sometimes they buy things that's really no value to them. Ever so many times I've heard the gentleman say "Well, we don't need it, but we'll buy it just for you to sell it". So that was really nice of 'em. Me, myself, I take plenty to a stranger, especially Yankees. (Crane, 1987: 313-314)

And another young white Hells Gate man expanded on these thoughts by saying:

When I say "God bless the Americans" I mean for a lot we does here in Saba.
Just like with the drawn-thread work the women is always sellin' it—orders and the
friends, and so on. So many people's livin' let me say, very nice today from them,
especially the Americans. I hear, when I'm goin' around, some talk that some of the
Americans don't feel that they's appreciated here. Well, they just feel that people pushes
handkerchiefs in their face or any kind of Saba craft, and they feel that the price is just
meant for they and nobody else. Well, some people might do it here, but I tell you,
there's a lot who appreciates Americans; and I do for number one. I'm sure a lot would
say for number one, because if you don't say that they can't be got no feelings in their
heart. And I mean it, because I know the Americans has helped a lot here. I know a lot
appreciate it. Maybe some might even go up and say it. But they feel it inside. (Crane,
1987: 399)

In the first narrative, an older white woman points out the few government jobs held by island women

and then quickly moves on to the centrality of the drawn-thread work trade in the lives of Saban

women and the role that Americans played in keeping that industry alive. In both passages,

Americans are seen, by and large, to be beneficent patrons of this native art form who choose to

spread their money to the local population irrespective of whether the purchase fills any specific need

for the purchaser. Although Dutch money flows from the coffers of the motherland, the interactions

that Sabans had with Americans, on- and off-island, were shaped outside of the context of a

dependent political relationship and were seen as somehow more human and more generous. The

Dutch are suspect based on their long history of financial neglect, the perceived stinginess and

clumsiness of their development programs, and their clear cultural difference but the Americans are

seen much like long-lost Saban cousins who have always extended a helping hand to their island kin.

This is not to say that there were no family squabbles, but that, in the end, most Sabans came to feel

that the similarities they shared with Americans outweighed the differences. This feeling of cultural

and historical solidarity dominated the relationships that whites from Hells Gate had with Americans

at home and abroad even if some residents resented the pushy know-it-all ways exhibited by some of

their northern cousins. Although colored by modern political events and a global trend of rising anti-

Americanism, these general positive attitudes still exist among many Hells Gate people and these

sentiments are often outwardly expressed by white people in other villages as well.

  While the older generation in Hells Gate went on with life in their usual ways, they knew that

the world that they inhabited now would soon be very different and that education was the key to

their children's future success. Education as a means to elevate one's status in life had always been foremost in the minds of elites on Saba but, more and more, it became a way for those born into families of lesser means to secure a future for themselves and their families. With the rising emphasis on education, some of those who did not have access to much formal schooling in their youth did feel slightly defensive about the way this new system cast them as "backwards" and some gave voice to their growing feelings of being disrespected by "modern" society. One older white woman put her thoughts on the subject as follows:

> There's nothin' to be ashamed of. You can't help the way that you's brought up and things like that. I guess there's places in the world too that there's poor people as well as Saba, and people that ain't been brought right up with good education and things like that. I knew of a gentleman here from Bermuda, and he was married to a Saba lady. Well, he used to have yachts and things. He was a Portuguese from Bermuda, and he couldn't even read or write. He could take boats out from Bermuda, bring 'em here, carry 'em back, and everything. So a poor place like this you didn't have the chance. (Crane, 1987: 310-311)

She echoes the feelings of many Sabans who felt cast out and marginalized in the brave new world of higher education and qualifications-based employment and some of these feelings still define the relationships between the old and young, the highly educated and the less educated, in island life today. She emphasizes the resiliency and intelligence of old-time people and takes pains to show how successful they could be despite their lack of education or, in her example, basic literacy. Her statement begs for understanding and respect while it simultaneously shows a declining admiration for older people who lived in very different times. However, even though parents may not have valued or had access to education in their youth, their attitudes towards education quickly changed as they envisioned a different path for their children. One young white father from Hells Gate put it like this:

> So then I left school when I was fifteen years—I was gonna almost make sixteen when I left. I wasn't the lucky one to go ahead. I mean, some boys went till almost seventeen; but it seems it just wasn't my chance to go ahead. I left from the sixth class, so I didn't get the diploma. I didn't went to the seventh. But it wasn't till after that I began finding out my mistake. I should have take my lessons better, study them better and so on; but instead of that, I went out to play and so on. Maybe if Mommy and Daddy and they had put me in my room and told me "Study your lessons, and if you ain't study your lessons at such time when we asks it to you, you is not playing." Mommy didn't do that. Maybe it's still a good way. I have that on my mind, but I haven't spoken to Phillie

about it yet. So when Jeff goes to school I'll tell him just that "Well, Jeffie, if you isn't goin' study you lessons, you're not playing. If you don't study them you get punishment—I'll put you in your room. If you study your lessons, if it takes ten minutes or it takes a hour, when it's finished, when we ask it to you, if you know it, you can have all the play you wants" You know, on my thinking, I think a child would appreciate that. "Gosh, if I'd study my lessons, right away, I'd go play with my friends". Everybody doesn't come with a brain to learn. We doesn't know how Jeff is going to be yet. I'm just thinking if he will have the right brains for studying and so on. Well, if he doesn't, I'll still be thankful. (Crane, 1987: 383)

For the first time, government investment in advanced off-island education made it possible for many Sabans, even those with limited resources, to advance their educations. Government funding supported Saban children in their quest to finish their secondary educations on Aruba and Curacao and, if they met with a high level of success, to move on to secure college degrees. In the past, education on-island ended with the seventh grade and, even though it would be some years before Saban children could complete their high school education on island, the opportunity to further studies on the government dime did begin to level the playing field between those of means and those without. However, the desire to achieve had to exist in the child and in their parents and even the reduced financial sacrifice required of the families sometimes proved to be too much to ask. The general perspective on education, though, became very positive in many Saban households irrespective of parental education and this change in attitudes continues to propel many Saban children to achieve academically.

While off-island academic achievement began to give island youth a foothold in the emerging regional and global service-oriented high tech economy, Sabans on-island also began to sense a sea-change in how the rest of the world viewed their tiny island and what that might mean for the future of Saba itself. Non-local entrepreneurs evidenced a growing interest in developing a local tourism market and Sabans in Hells Gate and elsewhere began to wonder how their lives might change if more foreigners showed up on their rocky shores. Although the economic windfall might be substantial, the social costs remained unknown. The same young father who expressed his thoughts on education shared his mixed feelings like this:

One night by the guest house we spoke a lot, and he was tellin' me a lot about how he figure Saba will change, and he asked me what I thought about it, and so on.

Well, I think now from my knowledge that Saba is really nice now the way it are. But when I see other people, speak to other people like Mr. Beebe—I mean the Americans, strangers—and puttin' the two things together, if the wharf comes, a lot of people will come in here-not only good people, the nice people who really comes here and enjoys the quietness—all kinds. I think Saba really be changed a lot. I mean that's my way of thinking. Well, I guess plenty do have a lot of different ideas about what's going to happen. All depends on how they's livin', I must say. You know, I've really spoke to some people about the wharf. They say "sure I'm glad that Saba's going to change—it's too slow". Well, the next person'll say "Not me—if Saba change to be any faster as now, it'll be wild like other places are, and people wants to come here for peace and quiet and so on" Well, my answer is something like the last one I said. In other words, I can add in: I hope that the change what's going to come, that that wouldn't dull it down, that just somehow that'll brighten it, brighten it so much maybe that people wouldn't notice the dullness in it. See, we have a poor chance because our island's so small and it can't build up so fast. (Crane, 1987: 419-420)

The fear of changing Saba into a "wild place" draws a very clear line between how Sabans saw their island compared to other islands and expressed the legitimate concern that opening up might bring unintended consequences for the local population. Development, then, was seen as a both a necessity for supporting on-island life and a threat to the lifeways of the native community. This balance between respecting Saba's unique culture and remaining, through necessity or desire, to the outside is a central theme in on-going negotiations between locals and non-locals within the context of on-island development through the tourism and Medical School industries. While Sabans had always moved freely in other cultures abroad, this was the first time that they were presented with the possibility of having the world come to them. This reversal of population flows dominates modern life on island and the concerns expressed by this thoughtful Hells Gate man and continue to be echoed in the sentiments of many islanders today.

Experiencing motherhood in Saban society: a closer look at the meanings of marital, non-marital, and mixed childbearing strategies from seafaring to post-oil times

The experiences of women who entered the path of non-marital childbearing were very diverse in the oil and post-oil periods, and, as an example of this diversity, it is clear that race, ever-married status, and the timing of marriage structured the long-term family experiences of Saban women who had children outside of marriage. When looking at these relationships in the black population on Saba, the total number of children born to a reproductively active black woman

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fluctuated across time and was tightly linked to variations in socioeconomic conditions and marital behavior in the black community. From late seafaring times to the height of the welfare state, black women who had children outside of marriage but who later married and had one or more marital children had significantly larger families than their peers who either waited to have children after marriage or who only had non-marital children (Figure 7.57). In addition, exclusively marital childbearing among black women produced larger families during the height of seafaring to the early oil years when compared to black women who only had children outside of marriage, but this trend reversed during the height of oil refinery migration and into the post-oil period where women who only had non-marital children had larger families than their marital-only childbearing peers (Figure 7.57). The timing of entry into childbearing and the presence or absence of a long-term partner combined to produce both the clear fertility advantage of pursing a mixed non-marital/marital childbearing strategy as well as the ebb and flow of relative fertility among marital-only and non-marital only childbearing black women. Looking at the variations in these experiences from height of seafaring times to the height of the welfare state will show just how dynamic childbearing strategies can be, both within a specific frame of time and across temporal periods, and how meanings of motherhood in different childbearing scenarios are both passed down and modified from generation to generation.

The confluence of maternal and marital trends created the family experiences of black Saban women under conditions of sustained seafaring migration, clearly associated the mixed strategy of combining non-marital and marital childbearing with the largest family sizes on-island, and revealed important characteristics of family life at this time. At the height of seafaring migration, black women who had a mixture of non-marital and marital children entered motherhood at a very young age (21 years), tended to marry around the age of 24, and had an average family size of 7.6 children (Figure 7.57, 7.59, 7.61). During this same time, women who waited to have children until after marriage entered marriage at age 24, had their first child by age 25, and had an average family size of just over 4 children while women who had only non-marital children entered motherhood at age 26,

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have no record of ever marrying after starting their families, and had an average of about 3.5 children during their lives (Figure 7.57, 7.59, 7.61). The timing of marriage for women who had non-marital children was very important in the creation of completed family sizes in the black community and this was especially true during times when modern contraception was not widely used. For mixed-strategy black women, the space between first birth and marriage spanned about 4 years during seafaring times while black women who had no marital children never married at all and likely never secured a long-term partner (Figure 7.63).

The demographic features outlined above resulted in larger family sizes and different family experiences for mixed-strategy black women when compared to their peers following exclusively marital or non-marital paths. During the height of seafaring times, black women who had both non-marital and marital children entered motherhood at a comparatively young age, tended to marry at the same age as their exclusively-marital childbearing peers, and waited, on average about 4 years between having their first child and getting married. The relative fertility advantage of mixed-strategy black women over marital-only black women stemmed from a prolongation of childbearing by six years due to earlier entry into motherhood. However, the fertility advantage of mixed-strategy women over exclusively non-marital peers is related both to their earlier entry into childbearing and to the types of childbearing relationships that each experienced. Based on these sociodemographic data, mixed strategy women tended to form long-term relationships that culminated in marriage within 4 years and that created a constant, if age-specific, risk of pregnancy across the life course while exclusively non-marital women had mostly-shorter term relationships, or long-term relationships disrupted by long-term migration, that reduced their relative life-time risk of pregnancy. In seafaring times, non-marital childbearing at a very young age tended to result in earlier entry into marriage when compared to women following other strategies and may have been used as a social gambit to pressure a man into accruing appropriate amounts of wealth, when possible, and marrying his partner at a time when the links between marriage and childbearing remained strong in the black community. For women who waited to get married before having children and those who had only

non-marital children, entry into motherhood was significantly delayed which could have allowed these women more time and space to become independent adults before taking on the challenges of motherhood and/or wifehood while the entire adult lives of mixed-strategy women were dominated by caring for and supporting their exceptionally large families. The delayed pattern of entering childbearing for women who only had non-marital children could also be read as an attempt to hold-out for marriage at a time when marital relationships were still stressed as the foundation of family life. After waiting many years for a marriage to materialize, some black women may have tried to force marriage through pregnancy while others came to the realization that marriage was not in the cards and opted to have non-marital children with a man or men for a variety of economic and personal reasons. Conversely, some hold-outs for marriage were able to secure a marital partner and were released from the pressure of deciding whether to have children outside of marriage or to remain life-long celibates like so many of their friends and family.

During the transition to an oil-based economy, the relationships between family size, family-building behavior, and social experience in the black community were quite similar to seafaring times, but marital fertility expanded relative to mixed strategy and non-marital fertility and women with no marital children initiated childbearing at younger ages. Entry into motherhood converged at around 23 years for black women who pursued a mixed childbearing strategy and for their peers who had children only outside of marriage while the age at first birth for marital-only black women stayed high at around 26 years (Figure 7.59). Women who had only marital children also became wives at a younger age than women from the other two groups and age at marriage ranged from about 25 years for marital-only childbearing women to 27.5 years for mixed-strategy women to over 40 years for women who never had any marital children (Figure 7.61). For women who had children outside of marriage but later married, the space between first birth and marriage averaged 4 years for mixed strategy women and 17 years for women who had no marital children (Figure 7.63). Family sizes remained largest for mixed-strategy women during the transition to an oil economy, at 7 children per

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woman, while marital-only women increased their family size to around 6 children and non-marital only families stayed smallest at just 3.5 children per woman (Figure 7.57).

The sudden relative increase in the family size of marital-only families in the late seafaring and early oil refinery days suggests that marital couples were not separated from their partners for as long as mixed-strategy couples, who may have initially pursued migration as a means to build up the wealth necessary for marriage and building a home, and that women who had only non-marital children continued to experience a lower level of pregnancy risk due to engaging in shorter-term relationships that rarely ended in marriage. Age at first birth remained high for marital-only women, increased by three years for mixed-strategy women and decreased by two years for non-marital only women. Despite their later entry into motherhood, elevated exposure of marital-only women to the risk of pregnancy narrowed the fertility gap between mixed-strategy and marital-only women during this time and resulted in a relative surge in the size of marital families. Despite having children at younger ages than in the past, exposure to the risk of pregnancy remained sporadic for non-marital only women and they continued to have the smallest family sizes in the black community. The movement towards earlier non-marital childbearing for women who subsequently had no marital children may indicate both a trend towards loosening the strict ties between marriage and childbearing in the black community under conditions of early oil-refinery migration and repeated but failed attempts to pressure men into marrying the mothers of their children either shortly before or soon after the birth of a child. When this strategy of pre-marital pregnancy failed, many of these women were faced with the prospect of caring for their children without male economic and emotional support and began to enter single-motherhood at early ages and for prolonged periods of time. For those who successfully negotiated marriage, either before or shortly after childbearing, male contributions to family life tended to be more secure and social stresses tended to be less because of this shared burden. Of course, this was true only in ideal or mostly-ideal situations where husbands took their roles as providers seriously and where family responsibilities, economic and domestic, were equitably divided between husbands and wives.

At the height of the oil refinery period, motherhood for mixed-strategy women and non-marital only women began even earlier in life while marital-only families became increasingly rare and relatively small. The age of entry into motherhood plummeted to 20 years old for black women who either pursued a mixed-childbearing strategy or who had only non-marital children while the age at first birth climbed to nearly 30 years old for the minority of black women who had only marital children (Figure 7.59). Age at marriage trends for marital-only women versus women with a mixture of non-marital and marital children flip-flopped from the early refinery days with mixed-strategy women entering marriage at around 23 years of age and exclusively-marital childbearing women entering marriage much later at age 28 (Figure 7.61). Black women who had no marital children still married at significantly older ages and, on average, did not enter marriage until age 37 (Figure 7.61). The delay between having a child and marrying shortened to just under 3 years for mixed-strategy women but remained lengthy, at 17 years, for women who had only non-marital children (Figure 7.63). Women who had both non-marital and marital children maintained their hold on largest family size, at an incredible 8 children per family, with non-marital only women exceeding the fertility of marital-only women for the first time at 6 and 5 children, respectively (Figure 7.57).

As oil refinery migration came to dominate life on Saba, it is clear that those who decided to wait to have children until after marriage significantly abbreviated their active childbearing years relative women who pursued non-marital family building forms. When thinking about mixed-strategy childbearing and exclusively non-marital childbearing it is similarly clear that mixed-strategy women were selected into marriage at much earlier ages and, therefore, had a higher life-time risk of pregnancy relative to their non-marital-only childbearing peers. In the past, variations in the risk of pregnancy had also created larger marital-only families relative to non-marital only families, but the nearly 10 year difference in entry into motherhood meant that marital-only women simply did not have the time to catch-up to the fertility of their non-marital peers. Women who entered non-marital childbearing and who did not have any marital children married much later in life, if at all, and spent most of their younger years raising and caring for their own children while periodically attempting to

solidify a long-term relationship with a man. A bump in the fertility of women who never had marital children also suggests that some couples simply delayed marriage due to a lack of economic resources or uncertainty about whether the relationship would last but still maintained long-term relationships either within the same household or as visiting partners. Alternatively, the few men who stayed on-island, married or not, may have been able to start simultaneous or sequential relationships with several different women, particularly if they had substantial economic resources, which would increase the risk of pregnancy for women as partners were shared and traded out, willingly or not, over time. Meanwhile, mixed-strategy women and marital-only women entered into long-term, ideally but not always stable and supportive, nuclear family relationships for the duration of their childbearing and childrearing experiences and, although childrearing responsibilities may have fallen primarily to these women, they were never in the same difficult, often lonely position relative to their exclusively non-marital childbearing peers. As in the previous period, pregnancy and non-marital childbearing may have served as a gambit for women who wanted to solidify their relationships with specific men. Those who met with success became wives early on while those who met with failure may have received some limited financial support but no long-term commitment from their resistant, or in some cases unavailable (married) or physically absent (migrated), partners. Cycling through this process created some families where siblings had different fathers who were differentially involved, or in many cases not involved, in their children's lives and where the mother did her best to keep her family together through hard times.

As migration opportunities waned in the immediate post-oil period, women pursuing all three family building strategies became mothers at early ages but the intervention of modern contraception helped to limit family size across the board. Age at first birth remained low for mixed-strategy and non-marital only women, at around 20 years but dropped from almost 30 years to just 22.5 years for marital-only women (Figure 7.59). Age at marriage was correspondingly low for marital-only women, at 21 years, while mixed-strategy women entered marriage later than in the previous period, at age 26.5, and non-marital only peers tended to marry around ten years earlier than in previous

periods at age 28 (Figure 7.61). The length of the gap between initiating childbearing and becoming married grew to 6 years for mixed-strategy women but declined to just eight years for women with only non-marital children (figure 7.63). This marks a clear departure from past patterns where mixed-strategy women married within four years of their first birth and mothers who had no children within marriage married an average of 17 years after having their first child. Even though all family sizes were on the decline in the immediate post-oil period, family sizes stayed largest for mixed-strategy women, at just over 6 children, remained intermediate for non-marital only families, at about 5 children, and stayed smallest for marital-only families that tended to have around four children (Figure 7.57).

In the immediate post-oil period, a resurgence of early marriage in the total black population of women dropped the age at first birth for marital-only women by close to 8 years which brought age at first birth much closer to that experienced by mixed-strategy women and women who had children only outside of marriage and signaled a period of early motherhood for all black women in Saban society. However, marital-only families continued to be the smallest families in the black community and this fact, coupled with the much younger ages at marriage and childbearing than found in the past and the decreasing probability of long-term separation through migration, indicates clear use of modern contraception to limit family size in this segment of the population. Declining fertility through contraceptive use was also occurring in the other two groups but came about at a slightly slower pace and did not disrupt the pattern of large families in mixed-strategy households, intermediate sized families in non-marital only households, and proportionally small families in marital homes that emerged during oil refinery times   Easing entry into marriage meant that women who were married before childbearing were, on average, much younger than in previous generations and took on the responsibilities of family life at around the same time of life as their non-marital and mixed-strategy peers. Women in marital-only situations no longer had the opportunity to live single adult lives for any appreciable period of time but small declines in fertility meant that they had fewer children to take care of over their childrearing years while restriction of childbearing to the early

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years after marriage meant that marital-only women more years to live, and perhaps more free time, after childbearing and childrearing were complete. Women pursuing a mixed strategy of childbearing found themselves waiting longer to marry even though partners were more likely to remain on-island while women who were selected into marriage after having only non-marital children waited just half the time to marry as they had in the past. Combined, this suggests that the experiences of these two groups of non-marital childbearing women came closer into line during the immediate post-oil period and that either entry into non-marital childbearing as a gambit for early marriage was less successful during this time or that women were no longer as interested in marrying as they had been in former days. Additionally, a movement back towards marriage in the immediate post-oil period may have shifted attitudes about non-marital childbearing and made mixed-strategy approaches less acceptable than in the past. This may have pressured some black women who became pregnant pre-maritally to enter marriage when they might otherwise have delayed which would reduce the overall proportion of mixed-strategy women and remove most women who had the option to marry at an earlier date from either pool of non-marital childbearing women. For women who could not secure marriage while pregnant, the road to establishing a marital home may have become more difficult in a climate of increased social disapproval of non-marital childbearing and this may be reflected in the fact that just 1/3 of black women who had children outside of marriage eventually married during the immediate post-oil period.

At the height of the welfare state, fertility continued to drop for women pursuing each of the three childbearing strategies, but marital-only and non-marital-only women began to have much smaller families than their mixed-strategy peers while entry into motherhood began later for marital-only women and stayed young for both types of non-marital childbearing women. Age at first birth rose slightly to around 21 years for women pursuing both types of non-marital childbearing while women who only had marital children entered motherhood significantly later at around age 27 (Figure 7.59). Ages at marriage converged for women pursing each of the three distinct childbearing strategies with marital-only women, mixed strategy women, and non-marital only women marrying at

ages 24, 23, and 27, respectively (Figure 7.61). The timing of marriage for women with some or all non-marital children again changed with mixed-strategy women marrying about two years after having their first child and women with no marital children marrying just under six years after entering motherhood (Figure 7.63). This pattern may indicate not only an ease of entry into marriage, especially for mixed-strategy women, but also a compression of childbearing into earlier age categories which would pull down the average waiting time for these two groups of women by including only quick marriages for mixed strategy women and intermediate rather than exclusively long waiting periods for women who only had non-marital children. For example, to have any marital children when desired family size is 2 or 3, one would have to enter marriage shortly after having a first child while some couples who married quite early may have already had two children in the first few years of their relationship. Family sizes also declined across the board at the height of the welfare state with marital-only and non-marital-only women having just over two children, on average, and mixed strategy women having nearly double that number at about 4 children per woman (Figure 7.57).

An elevation in age at marriage for marital-only women and widespread contraceptive use, particularly for marital-only and non-marital only women, created a clear decline in family size but still left mixed-strategy women with the largest families in the black population. These complex demographics suggest that women who had only marital children were choosing to delay entry into wifehood and motherhood. Increasing educational opportunities and a desire to gain job experience and career advancement may have helped to delay entry into motherhood and marriage for students who pursued degrees off-island before returning home or who stayed on island and entered the world of paid employment. These factors may also have helped to create an incipient movement towards delayed motherhood and family limitation in more educated households by attenuating the desire to have large families. Reduction in the number of children in marital-only families was a crucial aspect of this family-building shift as it allowed these women to more easily juggle the demands of work and home life as domestic duties lessened over time. Young motherhood remained the norm for women

who followed mixed-strategy or non-marital only paths and may have been a serious impediment to completing college-level education or to securing more lucrative on-island jobs. Women who were selected earlier into marriage after non-marital childbearing found themselves with nearly twice as many children as their non-marital only and marital-only peers which suggests that their lives continued to revolve around domestic responsibilities rather than career advancement. The clear reduction in the family size for women who only had non-marital children signals not only an abandonment of the practice of having successive children in order to find security in a man but also empowerment through the knowledge that fertility could be controlled and that employment outside the home could give a woman the means of supporting herself and her family. While an I-can-do-it-on-my-own attitude may have been more bravado that masked socioeconomic poverty and marginalization in the past, more non-marital only women were really able to make it economically during this time and many Sabans today will point to the fact that many "professional women" now have children outside of marriage. Early entry into motherhood for non-marital only women coupled with restriction of childbearing to early in life also meant that many of these women found themselves freed from the burdens of raising children quite early in life, sometimes by their early to mid 40s, and could focus more time and energy on a range of extra-domestic pursuits, especially as the responsibilities of grandmotherhood lessened over the past few decades. In this way, marital and non-marital women came to have more overlapping concerns and behaviors than they did in the past while mixed-strategy women continued to have larger families that required more of their time and attention. However, this is not to say that marital-only and non-marital only family building strategies were viewed as socially or morally equivalent in Saban society and many married women had to deal with the complex negotiations between historically shaped expectations of motherhood and the desire to exist outside the domestic sphere while unmarried women continued to deal with the stresses of raising children alone and the lingering class-based and racialized social disapproval of having children outside of marriage.

Looking at the trends in family size, age at first birth, and age at first marriage for white women reveals similar demographic patterns for marital-only and mixed-strategy women while the small number of women who only had non-marital children show a pattern of delayed entry into motherhood, marriage only after age 50, and very small family sizes (Figures 7.58, 7.60, 7.62). For women who followed a mixed strategy of childbearing, age at first birth, and age at first marriage, and total number of children correspond quite closely with those found for marital-only women which suggests that entry into marriage and nuclear family life was almost immediate for this group of women (Figures 7.58, 7.60, 7.62). Slightly lower ages at first birth for mixed-strategy women during early oil refinery times created slightly larger families when compared to marital-only women but continued lower ages at first birth at the height of oil refinery migration and equivalent family sizes with marital-only women suggest that some mixed-strategy coupled may have been separated by migration for longer periods of time (Figures 7.58, 7.60, 7.62). Relatively long separations would have depressed fertility in these situations and would have minimized the effects of earlier entry into childbearing apparent for mixed-strategy women. In addition, these trends also suggest the possibility that mixed-strategy couples were not as economically settled as their marital peers and that migration was one way to increase the possibility of building and supporting a family. Fathers-to-be working abroad may also have been one reason why some children were born outside of marriage during this time as return trips required funds that were already quite limited. While marriage and family life may have been very similar for mixed-strategy and marital-only women, for white women who only had children outside of marriage, age at first birth was similar to women following other strategies during seafaring times but shot up to the mid-thirties under conditions of oil refinery migration before dropping to 27 in the immediate post- oil period and then to just 22 at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.60). Age at marriage was also very high for non-marital only women and averaged in the mid-50s during oil refinery and immediate post-oil times before dropping to 25 at the height of the welfare state (Figure 7.62). Family sizes were very small and averaged around one child per woman in oil refinery times and only about 1.5 in the post-oil period (Figure 7.58). The lives of white

women who only had non-marital children are poignantly revealed in these demographic relationships as it is clear that they held out for marriage until near the end of their childbearing years and either gambled on having a sexual relationship with a man later in life in the hopes of becoming married, had an affair to stave off the loneliness of a celibate life and became pregnant as a result, or chose to have a child despite the social sanctions against non-marital childbearing in the white community. Those that married only did so much later in life which may indicate concerns over inheritance and, perhaps, a need to wait until her father's child was widowed or returned home from his various travels. At the height of the welfare state, demographic trends began to converge for white women pursuing these three distinct family building strategies and speaks to a general easing of the social burdens and stigma endured by women who never had children within the bounds of married life.

As shown through this sociodemographic analysis of marital, mixed-strategy, and non-marital family building processes, it is clear that there was no monolithic experience of these relationships either within racial groups or across time. The conditions of life that surrounded Saban families as they transitioned to successive labor regimes impacted the ways that the black and white communities viewed different kinds of childbearing practices and the experiences that women had following these three different paths. By revealing the complexities of these historical shifts, childbearing is rightfully positioned as a dynamic historical process in the lives of all kinds of women and the variations in age at first birth, age at first marriage, and completed family sizes paint poignant pictures of Saban women's lives and the challenges they faced as mothers, wives, partners, and workers. These intergenerational experiences continue to shape the possibilities afforded to Saban women today and knowledge of how these relationships assembled and reassembled over time anchors our understandings of modern forms of Saban motherhood and family life as they developed over the long arch of history.

Saban family life at the end of oil refinery migration and the transition to a welfare state

When oil refinery migration trickled off in the mid-1950s, an era of big government spending on social welfare buffered Sabans from a general decline in work opportunities and economic outlets abroad. Oil refinery migration had lured many Sabans away from their island but the labor demands of the growing petrochemical industry had caught men and women from both the black and white communities in its web and, as such, the rate of departure was much more evenly spread across the population as a whole. This meant that the basic population composition of the villages at the end of seafaring migration was maintained throughout this period even as the population declined from around 2500 people around 1915 to just over 1000 in 1965. Family formation processes remained remarkably stable for the white population in all four villages until the most recent period and were founded on the strong belief in marriage before childbearing and a strict code of sexual morality for women and, to a lesser extent, for men. Although non-marital childbearing did occur in the white community and did elevate slightly during oil refinery times and dramatically in post-oil refinery times, particularly in Windwardside, non-marital childbearing was never as common in the white community as it was in the black community as a whole.

While non-marital childbearing and single motherhood had always existed as an alternative family form in the black community, it was only during the oil refinery period that it elevated to the dominant childbearing pattern amongst the black population in three of the four villages on-island. In The Bottom, St. Johns, and Windwardside 40-60% of children were being born outside of marriage and most women experienced a non-marital birth at some point in their lives. However, the impulse to marry remained strong and most black women did marry after having one or more child. It is also important to emphasize that the traditional pattern of marriage before childbearing adhered to in the white community also existed in the black community even though it had become a minority experience by the middle of the 20th century. Overall, the reproductive flexibility in the black community gave rise to a diversity of family forms while the vast majority of the white community continued to insist on marriage as the only socially acceptable context for starting a family and raising children. In the post-oil period, non-marital childbearing became the norm for black women in all

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four villages but many black women continued to marry before having children, particularly in The Bottom, or to marry shortly after initiating childbearing. However, long-term single motherhood increased to nearly half of all black women in St. Johns, Windwardside, and Hells Gate with a slightly lower proportion, 20%, becoming sole caretakers of their children in The Bottom. Although the experience of non-marital childbearing varied over time due to broad changes in socioeconomic conditions and related period effects and remained heterogeneous within and between cohorts of black and white women, women from all walks of family life had to find a way to stitch together a living in difficult economic environments that continued to value the labor of men over the labor of women.

Non-marital family forms positioned a large segment of black women and a handful of white women as the only source of economic and emotional support for their children while married women of both racial groups continued to assume a secondary economic status to their husbands regardless of how much each party actually contributed to the economic viability of the household. Saban men, black and white, continued to have certain expectations of women as mothers, wives, and partners and these expectations exerted a lot of social pressure on women to carry sole responsibility for the maintenance of the household and the rearing of the children. However, because male contributions were often insufficient or non-existent, many women chose or were forced to enter the world of paid work. Women who entered paid employment soon found that their labor experiences were stratified by both gender and race. Women's work was universally devalued compared to men's work and even men performing unskilled manual labor could expect to earn salaries that vastly outstripped anything that women could hope to receive. A racial divide also emerged and segmented available women's jobs into those that were suitable for white women and those that were for black women only. White women tended towards labor forms that reinforced existing norms of female domesticity and, as such, preferred to spend their time doing drawn-thread work for sale to tourists on island or to other clientele living mainly in the United States. Black women also participated in the Saba Lace industry but, unlike most white women, were free to engage in a range of domestic work and small-

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scale production of bread, candy, and other consumables. Domestic work, in particular, allowed

black women to move more freely in their communities and this, coupled with the fact that many

black women forged lives independent from men, meant that black women enjoyed a level of social

freedom not experienced by women in the white community. This is not to say that black women did

not feel the pressure to conform to a life of domesticity and sexual purity, only that these ideals

became less and less possible given prevailing socioeconomic conditions and the rise of single

motherhood in the black community. It is also important to realize that domestic jobs clustered at the

lowest end of the pay scale in Saban society and confinement to this sector of the local economy

indicated a high degree of both racial and gender discrimination experienced by black women in their

communities. Economic and sexual exploitation were also common experiences for women working

in domestic service and some black Saban women, particularly those that resided with employers on-

and off-island, undoubtedly felt burdened by unreasonable demands placed on their time, physically

exhausted from the daily grind of cleaning and cooking for extremely low wages, and fearful of

powerful and fickle men who could use their position to extort sexual favors from their vulnerable

female employees. Somehow, though, many black women had to find a way to support their children

and, in the process of doing so, developed a kind of toughness rooted in the pain of being abandoned

by their own fathers and, later, by their own male partners. The very different attitudes that black and

white women developed towards marriage, male-female partnerships, and the expectations that they

had for the future came out in a survey of school children conducted by Crane in 1964. When asked

about their futures, an interesting racial divide emerged (Crane, 1971: 192):

> Girls of both racial groups named teaching and nursing as their first and second
> choices, respectively. The main difference between the two groups was in the greater
> number of white girls who chose the occupations of housewife and mother, despite the
> fact that in subsequent questioning all black girls stated that they planned to marry
> someday. This would seem to indicate that many black girls feel they must plan some
> means of supporting themselves even though they plan to marry.

Even today, many black women expect very little from their men and tend to see familial

responsibilities as the purview of women. However, it would be erroneous to suggest that black

women did not experience forms of gender domination similar to their white peers. Whether suffering from long periods of spousal separation, confinement to the home to protect an image of purity and domesticity, or suffering laboring as a domestic without any support from their children's fathers, black and white women had their lives shaped by the attitudes of men, the decisions that men made, and the generally uncontested high social status of men in their own communities. In reflecting on gender norms on Saba, Keur and Keur (1960: 228) state:

> While the woman is always important in running the household and caring for children, the man—the father—is usually the final authority. When he is present, the woman takes a subservient position. As wife and mother she remains in the background; she waits until she is addressed before she speaks; she serves her husband well, and often addresses him as Mr. There are a few exceptions to this among upper-class colored and white women. But, in general, all married women are expected to be faithful and are bitterly condemned for any extra-marital breach. The husband, however, is much freer, and his liaisons, durable and temporary, are borne and accepted. The "henpecked" husband is practically an unknowable figure.
>
> There are certainly a considerable number of households where children form an integral part of the group, especially where the parents are legally married and the father is present. But in general young children are strongly attached to the mother only, and those of about ten and over have but loose and tenuous bonds with their fathers. In cases of emergency or crisis, however, when action or decision is demanded, the father, if present or within reach, plays an important authoritarian role. He will often be called on to mete out punishment. He will decide if a boy should go to Curacao for work or further schooling. Sometimes, if a child is ill, the mother will wait to consult him before calling the doctor. If he is working in Curacao, Aruba, or the States, and regularly or even occasionally sends money orders or checks, deference to his whishes may still be maintained by correspondence. Although strong social pressure is exerted on men to support their children, there are still a considerable number of women who bear a great part or almost all of the financial burden alone. In such households, children are certainly handicapped and insecure. Such outside women or other unmarried women with children have, of course, almost complete authority over children, although occasionally they may still attempt to keep up the fiction of an absent father, even when contact is too slight to have any functional effect. Hence, it would seem that the concept of an authoritarian father as head of the household is the widely accepted ideal. It is overtly adhered to, wherever possible.

And Crane (1971: 226) adds:

> As has been suggested in other parts of this report, one of the reasons for the dominant position of male within their families may be due to their far superior economic position. Most males, even in hard times, earn several multiples of the amounts obtained by women. This appears to militate against any social definition of the male as 'marginal' and the formation of matrifocal families. As many informants reported, males have long been accorded an important position on Saba, especially when heavy emigration made the populace dependent on the few men present for so many functions traditionally performed by men.

The image of the authoritarian father is still very much in play in some Saban households even if more and more women are tending to move towards a model of intrahousehold equality in decision-making that appeared to be emerging in "upper class" black and white households in the mid 1950s. The authority wielded by unmarried women comes from a place of socioeconomic marginalization where male partners have relinquished any claim they might have asserted over family affairs. It is not so much that these women took this power but that, by default, it fell to them in the absence of any viable male presence. However, over time, single motherhood did become an empowering and transformative experience for some women but, in a larger sense, it continued to signal a serious breakdown in the traditional responsibilities that men and women had for each other and for their children. Marriage did not guarantee that men would live up to their financial and emotional obligations but the complete abandonment of any sense of parental or spousal responsibility from the outset became a common and painful experience for a growing segment of the black female population and became yet another way for men to express their power in Saban society. Fatherhood became optional as men maintained control over their level of involvement with their women and children either through complete support, partial support, complete abandonment, or outright denial of paternity. Worse still, men who fathered children with women outside of the context of marriage could use this fact to shame the woman herself and to question her morality in his eyes and in the eyes of the community as a whole. In this no-win situation, Keur and Keur (1960: 221-22) note that despite the availability of legal means to make a man meet his parental responsibilities:

> …in actual practice, there are many instances where the woman is left with very inadequate financial help or none for their children, and for reasons of her own, does not go to the Board, but struggles to earn a bare subsistence, often as a domestic. Sometimes the father does nothing more than to give or send an article of clothing or a little money for a child on Christmas or for its birthday.

This pattern of quiet suffering was maintained both by the sense that a woman should not or should not have to exert an external pressure on a man to meet his responsibilities and that the airing of the circumstances of a woman's case would bring attention to an event that many felt was shameful and embarrassing for the woman, her family, and her community. In a way, the single mother pays

penance for her transgressions while nothing, or very little, is required from the father either by the woman herself or by the community at large. Ironically, however, it may be this position of powerlessness that propelled many black women to stand on their own and to develop a modern sense of women's empowerment and self-reliance that is lagging behind in sectors of the white community where male authority remains unquestioned.

However, with male dominance secure throughout this period, keeping up appearances, especially when it came to female sexuality, became a preoccupation of all Sabans regardless of race. The community policed itself with zeal and outed any interaction or relationship that did not conform to general codes of morality that required a rigid division between the sexes. Because men were seen as authority figures in the community, attention focused on the behavior and conduct of women and girls who were required to remain sexually pure before marriage and sexually faithful after ascending to the status of wife. Crane (1971: 128, 133, 153-154) shares the following observations about the power of gossip in Saban society:

> At all dances, and a receptions whether or not there is dancing, chairs are arranged along the walls and most people, especially women, sit quietly and seldom move during the evening except to dance when asked. Men often cluster outside or at a bar except to dance. Couples seldom exchange more than a word or two in the dance floor; and a man seldom dances more than twice with the same girl. So carefully is this maintained to avoid gossip that it is almost impossible to tell from the dance floor if a couple is courting…
>
> After puberty, most girls are restricted socially far more than their brothers. They run errands to stores or neighboring homes and occasionally take their sewing to a friend's home to chat while they work. In order to keep a good reputation, however, most girls usually take walks only when accompanied by family members or girlfriends and seldom stand on street corners chatting…
>
> One result of the ever-present threat of what 'people will say' is the preoccupation of most parents with making sure their children, particularly daughters, keep friends of whom the parents approves and are not seem standing on the street chatting, especially with members of the opposite sex. The possible consequences in terms of gossip are carefully considered in connection with almost every act…The desire to avoid the power of gossip may well have been a major factor in bringing about the present social situation in which each family customarily visits in the homes of only a few close friends or relatives.

The picture painted by Crane highlights how the prevailing cultural climate isolated non-marital childbearing as the ultimate act of social transgression in a community that placed extreme value on the purity and faithfulness of women. Because these attitudes were even more pronounced in the

white community, it is easy to see how pregnancy outside of marriage could become a life-long emblem of a woman's complete failure to conform to societal expectations in white society. Diversity of experience in the black community did not allow for such a rigid division between the upright and the fallen but it is likely that some black families did view non-marital childbearing in a similar way to their white peers and exerted equivalent kinds of pressures on their children to conform to their social expectations. These varied streams of thought continue to impact women's lives in modern Saban society as women try to find their place as mothers, partners, and workers in their own families.

All of these social changes and continuities within Saban families arose under conditions of high male and female migration to the oil islands of Aruba and Curacao and, later, under a regime of big government that directly and indirectly doled out government money to fill the gap when off-island opportunities dissipated. All of the villages developed their own relationships with off-island locales and these relationships reflected both migrant connections forged in the past and those forged under prevailing economic conditions. The white population of Windwardside maintained its high degree of attachment to the United States while the black and white communities in other villages developed dense networks of connections with Aruba and Curacao. After the flow of labor migration to the southern islands taped off, a range of social programs and government work projects were a godsend to a struggling people but the socioeconomic effects of these programs were mixed at best. A large number of Sabans, both black and white, not only became dependent on government largesse but also developed a mindset that viewed government support as a right regardless of one's real economic situation. This mentality also reshaped the way a large segment of the population viewed the nature of work as many in the older generation bemoaned both what they saw as an overall decline in work ethic and a dangerous reorientation of labor towards government work on The Road or in an office rather than towards making a living from the ground. However, continuing high levels of migration existed side-by-side with the growing experience of on-island dependency on the local

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government which suggests that very different world views and access to social and economic resources underlay decisions to migrate or to stay on island.

The continuing abandonment of the island in the post-oil period, particularly by members of the black community, indicates that economic conditions on-island remained poor for many Sabans despite the intervention of welfare policies and, furthermore, that the experience of poverty on-island was, in some respects, stratified by race. Larger family sizes and more women having children in the black community meant that the number of black people born into Saban society could not be absorbed by a government that was already overwhelmed by the needs of its citizenry and, in some cases, that was racially-biased in its distribution of resources. This gap in the ability and/or desire of the local government and the private sector economy to support an "excess" of black population kept black migration rates high in all four villages until the past decade. The continual stream of black Saban migrants in the post-oil period indicates a clear desire to try to build a better life abroad even though changes in the nature of off-island markets meant that they encountered decreasing employment opportunities in an increasingly skills-based economy. However, many of those who stayed continued to look towards the government for support and had little in the way of social or economic resources that would even facilitate migration while the smaller group of wealthier black Sabans were able to find ways to make a living through investing in a variety of service-based industries on-island and ascending to political office or lucrative political appointments.

Although just under half of white Sabans also continued to leave at this time, their rates of departure never approximated the 60-75% loss experienced of their black peers and white men, in particular, became the most stationary social group in Saban society. Economic advancement through political office and political favor, the generation of substantial wealth through control of on-island markets, particularly provisioning of consumer goods and construction, and a decline in the size of white families through earlier fertility limitation certainly played a role in the improved economic situation of the white community at this time and lessened the need for white Saban men to seek employment off-island. Interestingly, however, white Saban women did leave in a higher proportion

than white Saban men, which suggests an emerging dissatisfaction with the socioeconomic opportunities afforded to white women in the post-oil period that existed alongside racial inequalities in the local economic system. While the white Saban population also had plenty of poor people with little in the way of economic resources or off-island connections, the privileges of whiteness, particularly male whiteness, still carried currency during much of this period and the interrelatedness of white families meant that even the poorest white Sabans likely had access to someone with the power to deliver money, services, or employment to help ease economic strife.

Although gradations of experience certainly existed in both the black and white communities, those who stayed on-island were either positioned to tap into new streams of revenue generated by entry into political office or the positioning of family members within those offices, able to invest family or individual wealth gained from migration into local businesses that catered to basic needs and other consumer desires, or forced into a pattern of various direct dependencies on state-administered social programs, state-provided employment, or low-pay labor in local private-sector businesses. While Saba continued to lose many of its most educated and ambitious black and white citizens to life overseas, irrespective of financial status, the local population became painfully split between people who had the means and the power to create comfortable on-island lives and those who were boxed in by economic deprivation, a lack of off-island connections that might facilitate movement, and increasing dependency on government services and employment. Due to a long history of racial bias and the various privileges of whiteness, more black Sabans found themselves either compelled to leave their island through economic need or trapped in a cycle of direct government dependency in the post-oil period. However, it is important to keep in mind that white Sabans also became heavily integrated into this system of government-supported economic pursuits and that much of the wealth generated by white Sabans during this time can be directly and indirectly linked to political favors that supported the establishment and growth of white-owned on-island businesses or government work that provided enough income to live well and, in some cases, to amass enough wealth to invest in private sector ventures. Dependency, then, was and still is a very

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complex phenomenon and had the ability to propel some Sabans and their families into relatively affluent on-island lives while others were given the means to survive but not to advance in the economic hierarchy of Saban society.

At this time, the Saban government also began funding children to pursue secondary and college-level education off-island in an effort to give their citizens a better foothold in the emerging qualifications-based economy. Education had always been a mark of status in Saban society, but it was now becoming much more generally accessible to people irrespective of their family's financial situation. However, a commitment to education required some financial input by families who sent their children off-island to study and even this minimal amount proved to be prohibitive in some cases. Apart from financial means, some families simply never developed an orientation towards pursing higher education and, as such, never instilled a desire to achieve academically in their own children. While in the past education became a marker of elite status and remained a concern concentrated amongst elite white seafaring families, Saban society during this time became more and more divided based on academic achievement irrespective of the economic condition of one's family of origin. Investment in education meant that many Sabans became successful business people, educators, scientists, and politicians but, ironically, did not mean that Saba itself ever really directly benefited from devoting fiscal resources towards the education of its youth. Those who succeeded academically and who secured higher level degrees and qualifications found that no on-island jobs matched either their skill set or the level of financial compensation they desired. These restrictions in island life led those with the most education to pursue careers off-island and to spend the better part, if not all, of their lives away from home. This "brain-drain" left a resident population with only limited levels of education and limited possibilities for off-island employment because they lacked the level of educational attainment or specialized qualifications needed to successfully complete for off-island positions. This, too, is an entrenched problem on Saba even today and forms a topic of intense discussion in all sectors of Saban society.

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While more Saban youth tried their hand at off-island schooling, more foreigners began to discover Saba and cherish the island as an escape from the tempo of hectic modern lives. An influx of foreign investors and tourists in the post-oil period helped to solidify the general positive feelings that Sabans had towards Americans but also began to sow the seeds of discontent that are presently found on-island. Ownership in burgeoning tourist industries was generally low for Sabans and this only heightened the feeling that foreigners were "taking over" by buying property and making their homes on island. As one poor black girl from Windwardside put it:

> Well, I don't mind the Americans comin' here but not for them to buy all our land. Give we a chance too. All that the Americans is doing now is buying all our land, and pretty soon they'll take we over (Crane, 1987: 484).

This sense of encroachment went hand in hand with a sense of relief that Sabans could establish themselves as hired laborers for building construction in the tourist industry or that they could find a steady outlet for selling drawn-thread work or other Saban goods. However, these first few trickles of foreign interest soon became a flood of foreign migration into this tiny island and, for the first time, required Sabans to negotiate the differences of culture and economic power between themselves and their non-Saban neighbors who hailed from America, Colombia, The Dominican Republic, Haiti and a host of other nations in the Caribbean and across the globe. Instead of going into the world, many Sabans now experience having the world come to them.

The changing structure of socioeconomic opportunity and the interactions sparked by a reversal of migration flows created points of social, cultural, political, and economic consensus and disagreement among Sabans and non-Sabans, shifted perspectives on work and family in island life, and solidified commitment to some Saban values as markers of difference while others modified substantially or vanished entirely in the face of these external challenges. This emerging sociodemographic transition from sending to receiving country through on-island development is the single most important experience of modern Saban society. All of the complex Diasporic interactions from the earliest periods of seafaring to the opening of Saba itself to the wider world form the social environment that continues to surround and give meaning to modern Saban families. This dynamic

between past and present, old-time values and modern living, Saban identity and the challenge of next-door difference will become the focus of the remaining discussion of changing Saban family forms and their connection to broader socioeconomic trends in Saban society.

Table 7.1: Government supported jobs occupied by white Sabans, 1964

Governmental positions (fully and partially subsidized)	Men	Women
Men's jobs		
Administrator	1	0
Government mechanic	1	0
Head of Public Works	1	0
Island Deputy	1	0
Policeman	2	0
Runs the government telephone and telegraph station	1	0
Soldier	2	0
Telegram delivery	1	0
Works in government office	1	0
Works on the road	44	0
Works the telephone for the government	1	0
Total jobs	56	0
Women's jobs		
Runs the bank	0	1
Total jobs	0	1
Jobs held by both men and women		
Caretaker or domestic service	2	4
Postal worker	3	4
Teacher in Public School	3	1
Total jobs	8	9

Proportion of total government jobs held by white Sabans = 62%
Proportion of working age cohort of white ancestry = 42%

Table 7.2: Limited paid economic activities and agricultural jobs occupied by white Sabans, 1964

Pensioners, unemployed, and within family domestic work	Men	Women
Domestic work within the family	3	136
Pension from Lago	0	0
Pensioner	45	72
Unemployed	12	14
Total jobs	60	222

Agricultural industries	Men	Women
Fishing	26	1
Keeping and/or butchering livestock	58	5
Planting	75	0
Total jobs	159	6

Table 7.3: Private sector jobs occupied by white Sabans, 1964

Non-governmental positions	Men	Women
Women's jobs		
Artist	0	1
Bakes	0	2
Domestic work outside the home	0	3
Drawn thread-work, hemstitching, fancy work, crochet	0	104
Dressmaker, seamstress, or tailor	0	12
Keeps a kindergarten	0	1
Makes butter	0	2
Sells clothes	0	1
Sells shoes	0	1
Sells soda at the movies	0	1
Teaches typing	0	1
Total jobs	0	129
Men's jobs		
Agent for the plane	1	0
Agent for the steamer	1	0
Carpenter or mason	14	0
Driver	5	0
Grave digger or makes grave markers	4	0
Handyman/does odd jobs for people	6	0
House builder	1	0
House painter	7	0
Makes charcoal	1	0
Makes rope	1	0
Mechanic	2	0
Minister/priest/nun	2	0
Owns and manages two theatres	2	0
Pumps water for the guesthouse	1	0
Repairs watches	1	0
Runs a restaurant	1	0
Sells hardware and paint	1	0
Stevedore or porter	1	0
Telephone booth operator or line man	3	0
Welder	1	0
Yard cleaning	5	0
Total jobs	61	0
Jobs held by both men and women		
Hairdresser or barber	2	2
Runs a club/helps in a club	2	4
Runs a store/shop keeper	13	4
Runs errands for people	1	1
Sells liquor or beer	3	1
Shop assistant (for family or for others)	1	11
Teacher in a parochial school	1	4
Total jobs	23	27

Proportion of total private sector jobs held by white Sabans = 55%
Proportion of working age cohort of white ancestry = 42%

Table 7.4: Government supported jobs occupied by black Sabans, 1964

Governmental positions (fully and partially subsidized)	Men	Women
Men's jobs		
Council member	2	0
Government mechanic	3	0
Harbormaster	1	0
Manages the government guest house	2	0
Policeman	2	0
Sanitation inspector	1	0
Soldier	1	0
Teacher in Public School	1	0
Telephone booth operator or line man	1	0
Works in government office	1	0
Works on the road	25	0
Total jobs	40	0
Women's jobs		
Caretaker or domestic service	0	4
Postal worker	0	1
Total jobs	0	5
Jobs held by both men and women		
None		

Proportion of total government jobs held by black Sabans = 38%
Proportion of working age cohort of black ancestry = 58%

Table 7.5: Limited paid economic activities and agricultural jobs occupied by black Sabans, 1964

Pensioners, unemployed, and within family domestic work	Men	Women
Domestic work within the family	0	71
Pension from Lago	7	0
Pensioner	28	32
Unemployed	13	7
Total jobs	48	110

Agricultural industries	Men	Women
Fishing	17	1
Planting	31	1
Keeping and/or butchering livestock	24	4
Total jobs	72	6

Table 7.6: Private sector jobs occupied by black Sabans, 1964

Non-governmental positions	Men	Women
Women's jobs		
Bakes	0	17
Drawn thread-work, hemstitching, fancy work, crochet	0	20
Gives music lessons	0	2
Makes candy	0	3
Makes guava cheese	0	2
Makes wool mats	0	1
Nurse	0	4
Total jobs	0	49
Men's jobs		
Agent for cement and bottled gas	1	0
Captain of ship	1	0
Carpenter or mason	3	0
Driver	12	0
Hairdresser or barber	2	0
Handyman/does odd jobs for people	6	0
House builder	1	0
House painter	5	0
Makes charcoal	5	0
Makes ice-cream	1	0
Makes rope	3	0
Makes shoes	1	0
Mechanic	1	0
Runs a guesthouse	1	0
Runs errands for people	2	0
Sailor	10	0
Stevedore or porter	10	0
Store owner	1	0
Telephone booth operator or line man	2	0
Works for the electric company	1	0
Yard cleaning	5	0
Total jobs	74	0
Jobs held by both men and women		
Delivers bread or cakes	2	2
Domestic work outside the home	1	35
Dressmaker, seamstress, or tailor	1	2
Minister/priest/nun	1	1
Runs a club/helps in a club	2	1
Runs a store/shop keeper	6	2
Sells fruits and vegetables	1	4
Sells liquor or beer	4	1
Shop assistant (for family or for others)	2	3
Total jobs	20	51
Proportion of total private sector jobs held by black Sabans = 45%		
Proportion of working age cohort of black ancestry = 58%		

Table 7.7: The Bottom (1964), Average number of close relatives living abroad by country*

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	3.33	1.20	1.98
Aruba	2.08	2.23	1.98
Bermuda	1.75	1.00	1.00
Curacao	1.41	3.03	2.50
Holland	2.00	1.00	1.00
St. Maarten	1.67	1.73	1.00
Average number of relatives abroad	3.51	4.36	3.99

*Data for Table 7.7-7.14 complied from Julia Crane's 1964 Household Census

Table 7.8: The Bottom (1964), Proportion of the population with close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	0.53	0.13	0.50
Aruba	0.34	0.49	0.49
Bermuda	0.05	0.00	0.07
Curacao	0.45	0.65	0.53
Holland	0.03	0.10	0.03
St. Maarten	0.04	0.34	0.16
Proportion with no close relatives abroad	0.34	0.10	0.17

Table 7.9: St. Johns (1964), Average number of close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	3.82	2.00	2.33
Aruba	2.33	3.04	2.00
Bermuda	1.00	0.00	0.00
Curacao	2.33	1.95	1.33
Holland	0.00	1.00	1.00
St. Maarten	5.00	1.71	1.00
Average number of relatives abroad	4.04	2.97	2.10

Table 7.10: St. Johns (1964), Proportion of the population with close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	0.65	0.02	0.15
Aruba	0.12	0.41	0.10
Bermuda	0.27	0.00	0.00
Curacao	0.12	0.66	0.60
Holland	0.00	0.11	0.35
St. Maarten	0.04	0.09	0.25
Proportion with no close relatives abroad	0.12	0.13	0.10

Table 7.11: Windwardside (1964), Average number of close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	5.48	1.83	2.26
Aruba	3.43	4.88	3.00
Bermuda	2.27	0.00	0.00
Curacao	1.53	2.86	3.16
Holland	1.32	1.00	1.33
St. Maarten	1.76	1.00	1.20
Average number of relatives abroad	7.93	5.44	5.04

Table 7.12: Windwardside (1964), Proportion of the population with close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	0.76	0.08	0.39
Aruba	0.56	0.60	0.59
Bermuda	0.15	0.00	0.00
Curacao	0.32	0.70	0.39
Holland	0.27	0.03	0.06
St. Maarten	0.10	0.05	0.10
Proportion with no close relatives abroad	0.02	0.13	0.08

Table 7.13: Hells Gate (1964), Average number of close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	2.87	1.00	0.00
Aruba	3.17	5.82	2.83
Bermuda	1.88	0.00	0.00
Curacao	2.50	2.71	1.44
Holland	1.26	1.67	1.67
St. Maarten	1.09	1.00	2.14
Average number of relatives abroad	6.04	4.10	3.76

Table 7.14: Hells Gate (1964), Proportion of the population with close relatives living abroad by country

Location of close relatives	White	Black	Biracial
United States	0.21	0.03	0.00
Aruba	0.73	0.55	0.72
Bermuda	0.29	0.00	0.00
Curacao	0.63	0.23	0.36
Holland	0.43	0.10	0.12
St. Maarten	0.08	0.10	0.28
Proportion with no close relatives abroad	0.02	0.42	0.20

Table 7.15: Black women's childbearing practices by period and village

	Height of seafaring	Late seafaring to early oil transition	Height of oil to early post-oil	Immediate post-oil period	Height of welfare state
Total black population					
Proportion celibate	0.27	0.30	0.15	0.21	0.20
Proportion non-celibate	0.73	0.70	0.85	0.79	0.80
Proportion exclusively marital	0.31	0.25	0.20	0.32	0.19
Proportion non-marital	**0.42**	**0.46**	**0.65**	**0.47**	**0.61**
Proportion eventually married	0.17	0.26	0.39	0.15	0.35
Proportion never married	0.24	0.20	0.27	0.31	0.26
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.02	0.03	0.08	0.02	0.04
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.26**	**0.22**	**0.35**	**0.33**	**0.29**
Total black population, Bottom					
Proportion celibate	0.34	0.35	0.30	0.35	0.30
Proportion non celibate	0.66	0.65	0.70	0.65	0.70
Proportion exclusively marital	0.25	0.24	0.10	0.35	0.26
Proportion non-marital	**0.41**	**0.41**	**0.60**	**0.30**	**0.44**
Proportion eventually married	0.23	0.19	0.30	0.12	0.22
Proportion never married	0.18	0.22	0.30	0.18	0.22
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.01	0.02
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.21**	**0.24**	**0.37**	**0.19**	**0.24**
Total black population, St. Johns					
Proportion celibate	0.14	0.27	0.00	0.20	0.20
Proportion non celibate	0.86	0.73	1.00	0.80	0.80
Proportion exclusively marital	0.22	0.13	0.17	0.40	0.00
Proportion non-marital	**0.65**	**0.60**	**0.83**	**0.40**	**0.80**
Proportion eventually married	0.19	0.38	0.62	0.00	0.40
Proportion never married	0.46	0.22	0.21	0.40	0.40
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.02	0.04	0.14	0.00	0.04
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.48**	**0.26**	**0.34**	**0.40**	**0.44**
Total black population, WWS					
Proportion celibate	0.56	0.30	0.40	0.14	0.15
Proportion non celibate	0.44	0.70	0.60	0.86	0.85
Proportion exclusively marital	0.31	0.40	0.00	0.15	0.00
Proportion non-marital	**0.13**	**0.30**	**0.60**	**0.71**	**0.85**
Proportion eventually married	0.00	0.15	0.34	0.29	0.43
Proportion never married	0.13	0.15	0.20	0.43	0.43
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.00	0.02	0.07	0.03	0.05
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.13**	**0.17**	**0.27**	**0.46**	**0.47**
Total black population, Hells Gate					
Proportion celibate	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.50	0.50
Proportion non celibate	1.00	0.75	1.00	0.50	0.50
Proportion exclusively marital	0.56	0.38	1.00	0.03	0.09
Proportion non-marital	**0.44**	**0.38**	**0.00**	**0.48**	**0.42**
Proportion eventually married	0.33	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion never married	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.42
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.15**	**0.04**	**0.00**	**0.48**	**0.42**

Table 7.16: White women's childbearing practices by period and village

	Height of seafaring	Late seafaring to early oil transition	Height of oil to early post-oil	Immediate post-oil period	Height of welfare state
Total white population					
Proportion celibate	0.39	0.31	0.31	0.15	0.15
Proportion non-celibate	0.61	0.69	0.69	0.85	0.85
Proportion exclusively marital	0.56	0.63	0.56	0.68	0.50
Proportion non-marital	**0.05**	**0.06**	**0.13**	**0.17**	**0.35**
Proportion eventually married	0.03	0.02	0.13	0.11	0.17
Proportion never married	0.02	0.04	0.00	0.06	0.17
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.02**	**0.04**	**0.00**	**0.07**	**0.18**
Total white population, Bottom					
Proportion celibate	0.82	0.50	0.00	0.57	0.80
Proportion non celibate	0.18	0.50	1.00	0.43	0.20
Proportion exclusively marital	0.18	0.50	1.00	0.43	0.00
Proportion non-marital	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.20**
Proportion eventually married	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20
Proportion never married	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**
Total white population, St. Johns					
Proportion celibate	0.33	1.00	0.25	0.00	1.00
Proportion non celibate	0.67	0.00	0.75	1.00	0.00
Proportion exclusively marital	0.53	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.00
Proportion non-marital	**0.14**	**0.00**	**0.25**	**0.50**	**0.00**
Proportion eventually married	0.05	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.00
Proportion never married	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.10**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.01**	**0.00**
Total white population, WWS					
Proportion celibate	0.56	0.58	0.50	0.20	0.20
Proportion non celibate	0.44	0.42	0.50	0.80	0.80
Proportion exclusively marital	0.42	0.36	0.39	0.65	0.48
Proportion non-marital	**0.02**	**0.06**	**0.11**	**0.15**	**0.32**
Proportion eventually married	0.02	0.00	0.11	0.05	0.08
Proportion never married	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.10	0.24
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.00**	**0.06**	**0.00**	**0.10**	**0.24**
Total white population, Hells Gate					
Proportion celibate	0.18	0.18	0.13	0.18	0.18
Proportion non celibate	0.82	0.82	0.87	0.82	0.82
Proportion exclusively marital	0.76	0.82	0.80	0.68	0.51
Proportion non-marital	**0.06**	**0.00**	**0.07**	**0.14**	**0.31**
Proportion eventually married	0.06	0.00	0.07	0.09	0.21
Proportion never married	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.10
Proportion married after 20+ years	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proportion long-term single mothers	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.05**	**0.11**
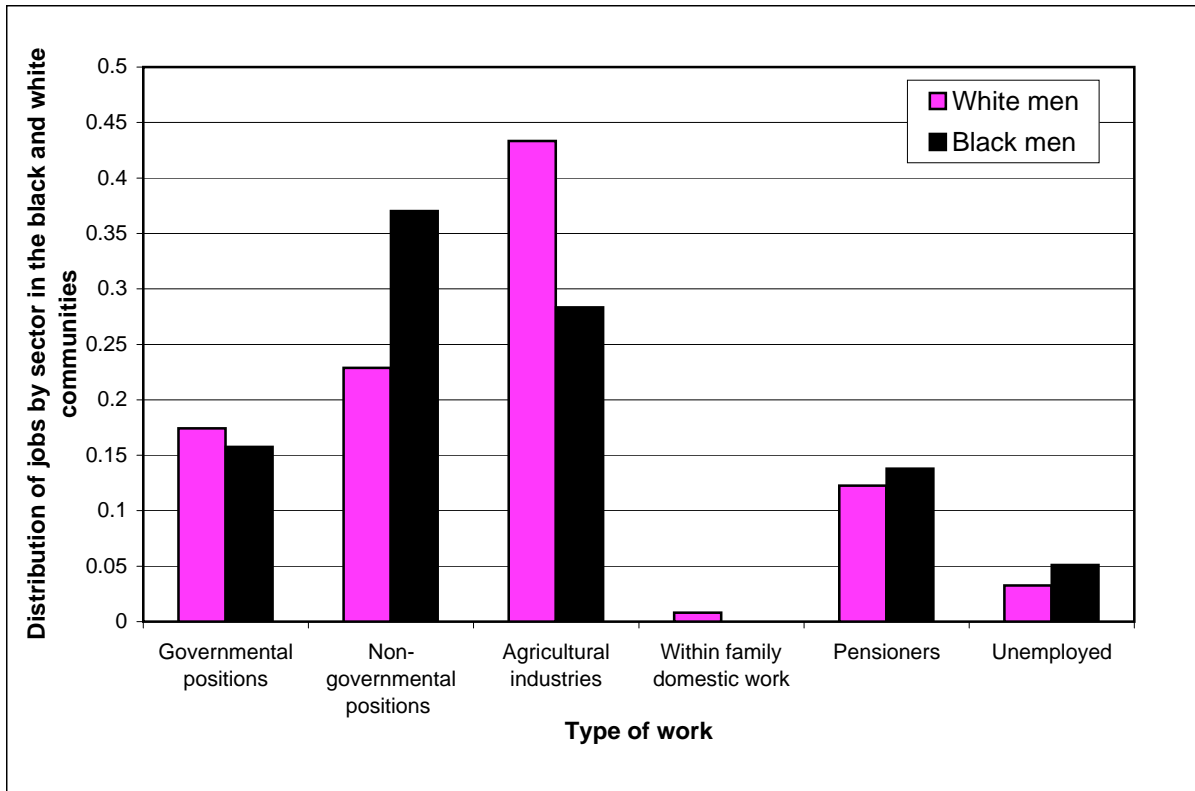
Figure 7.1: Types of jobs available for men, 1964
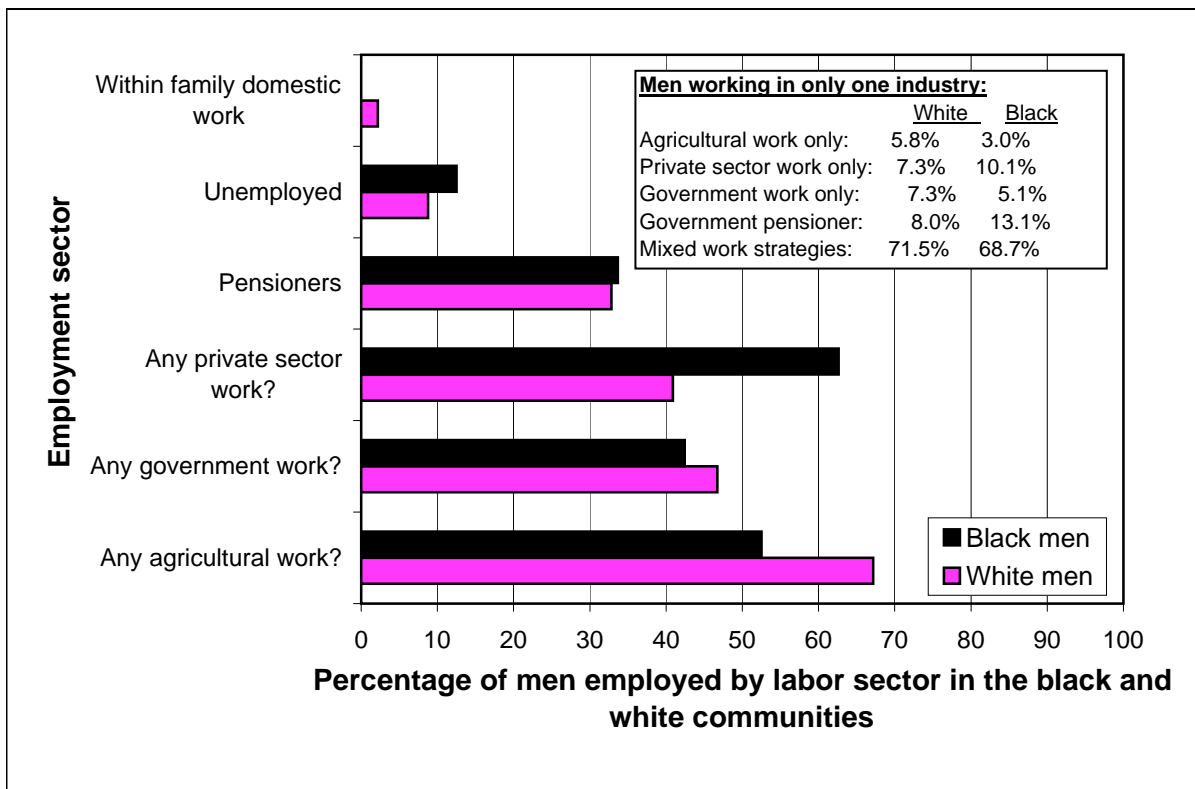
**Figure 7.2: Men's employment by economic sector, 1964
(Sum>100% because many Sabans were engaged in more than one sector)**
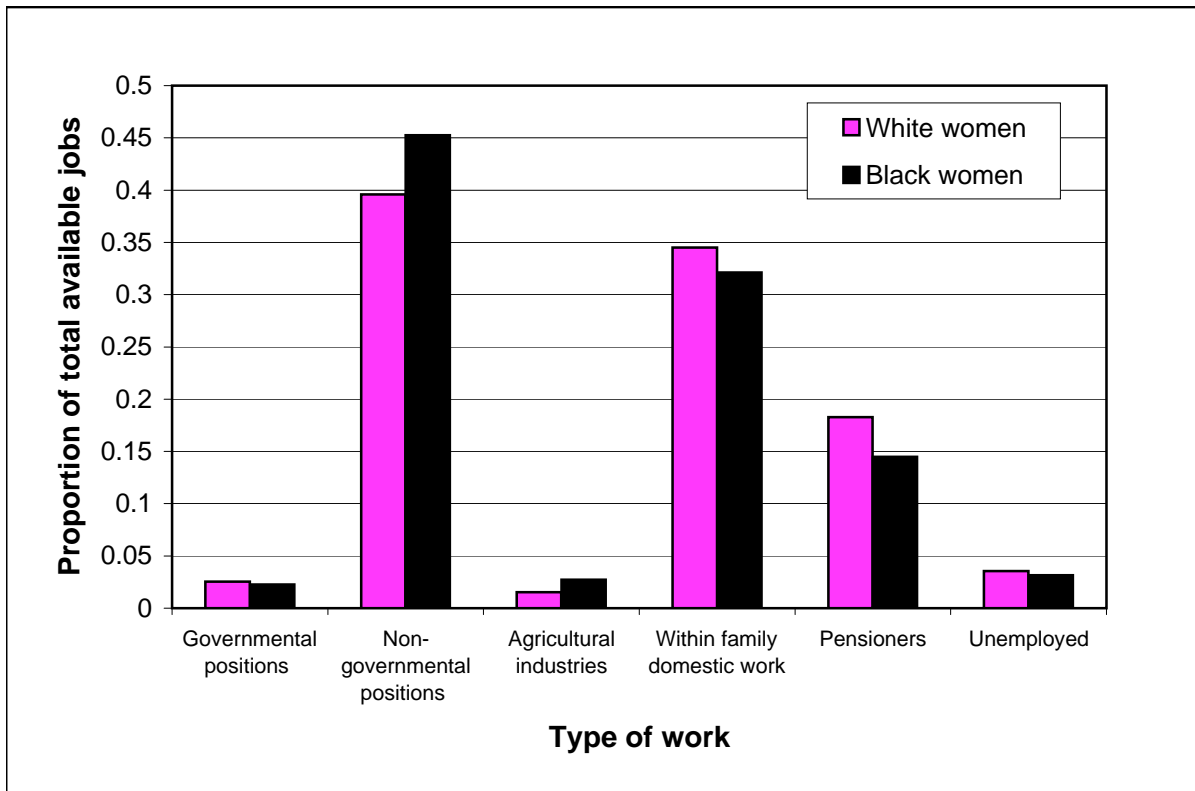
Figure 7.3: Types of jobs available for women, 1964
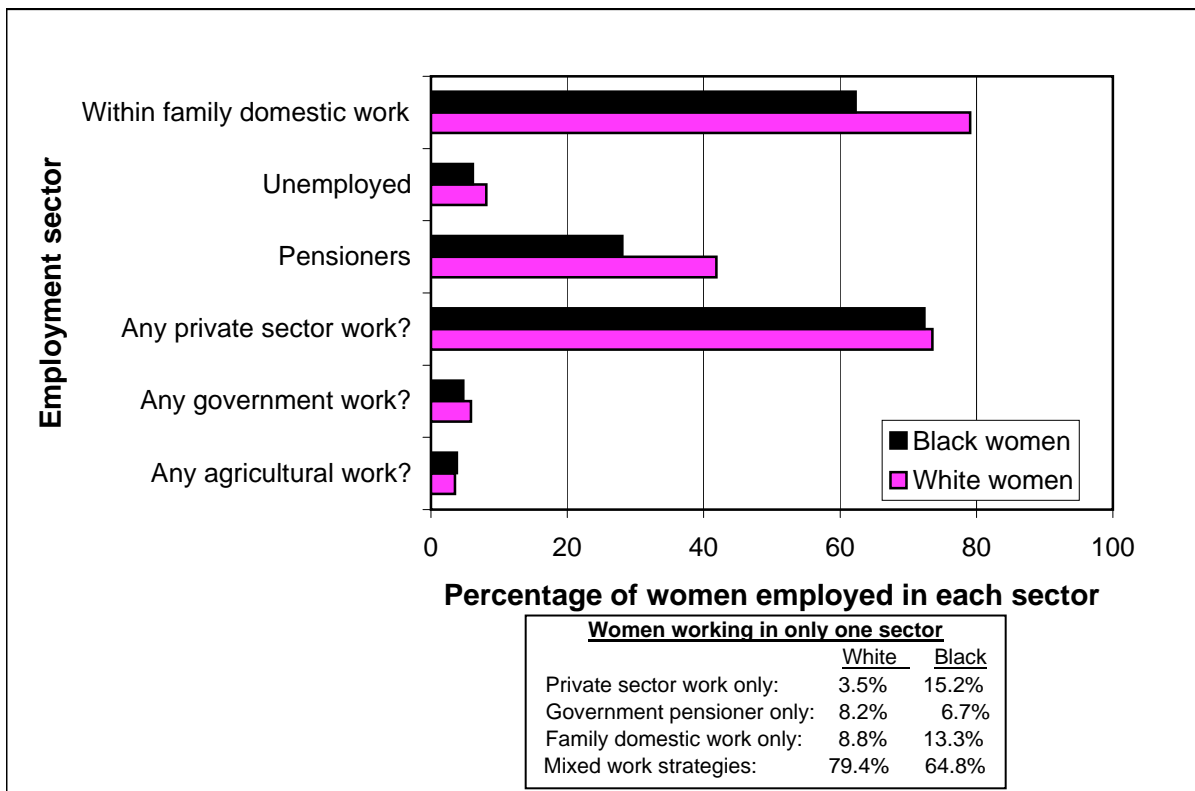
Figure 7.4: Women's employment by economic sector, 1964
(Sum>100% because many Sabans were engaged in more than one sector)
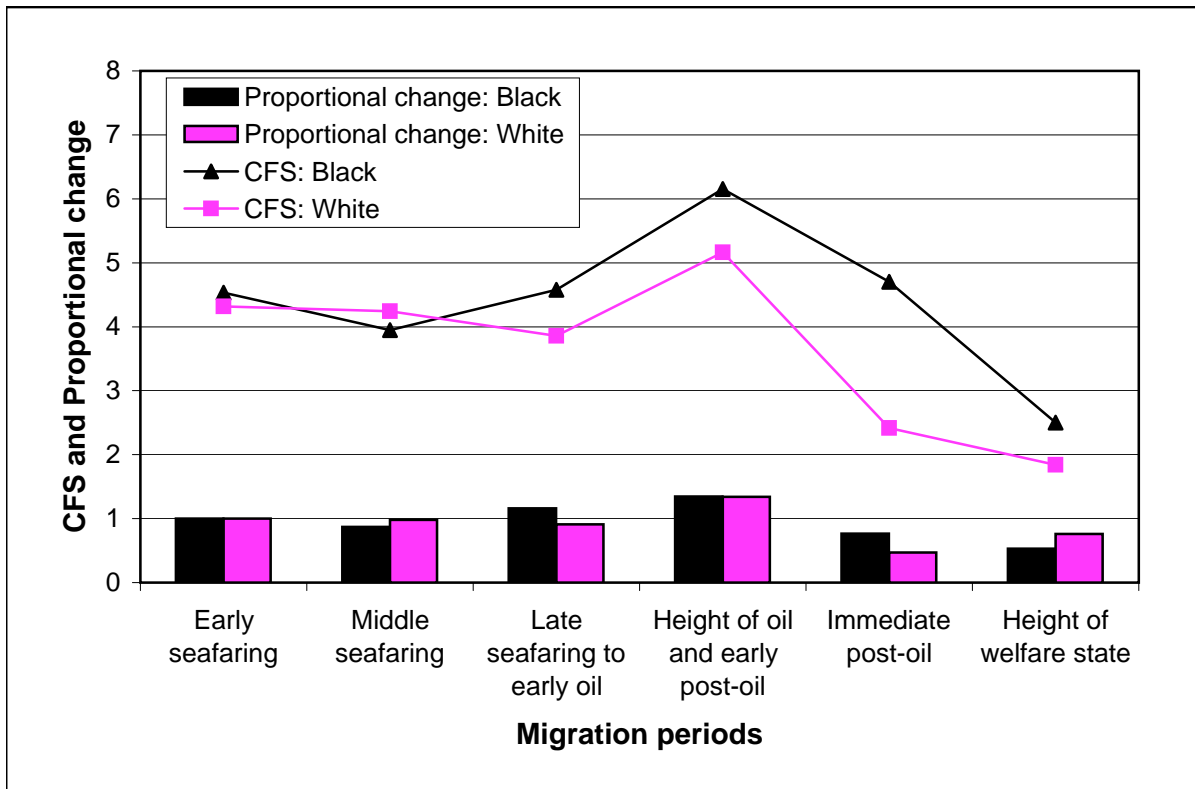
Figure 7.5: Completed family sizes (CFS) and proportional change (Current/Prior CFS)

Figure 7.6: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, White population
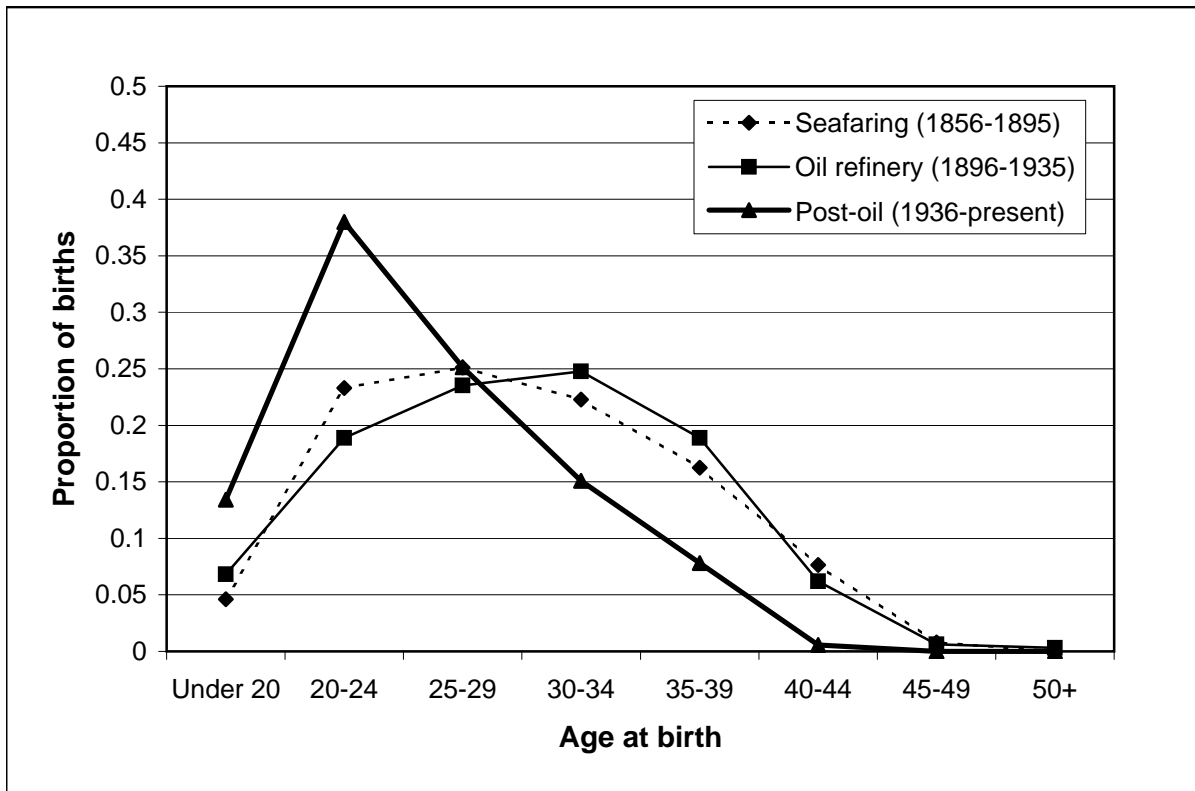
Figure 7.7: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, Black population
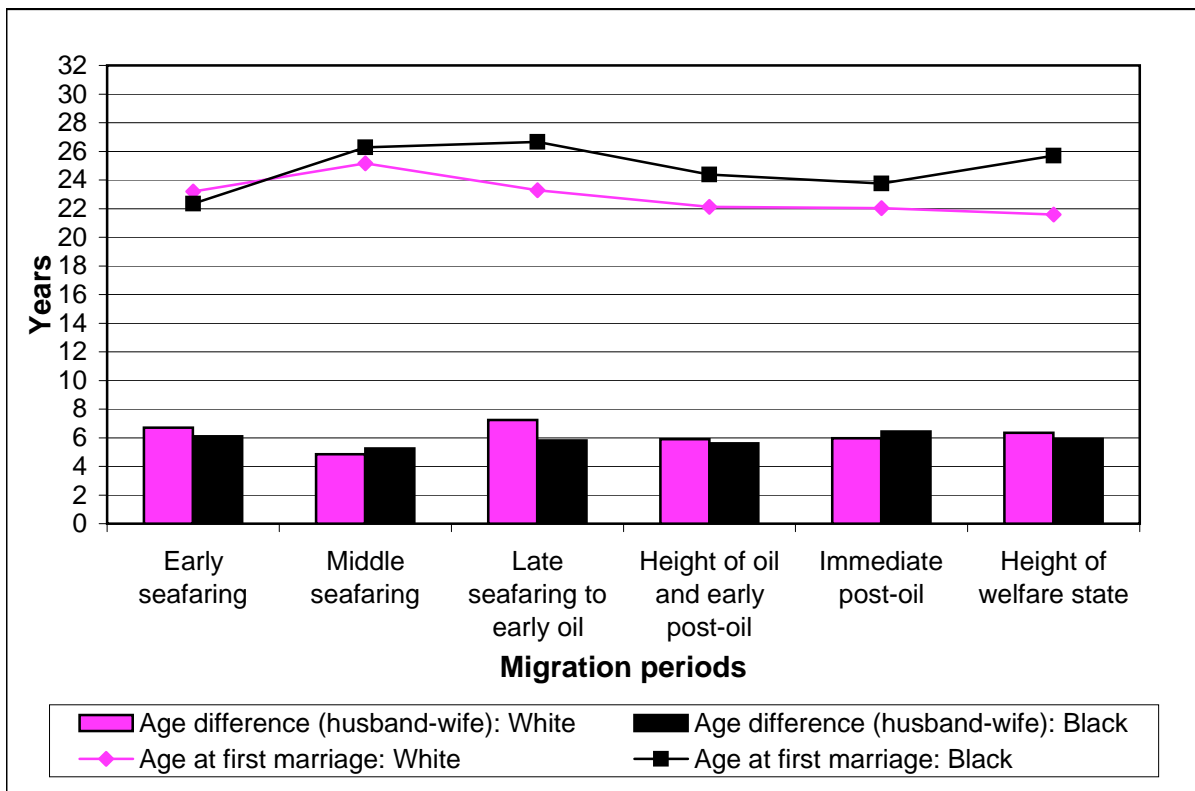
Figure 7.8: Age at first marriage and spousal age difference
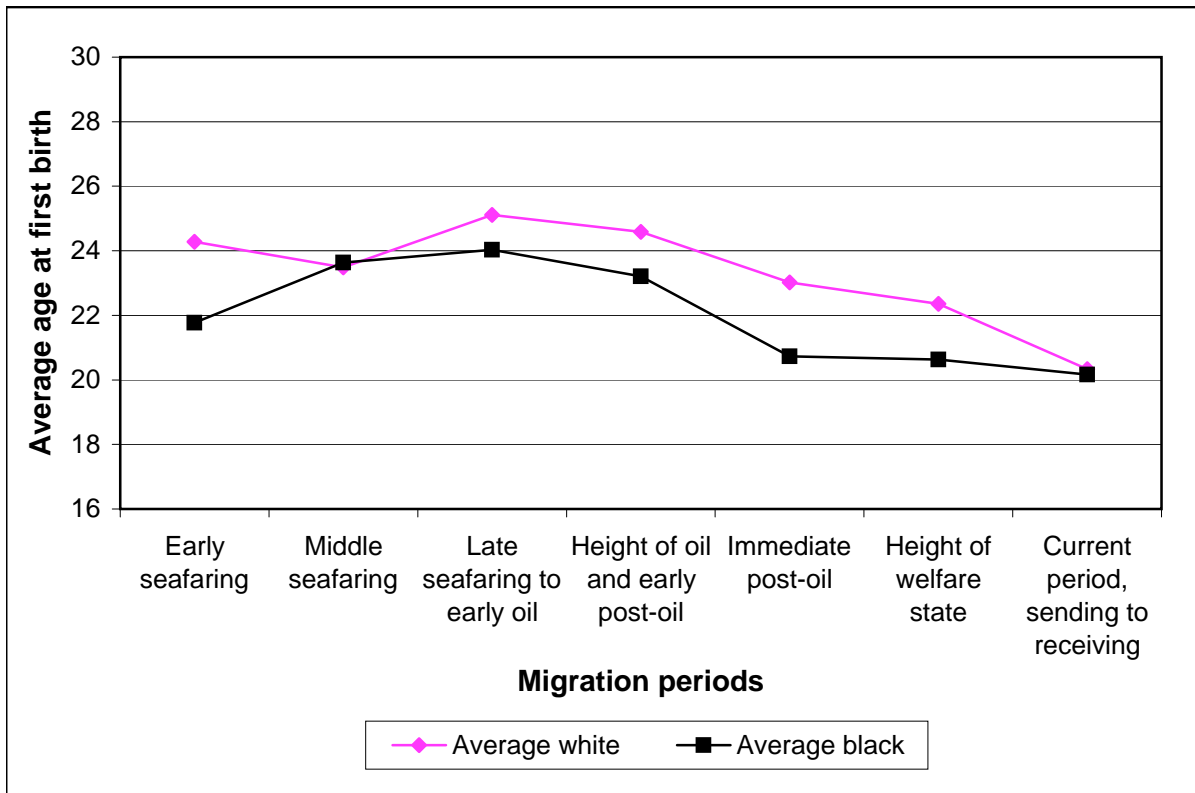
Figure 7.9: Age at first birth
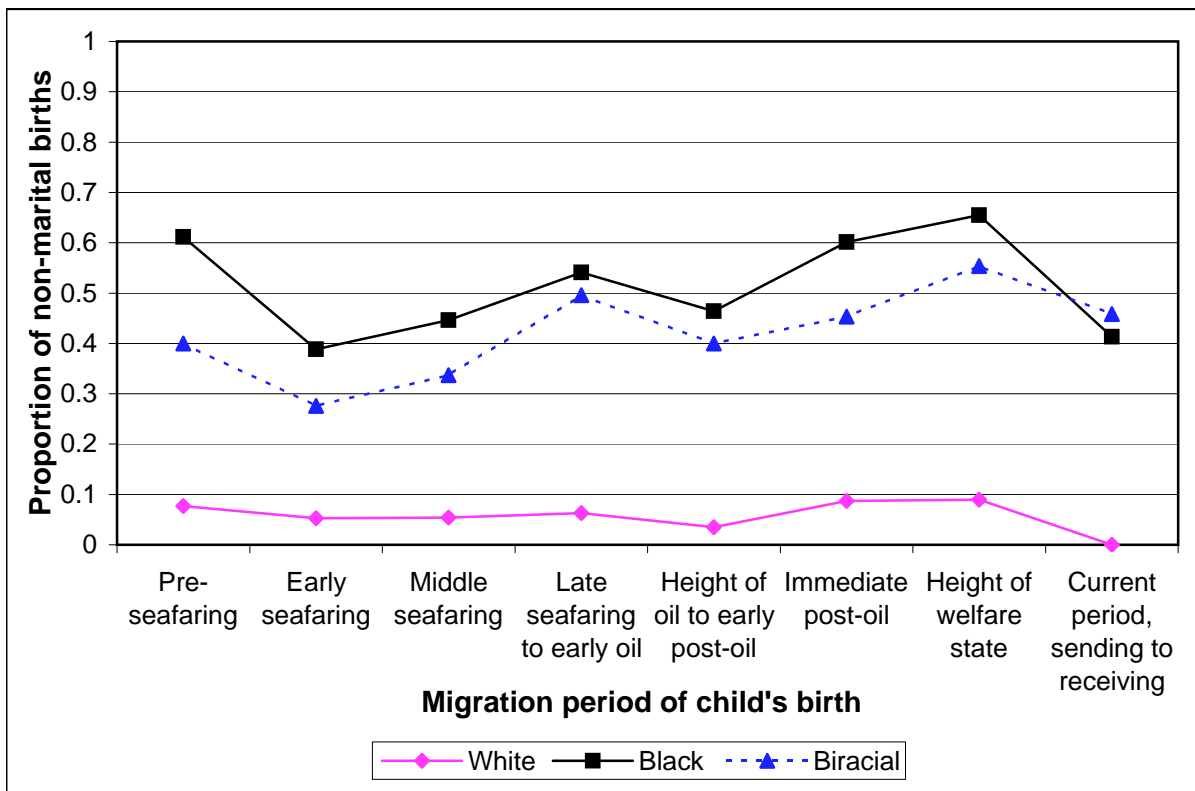
Figure 7.10: Non-marital births by child's race
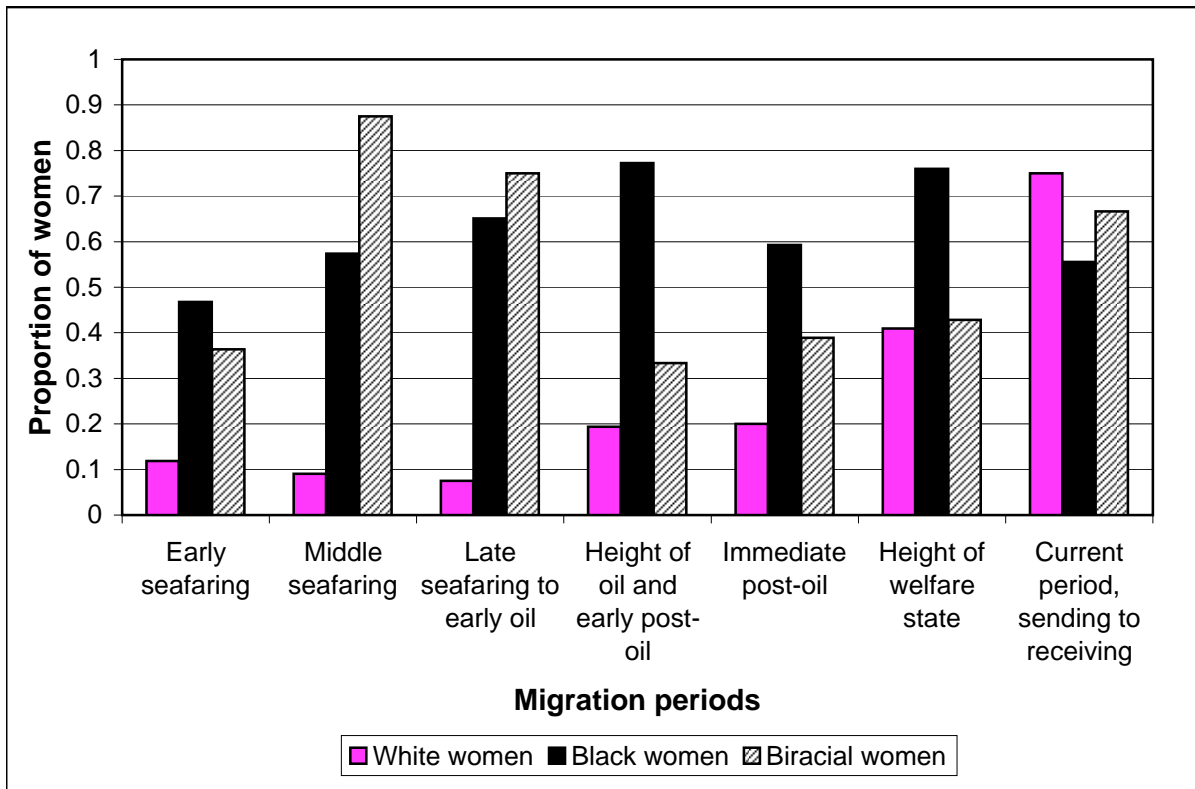
Figure 7.11: Proportion of childbearing women having non-marital births by race
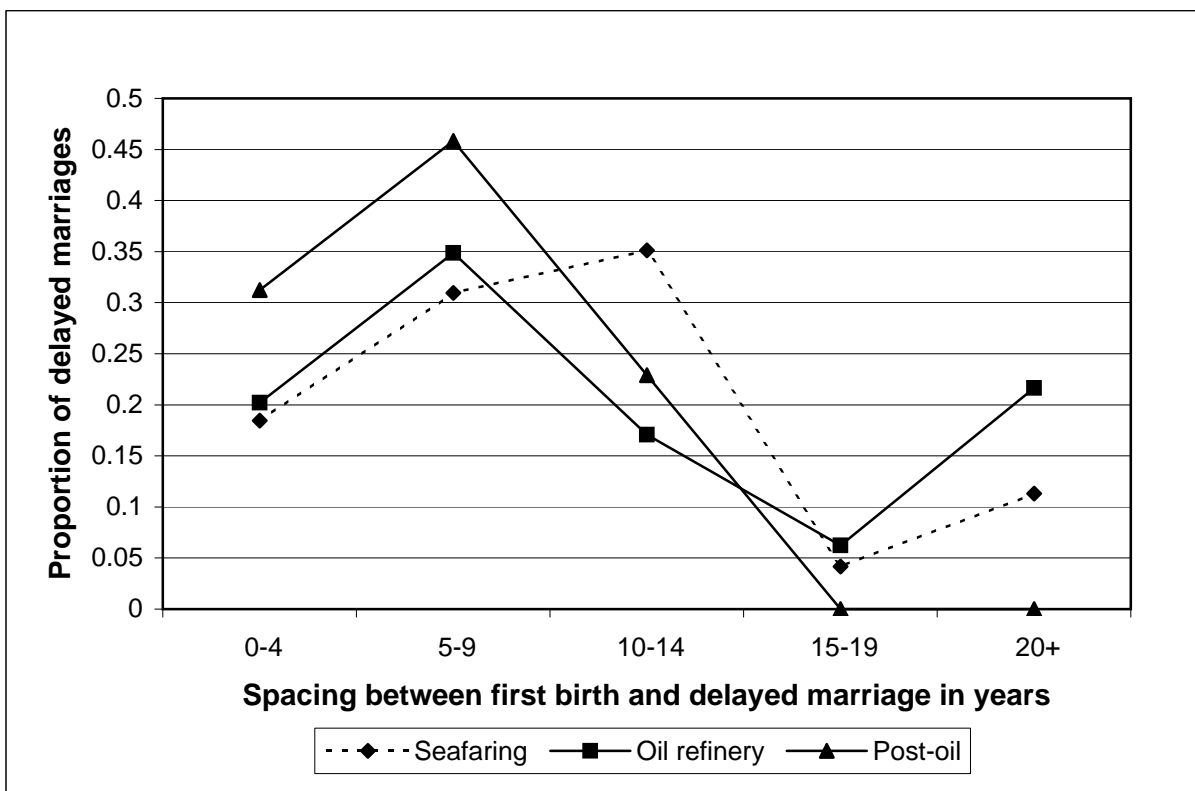
Figure 7.12: Spacing between first birth and delayed marriage, Black population
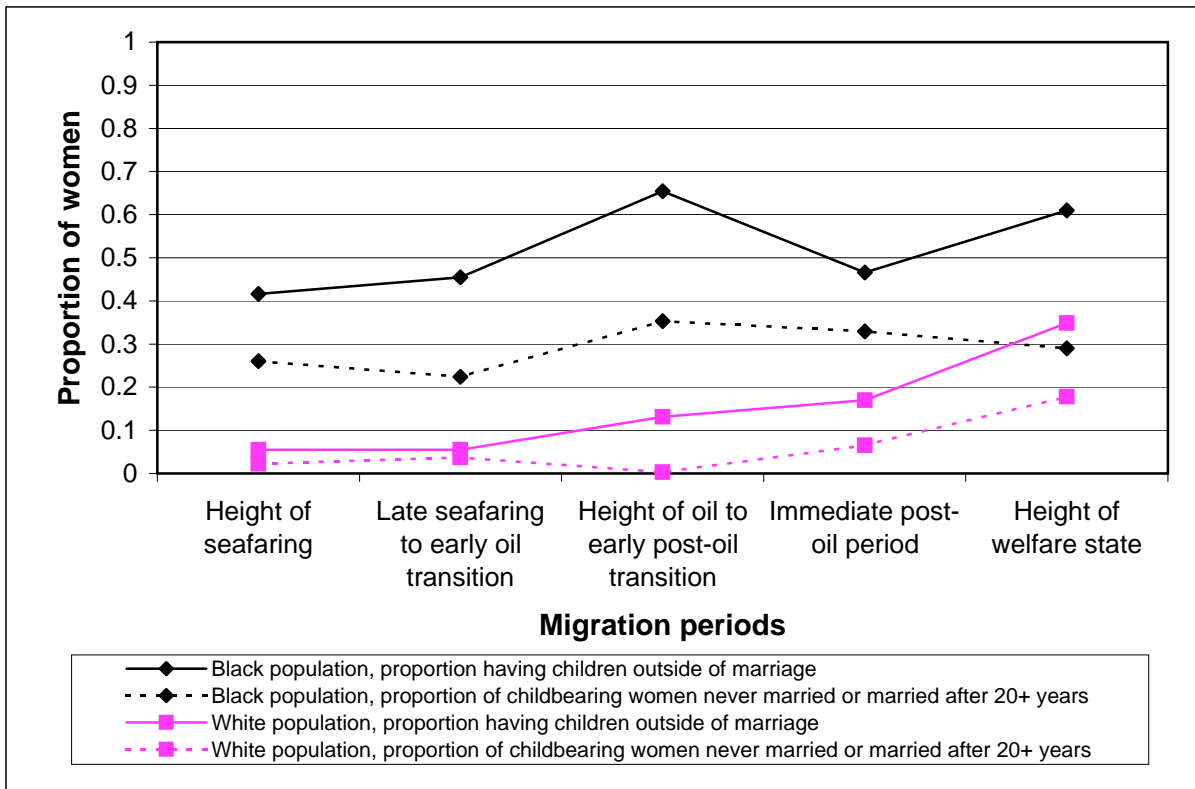
Figure 7.13: Proportion of women who raised their children outside the context of marriage
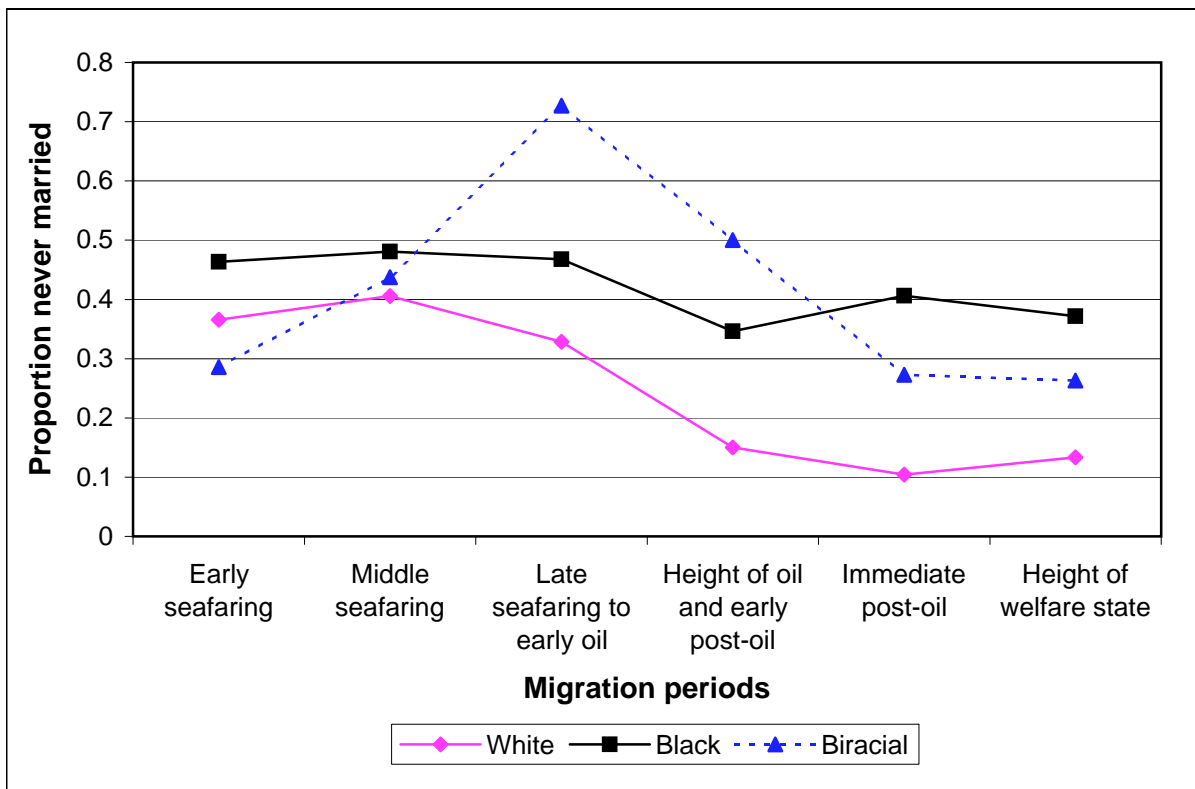
Figure 7.14: Proportion of women never married
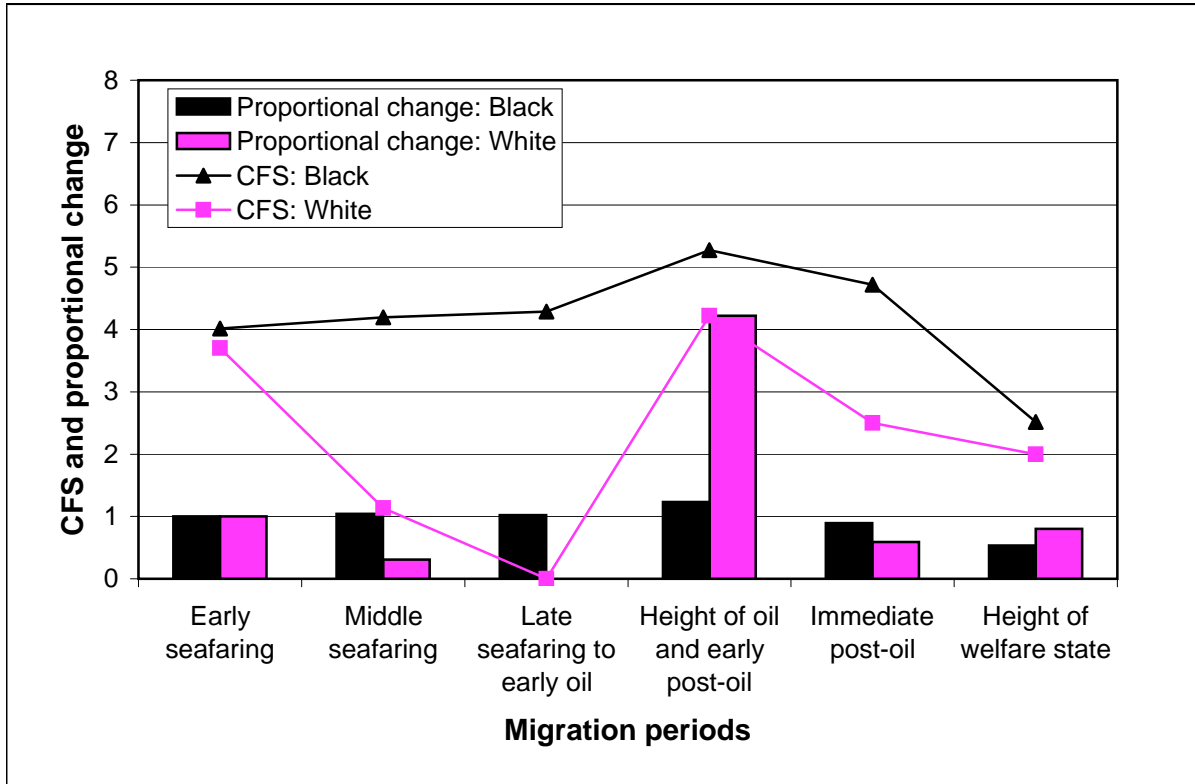
Figure 7.15: Completed family sizes (CFS) and proportional fertility change (Current/Prior CFS), The Bottom
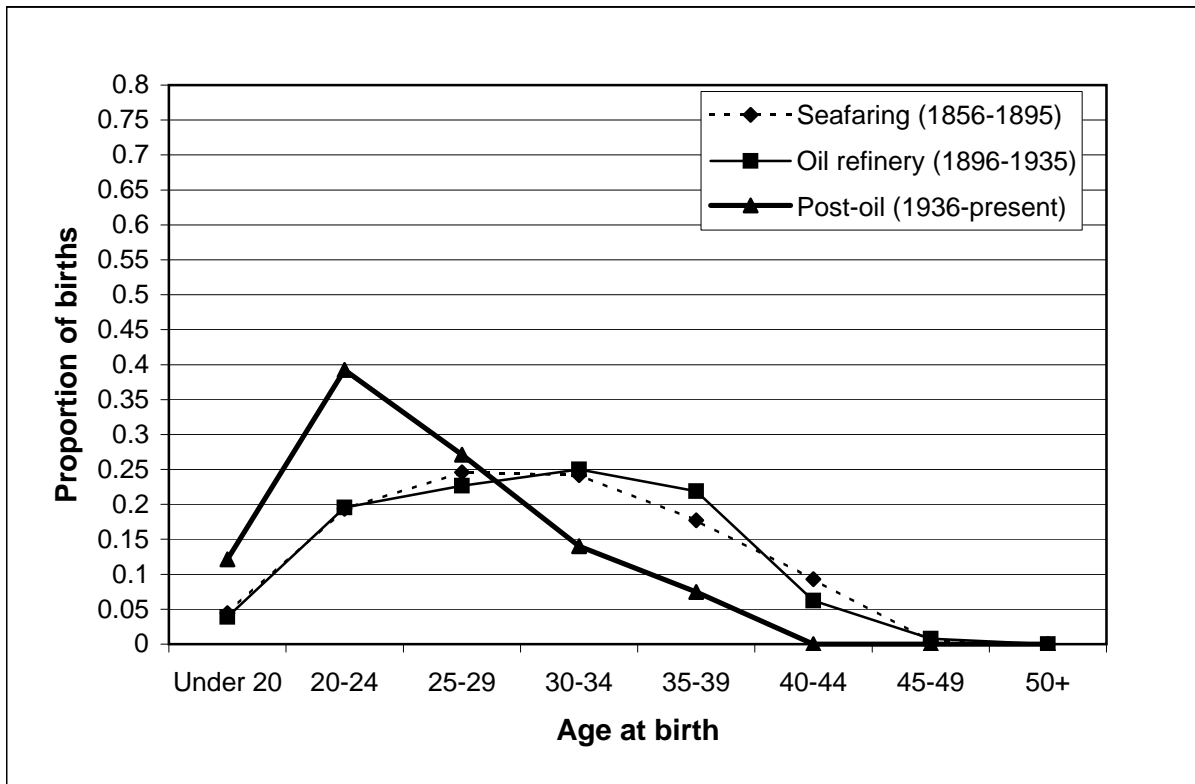
Figure 7.16: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, Bottom Blacks

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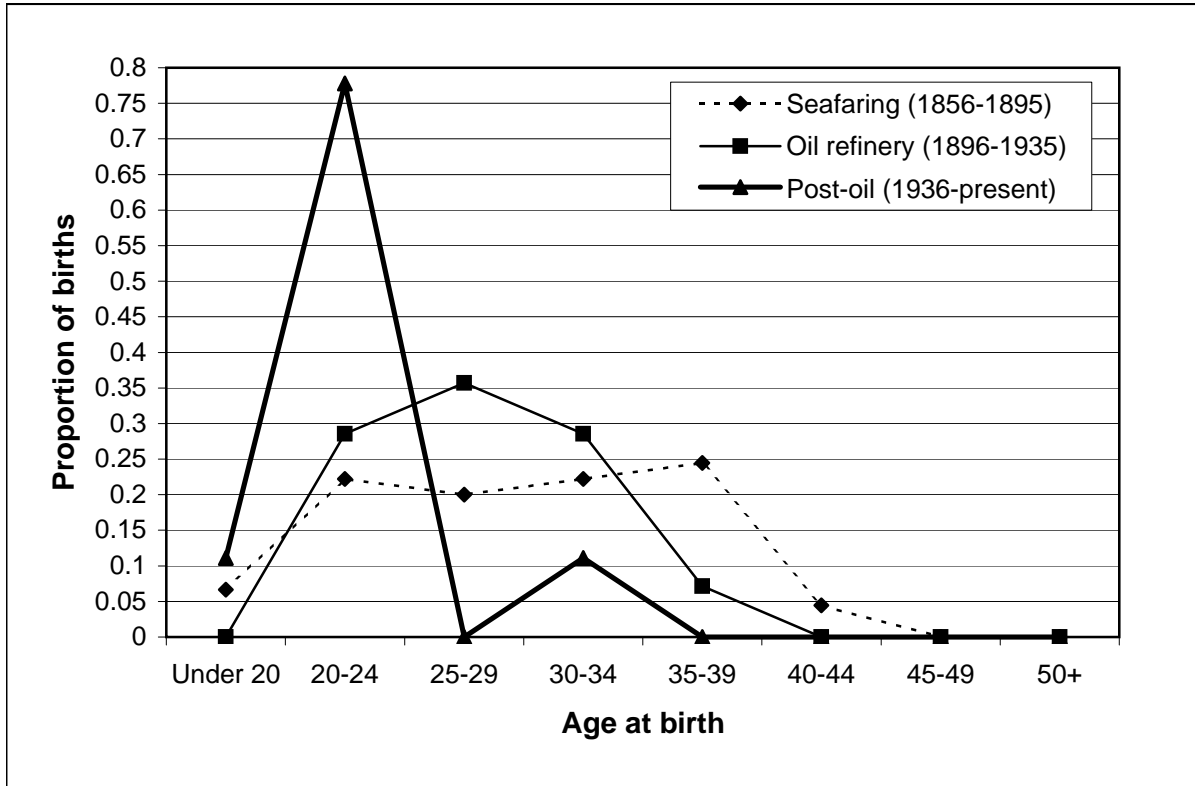
Figure 7.17: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, Bottom Whites
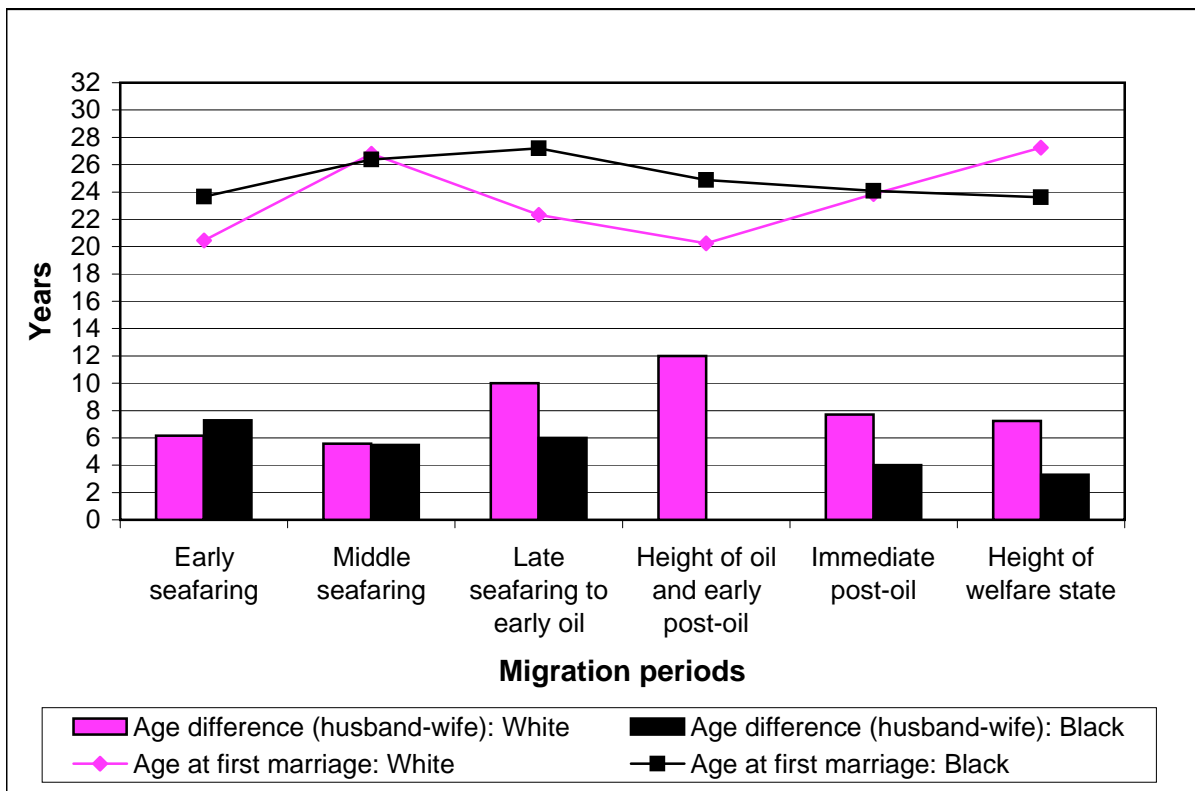
Figure 7.18: Age at first marriage and spousal age difference, The Bottom
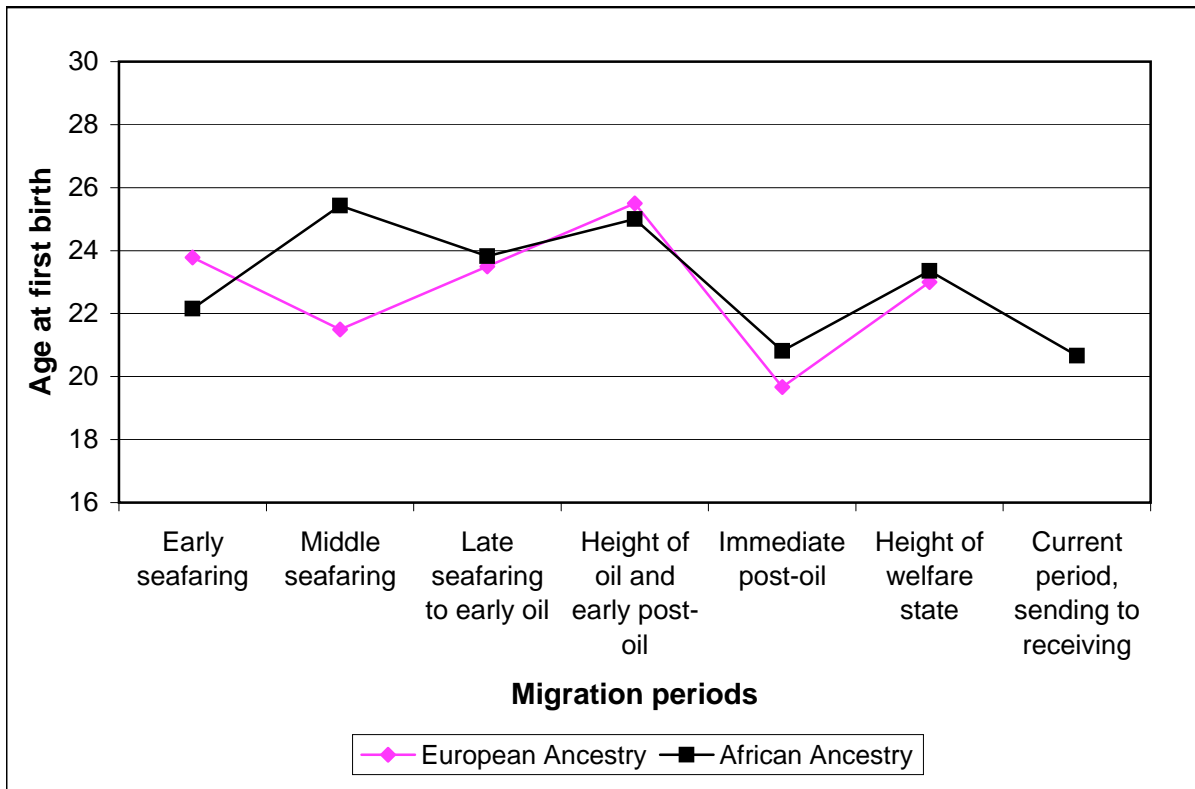
Figure 7.19: Age at first birth, The Bottom
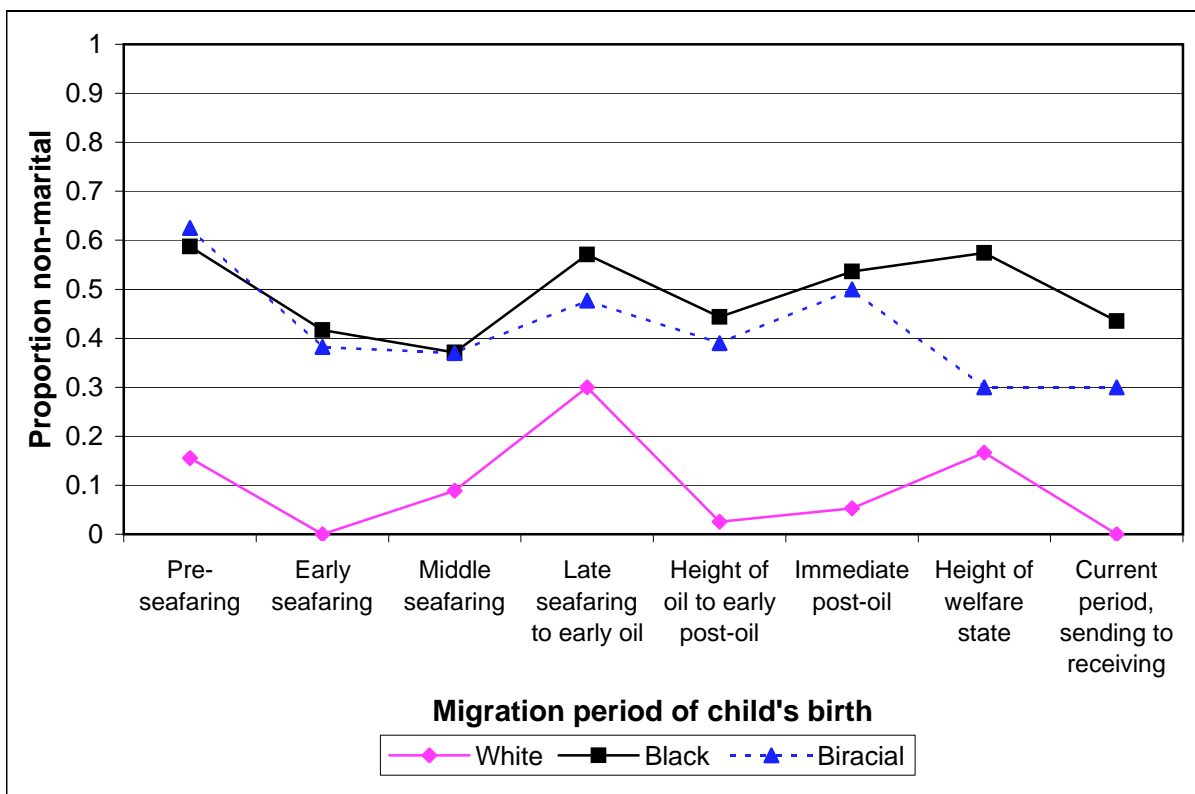
Figure 7.20: Non-marital births by child's race, The Bottom
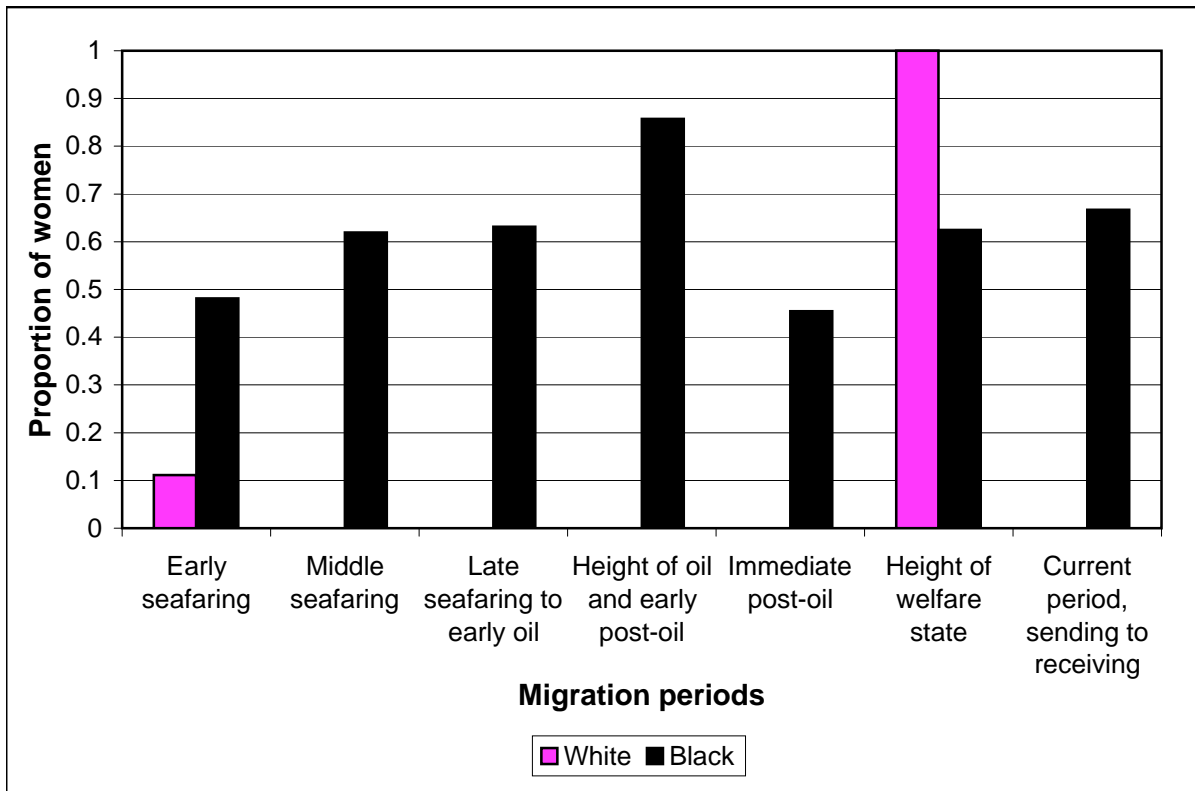
Figure 7.21: Proportion of childbearing women having non-marital births by race, The Bottom
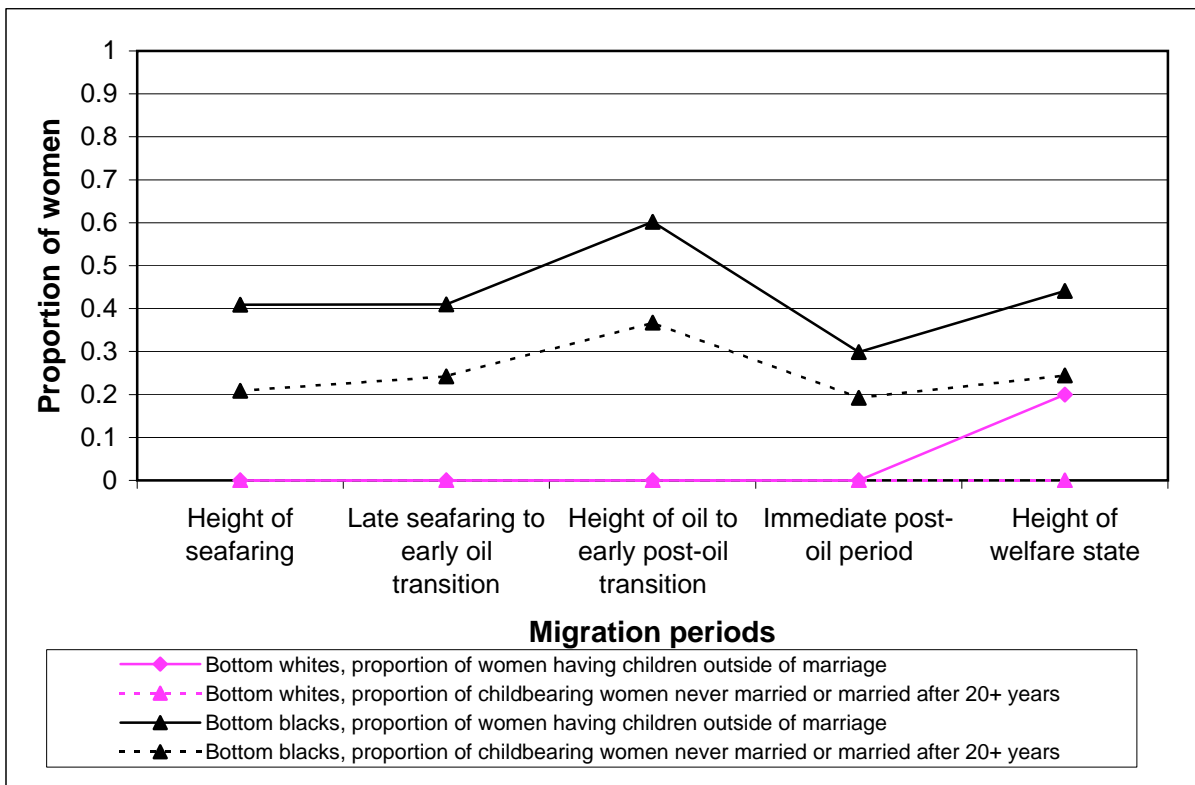
Figure 7.22: Proportion of Bottom women who raised children outside of marriage
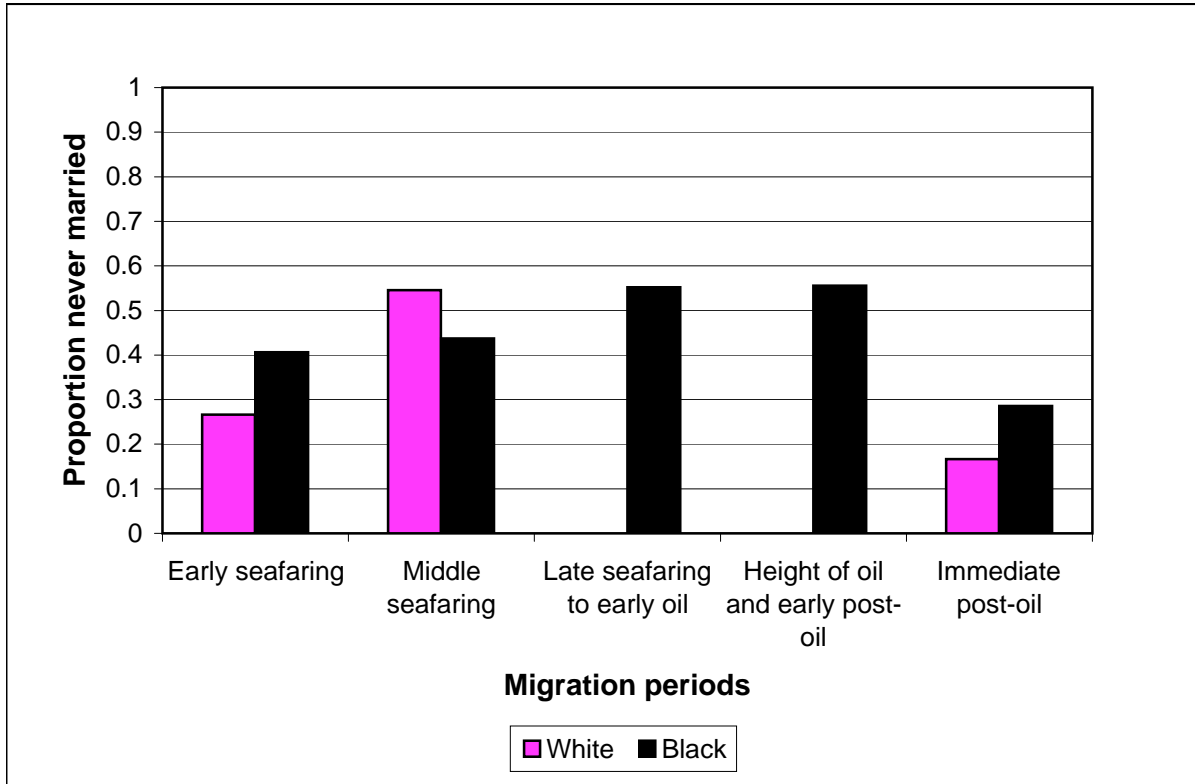
Figure 7.23: Proportion of women never married, The Bottom
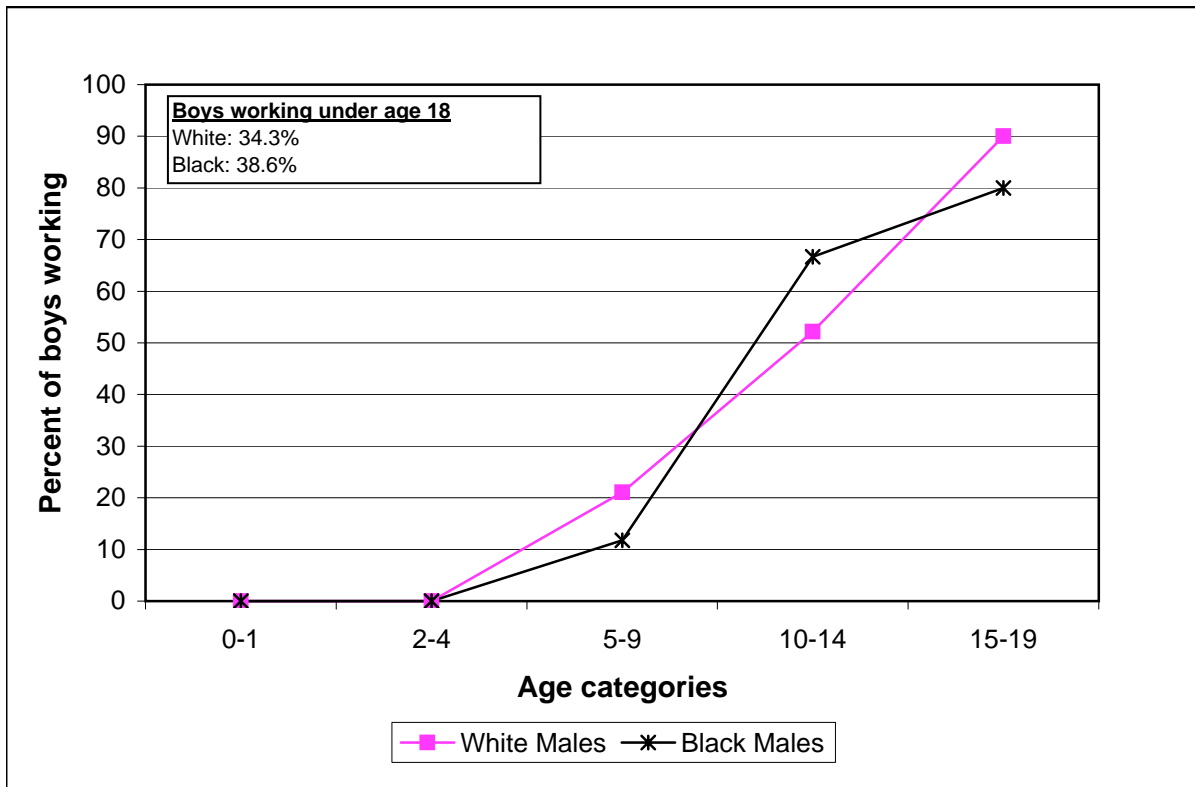
Figure 7.24: Integration of boys into Saban labor practices, 1964
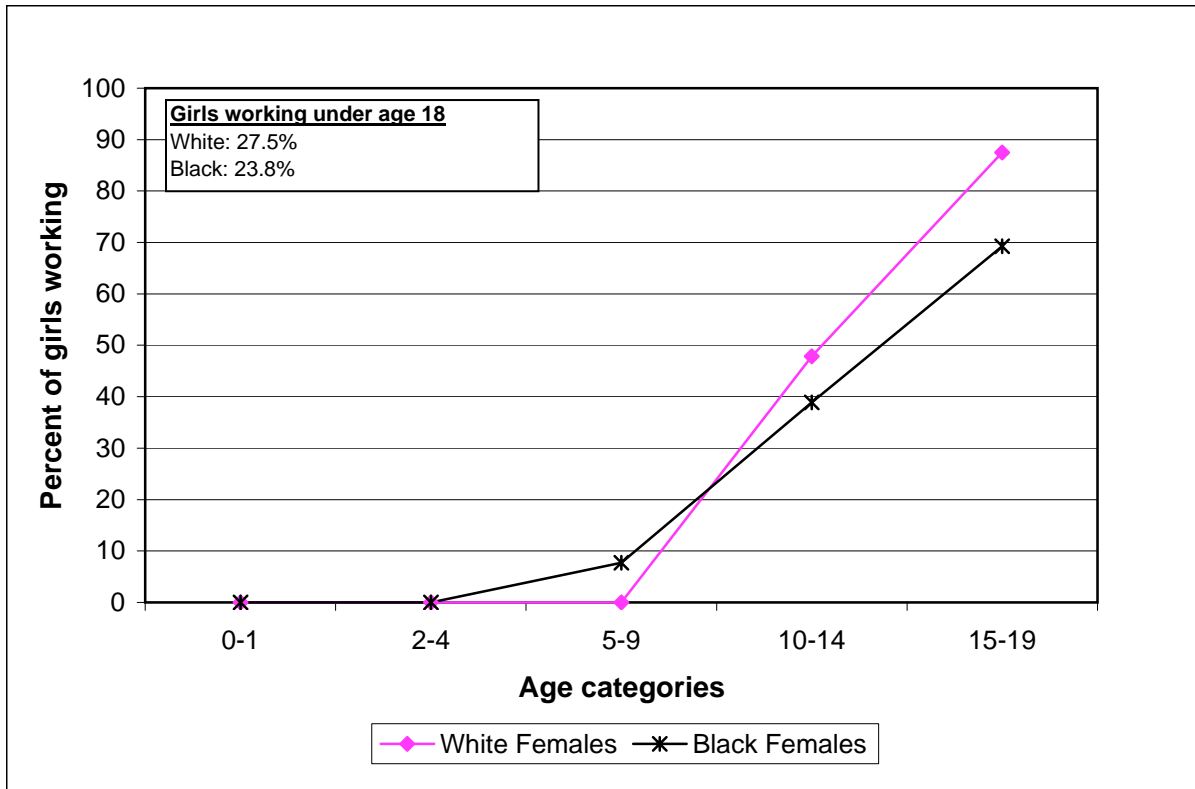
Figure 7.25: Integration of girls into Saban labor practices, 1964
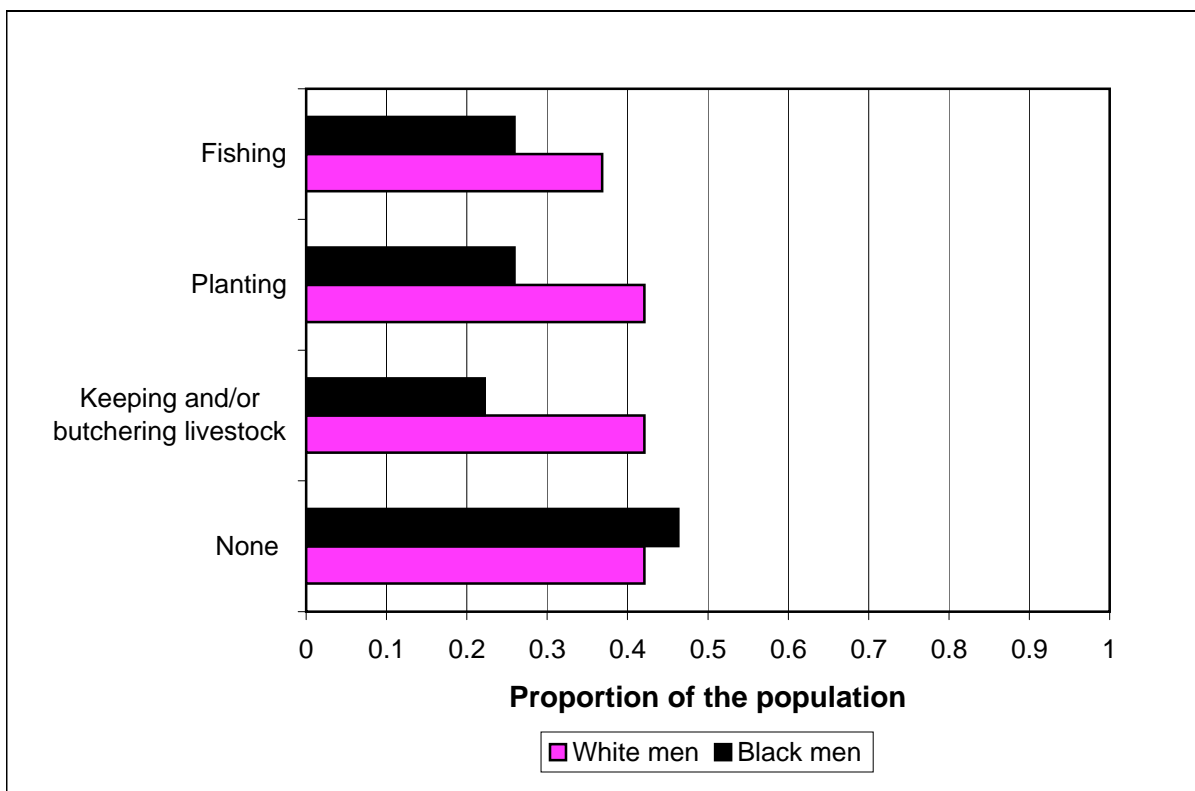
Figure 7.26: Men's labor patterns in the agricultural sector, The Bottom 1964
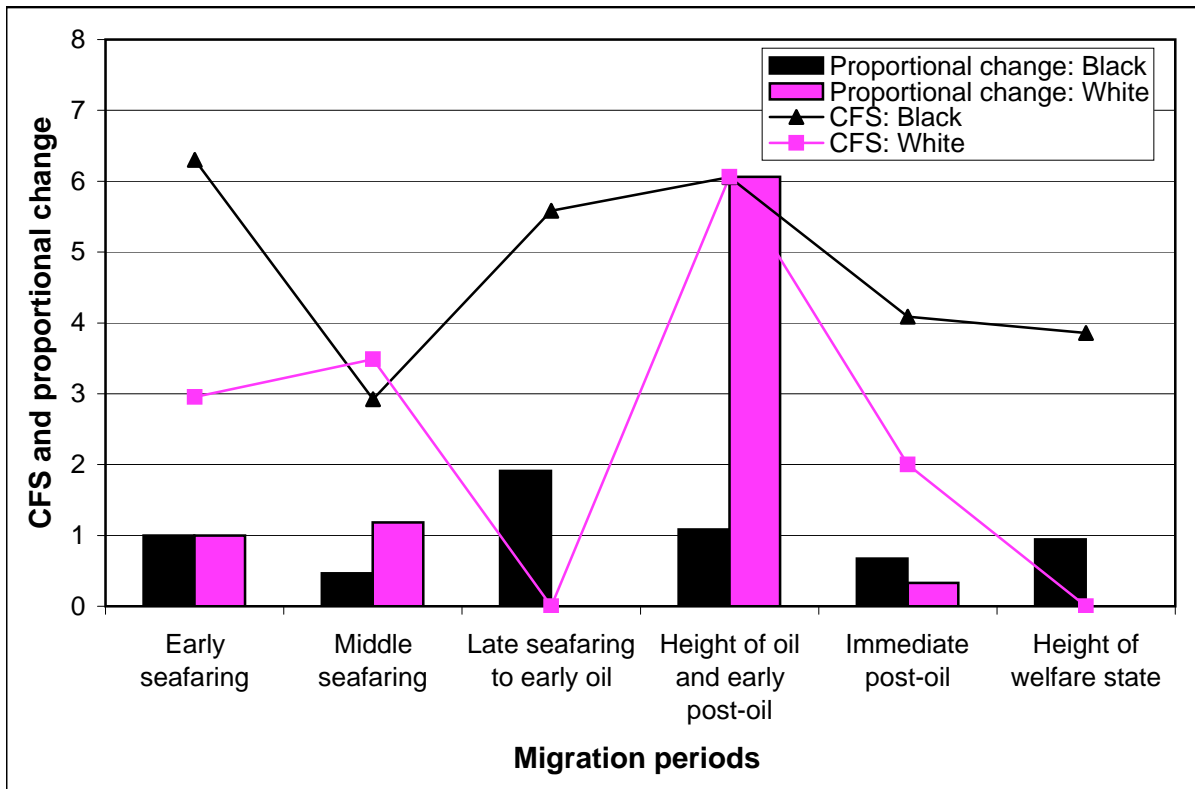
Figure 7.27: Completed family sizes (CFS) and proportional fertility change (Current/Prior CFS), St. Johns
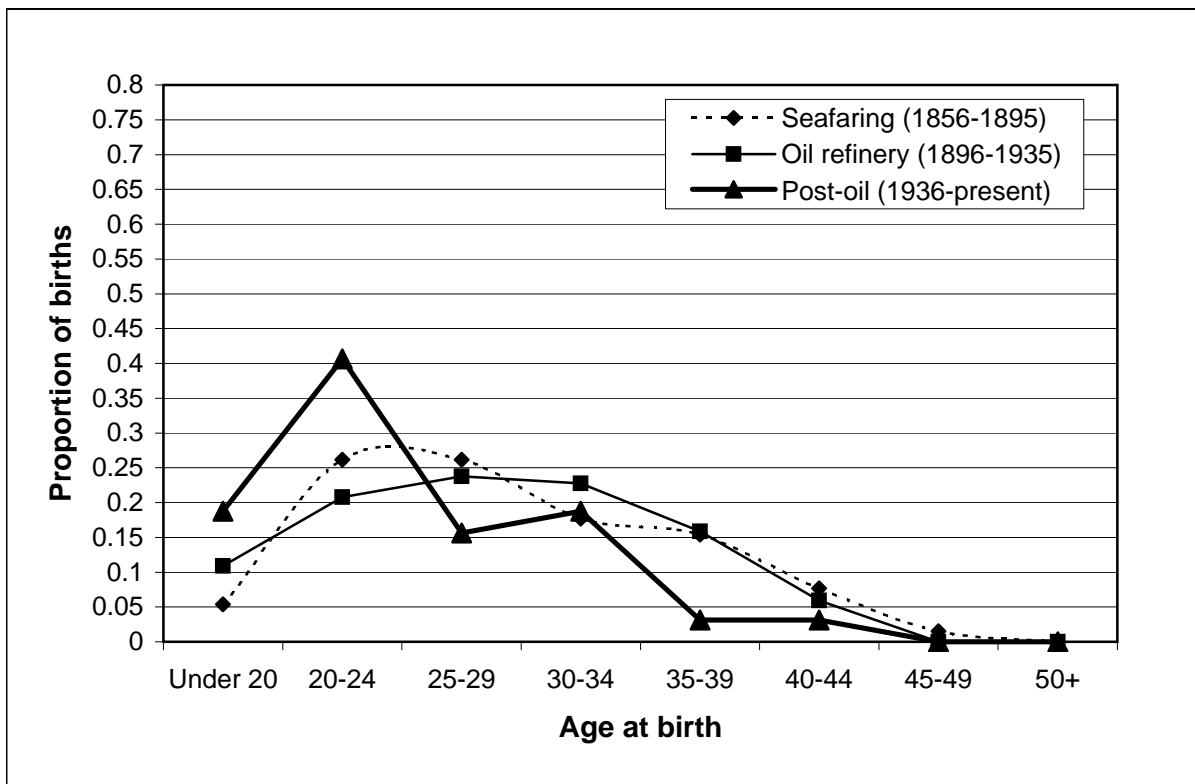
Figure 7.28: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, St. Johns Blacks
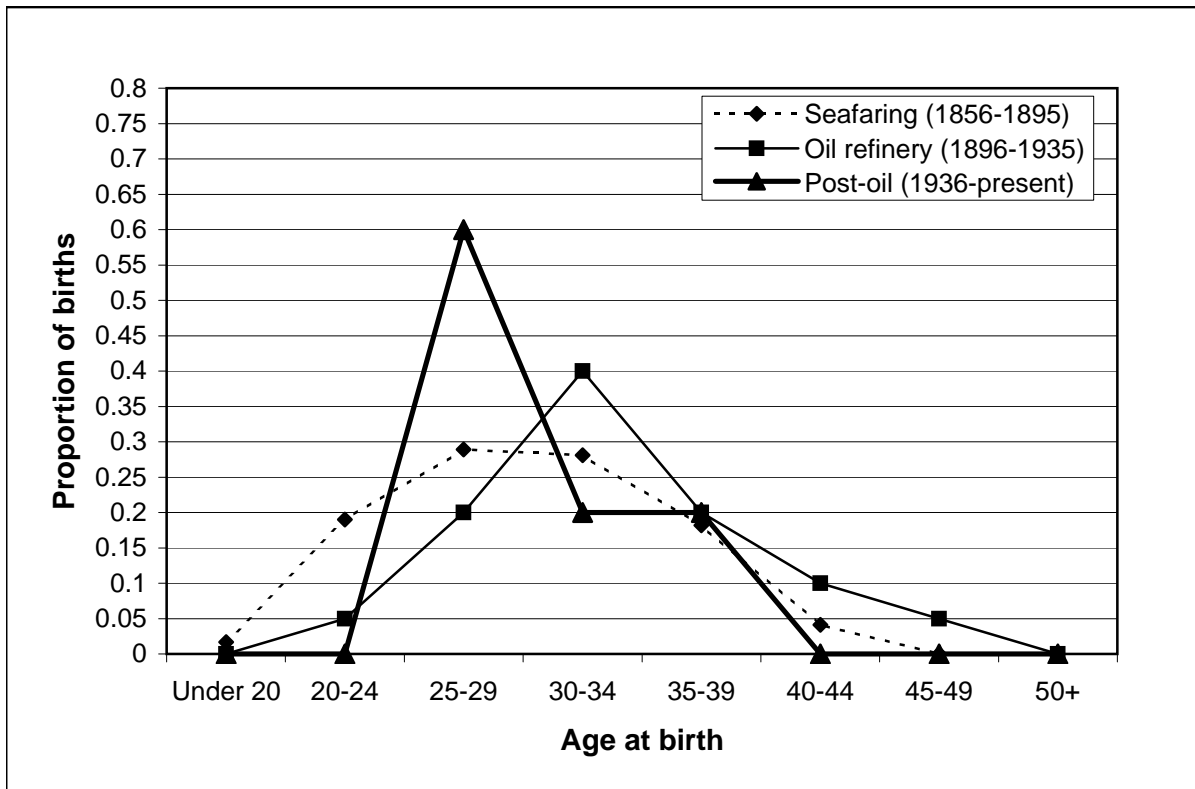
Figure 7.29: Proportion of births in each age category by migration period, St. Johns White
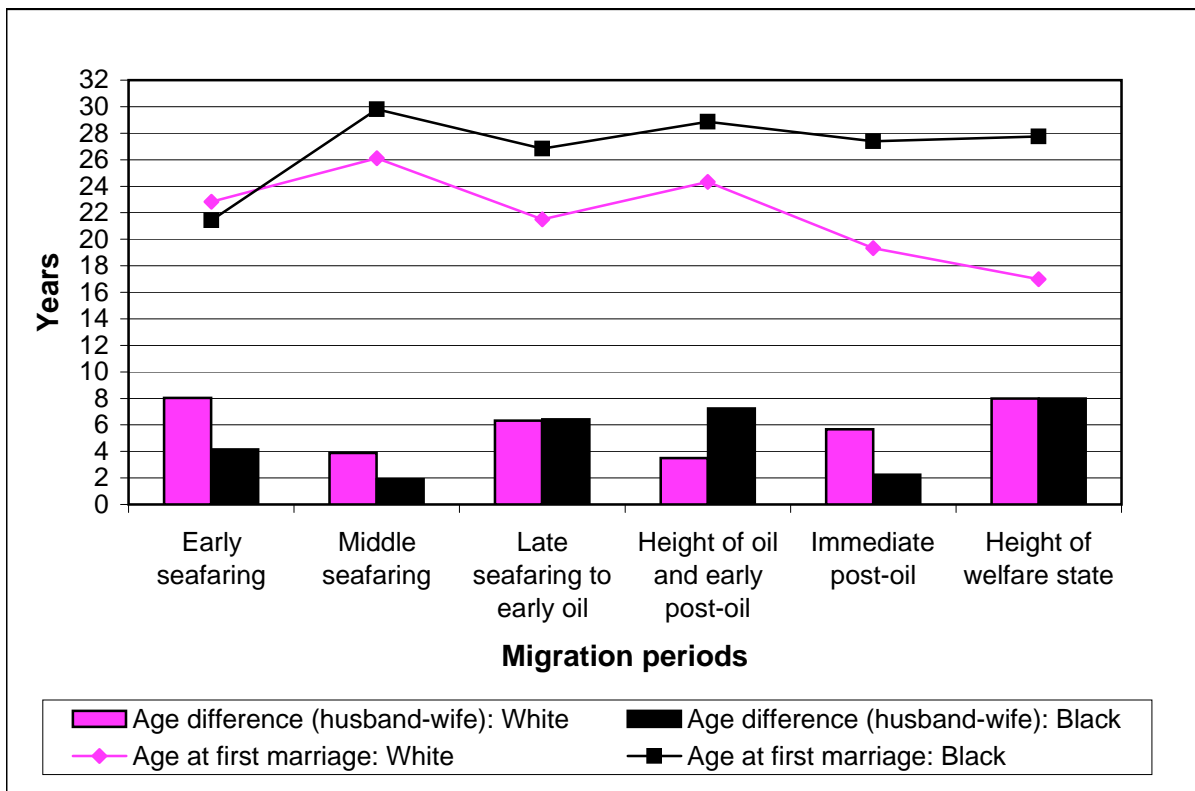
Figure 7.30: Age at first marriage and spousal age difference, St. Johns
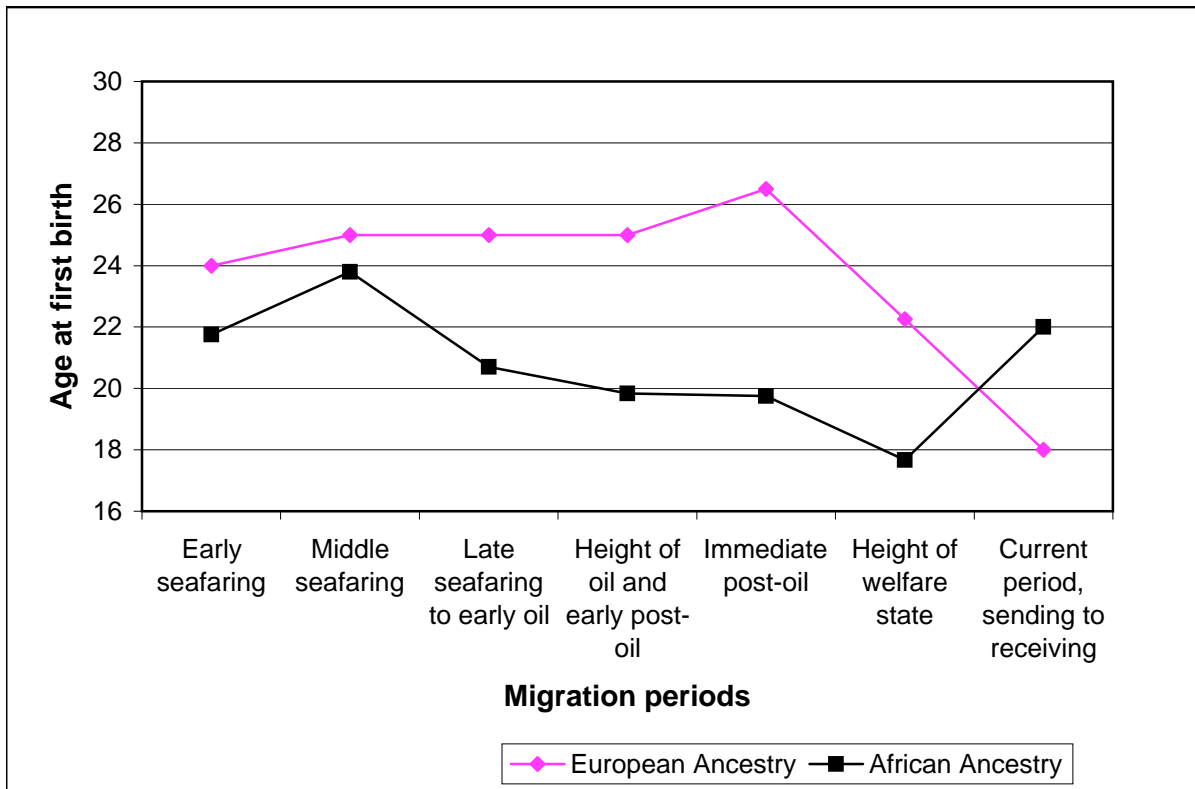
Figure 7.31: Age at first birth, St. Johns
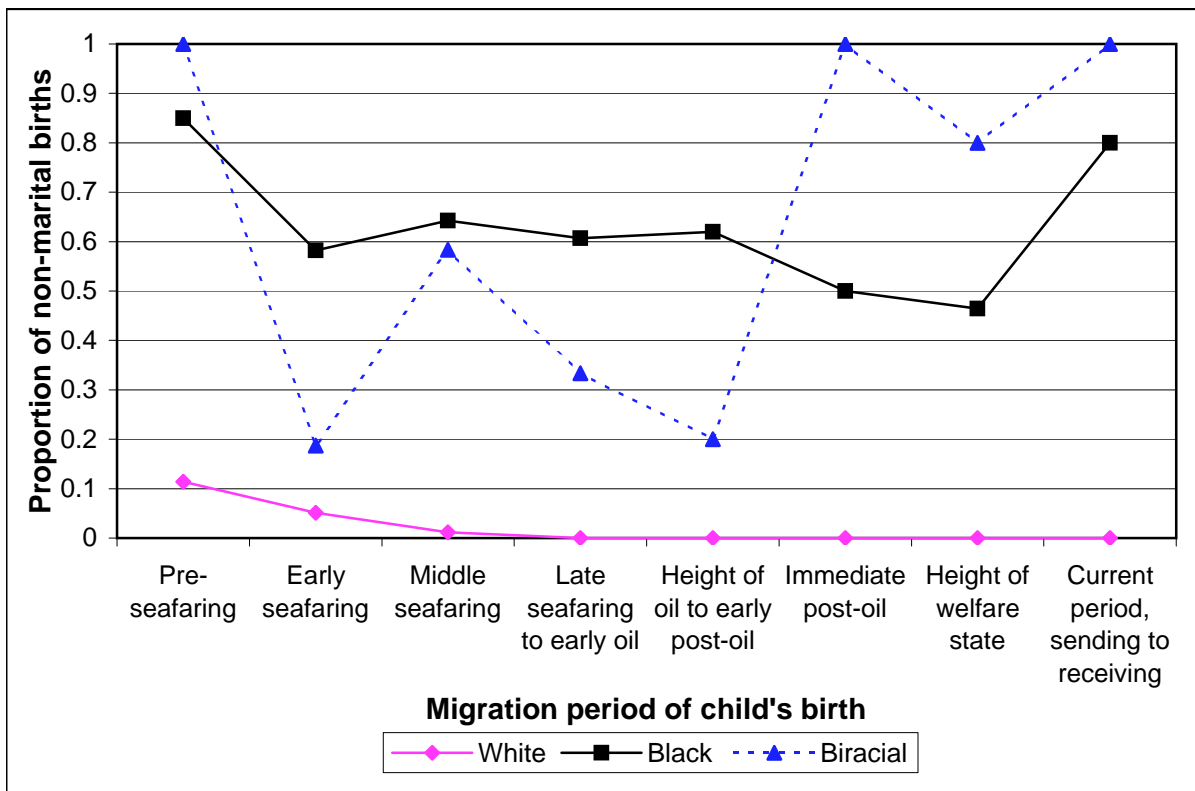
Figure 7.32: Non-marital births by child's race, St. Johns

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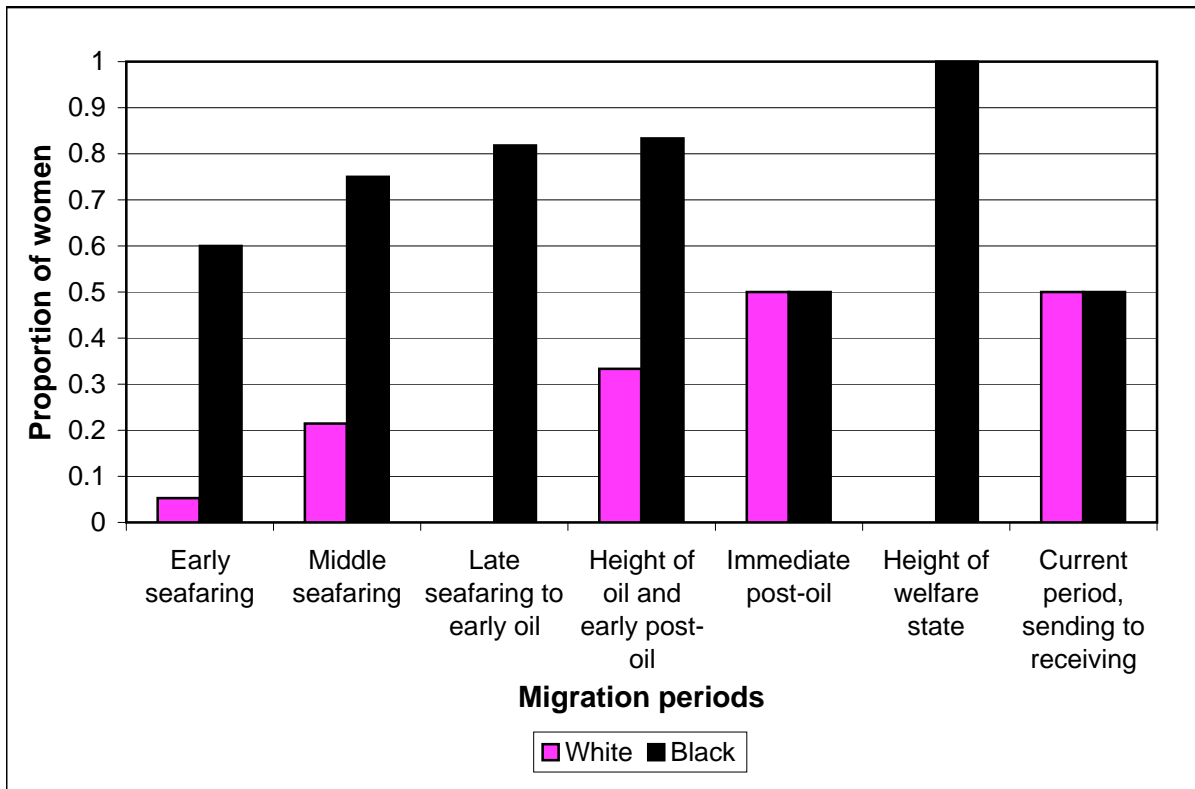
Figure 7.33: Proportion of childbearing women having non-marital births by race, St. Johns
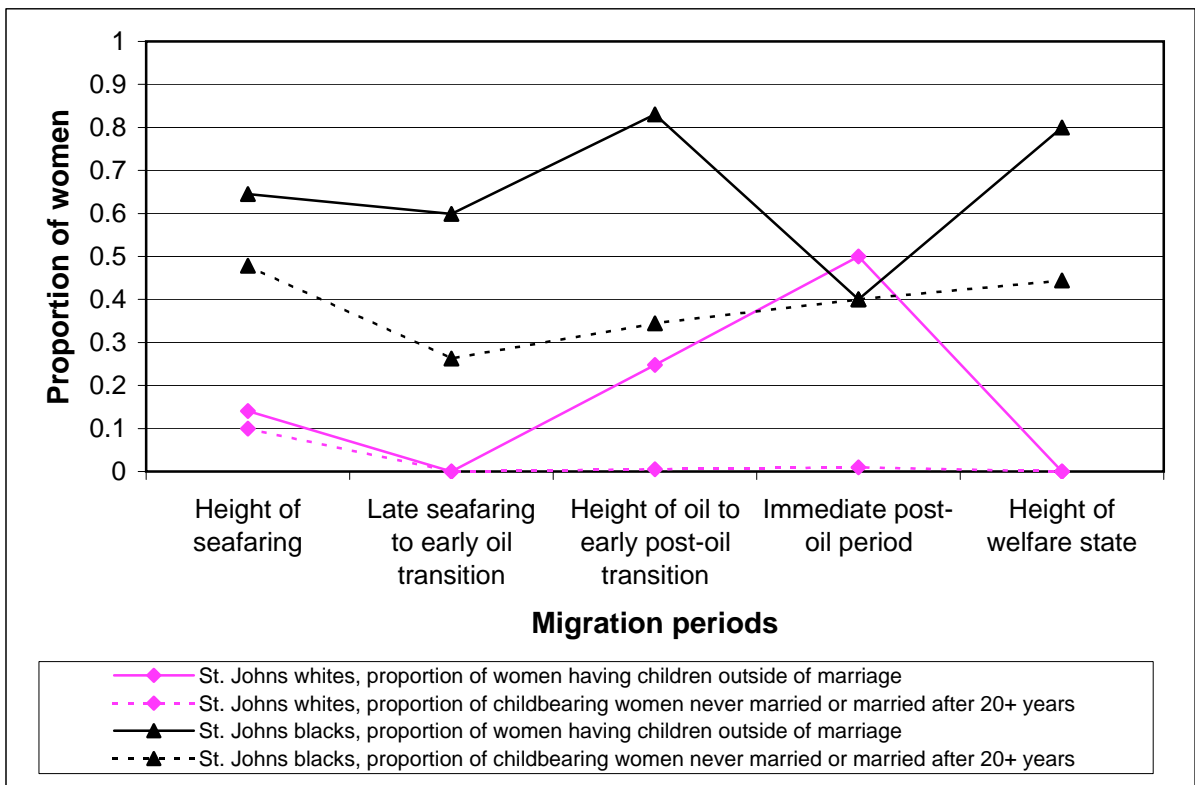
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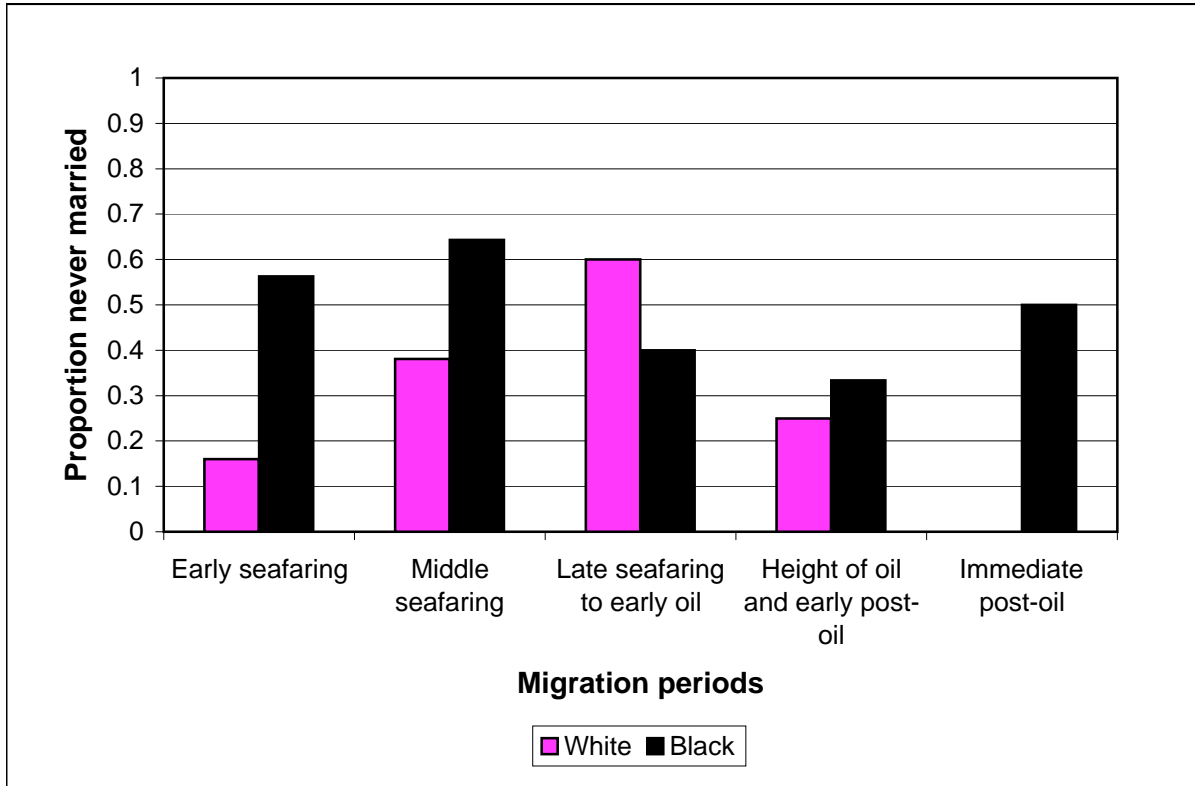
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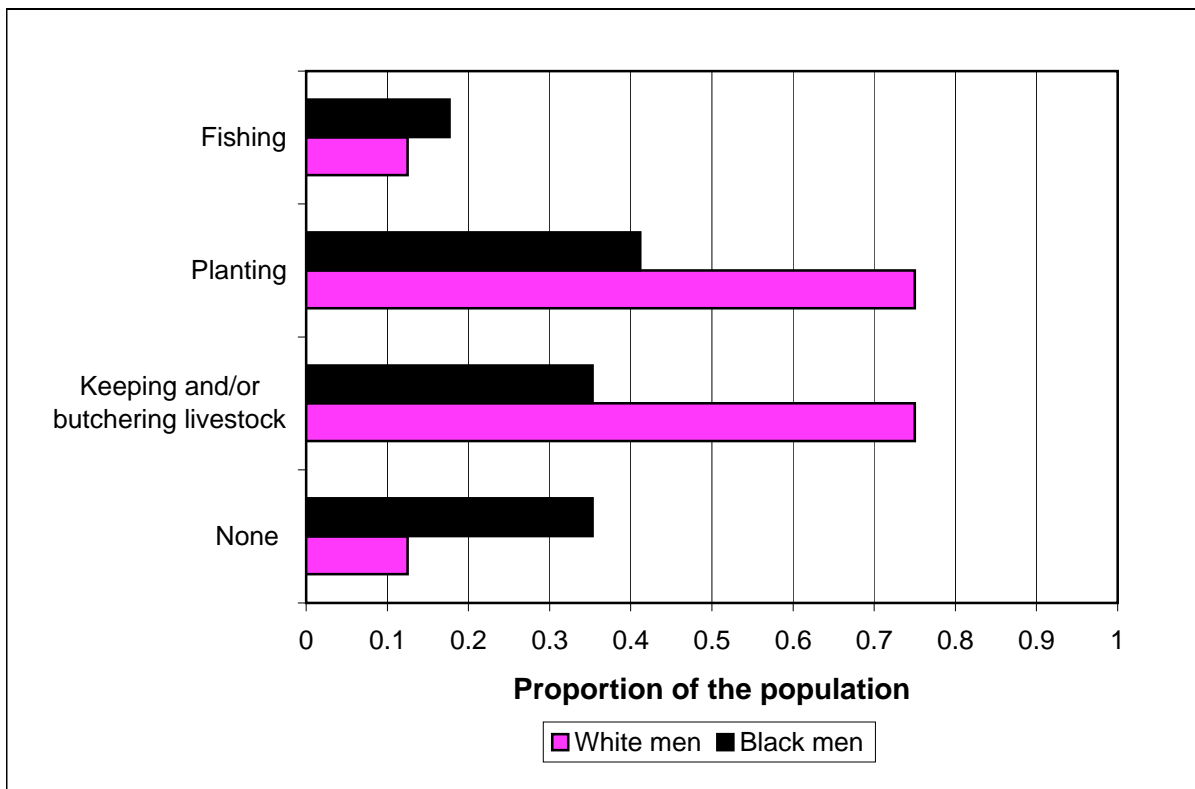
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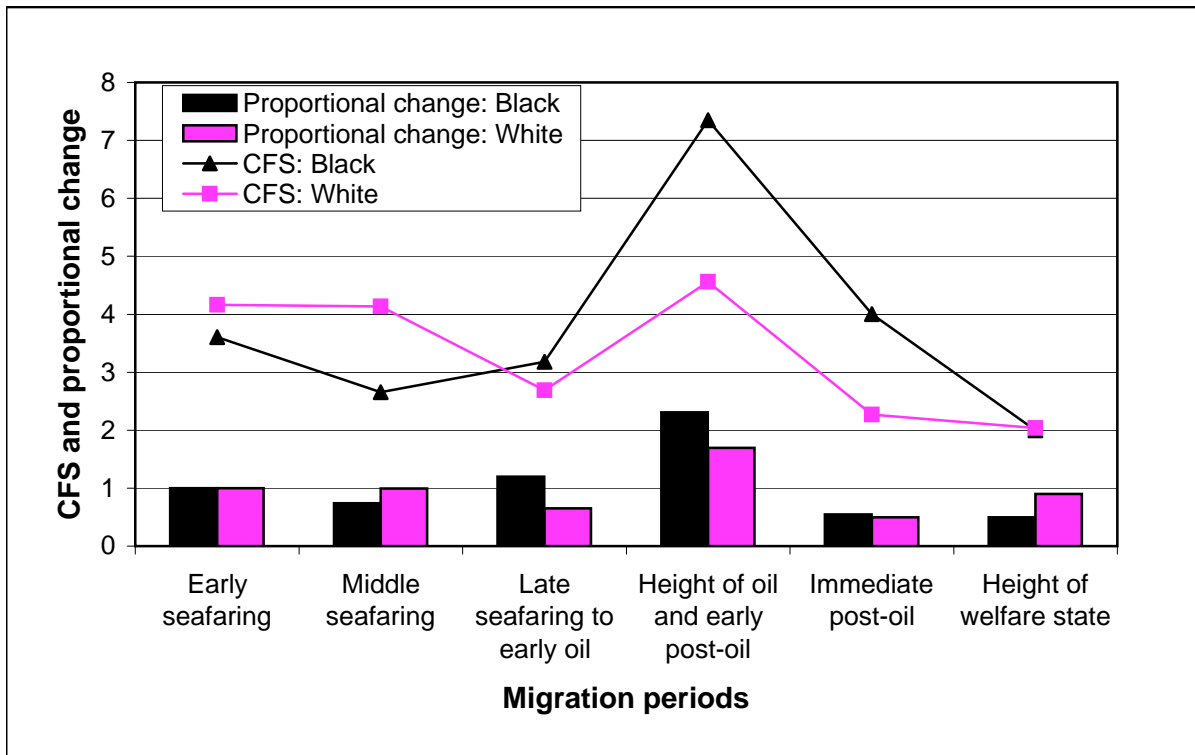
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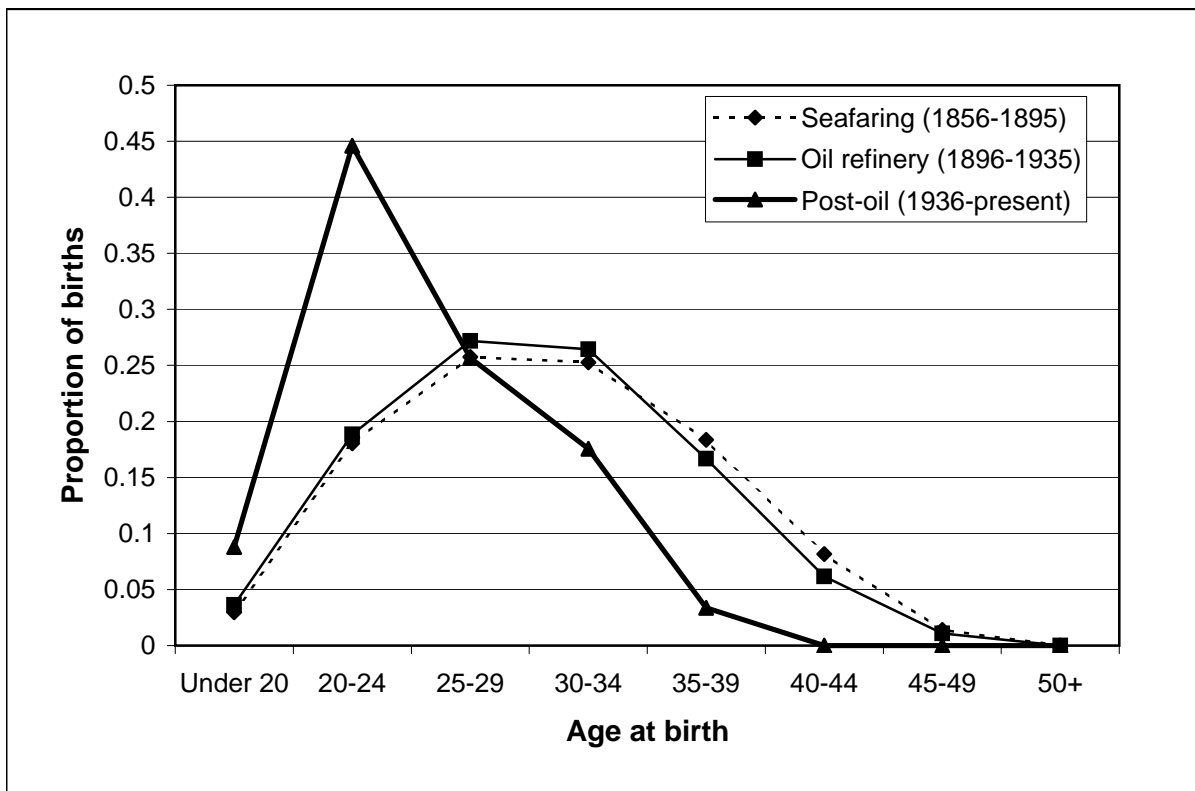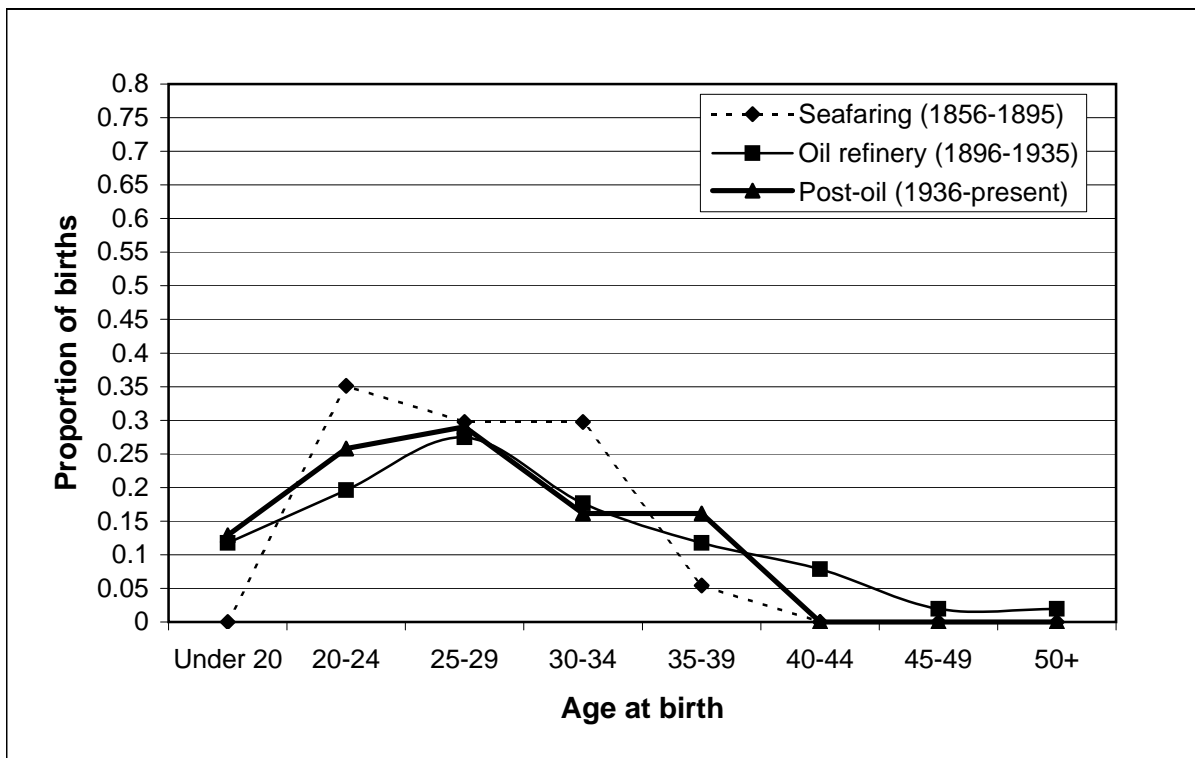

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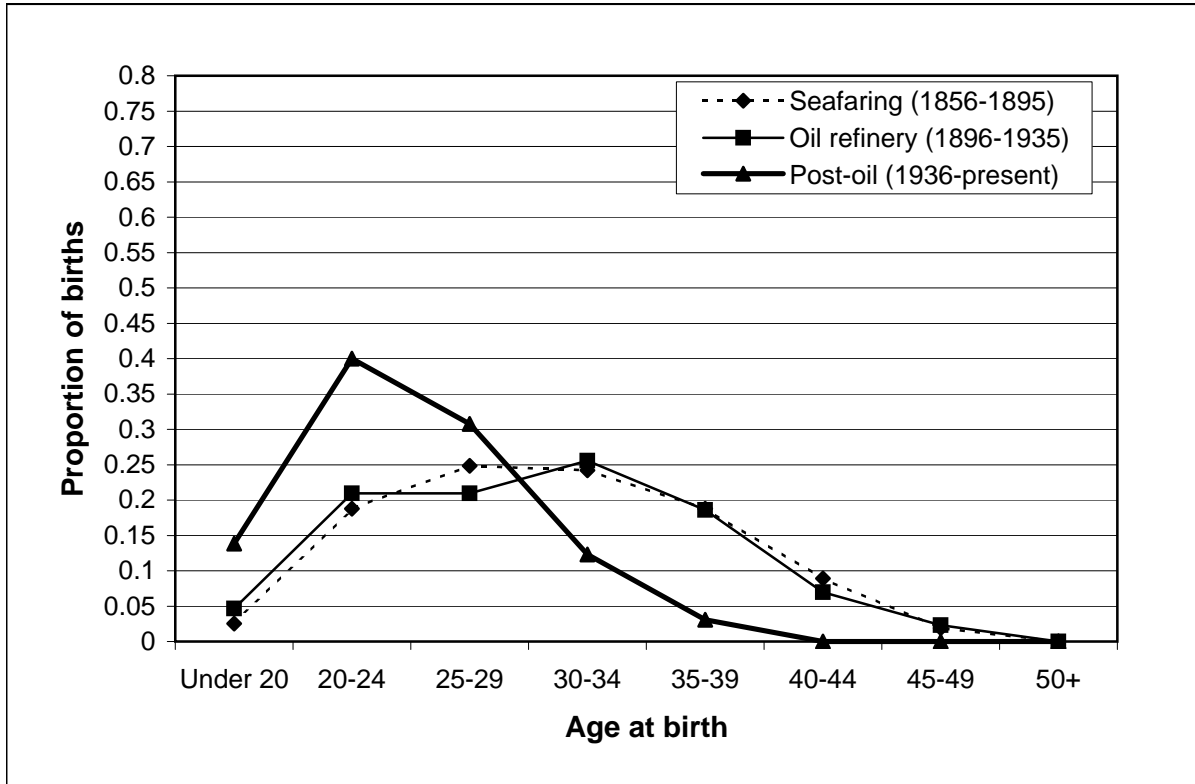
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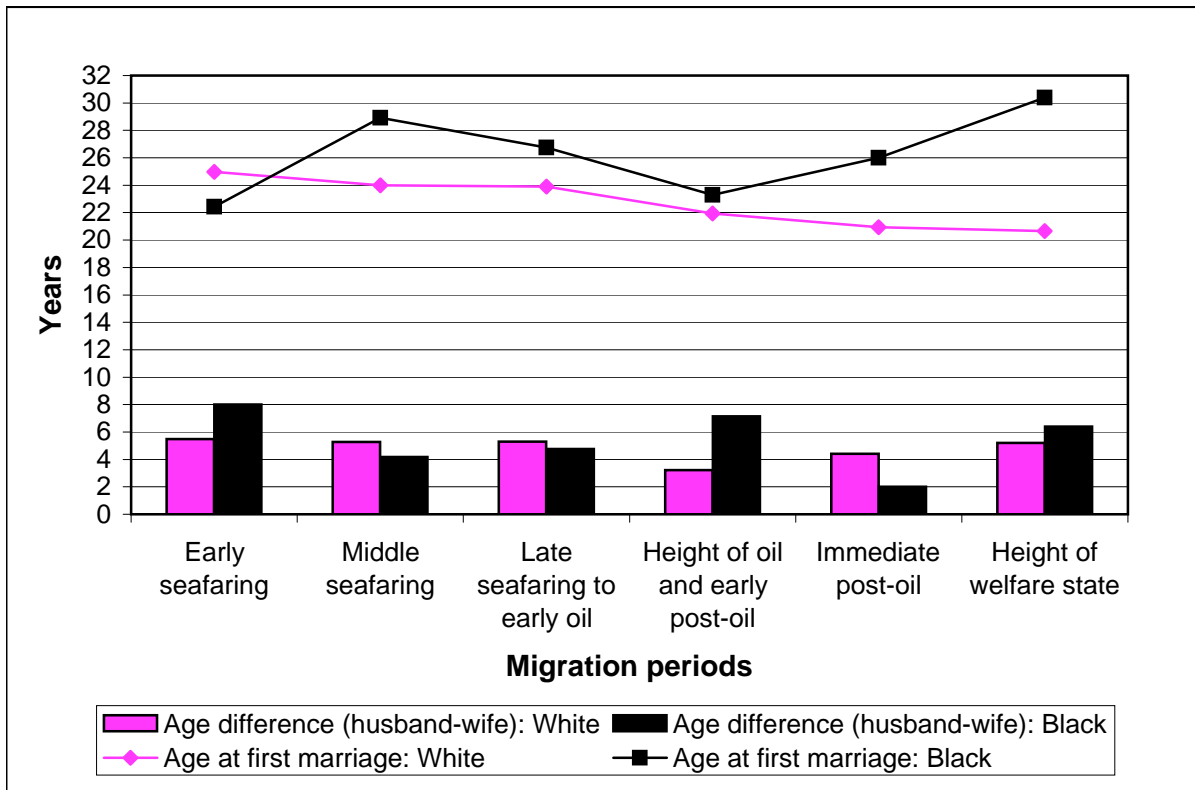
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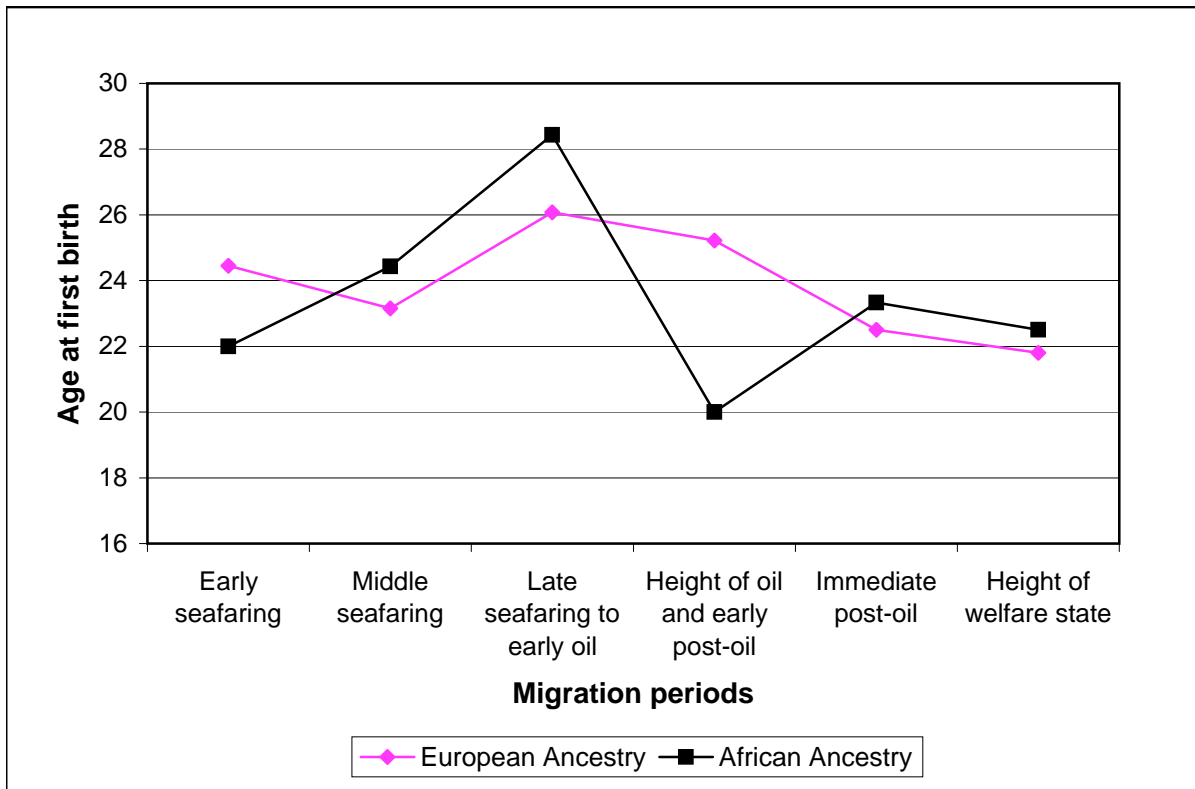
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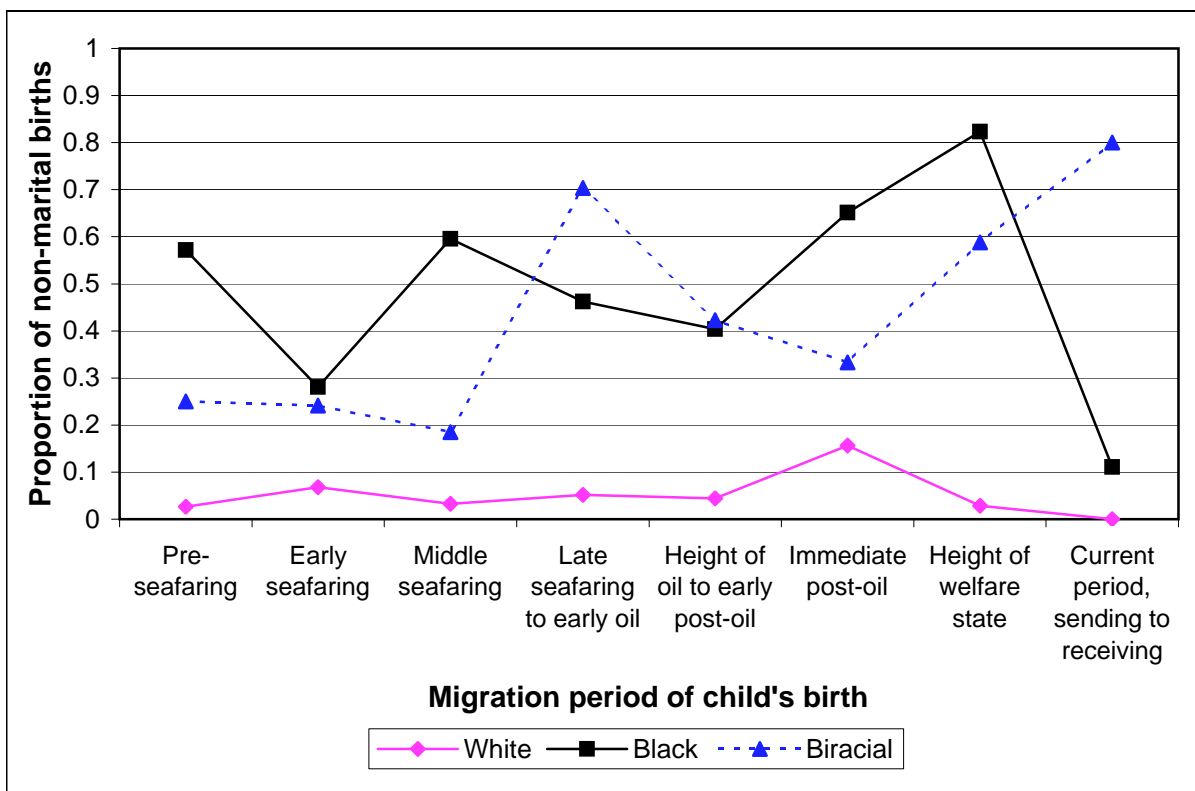
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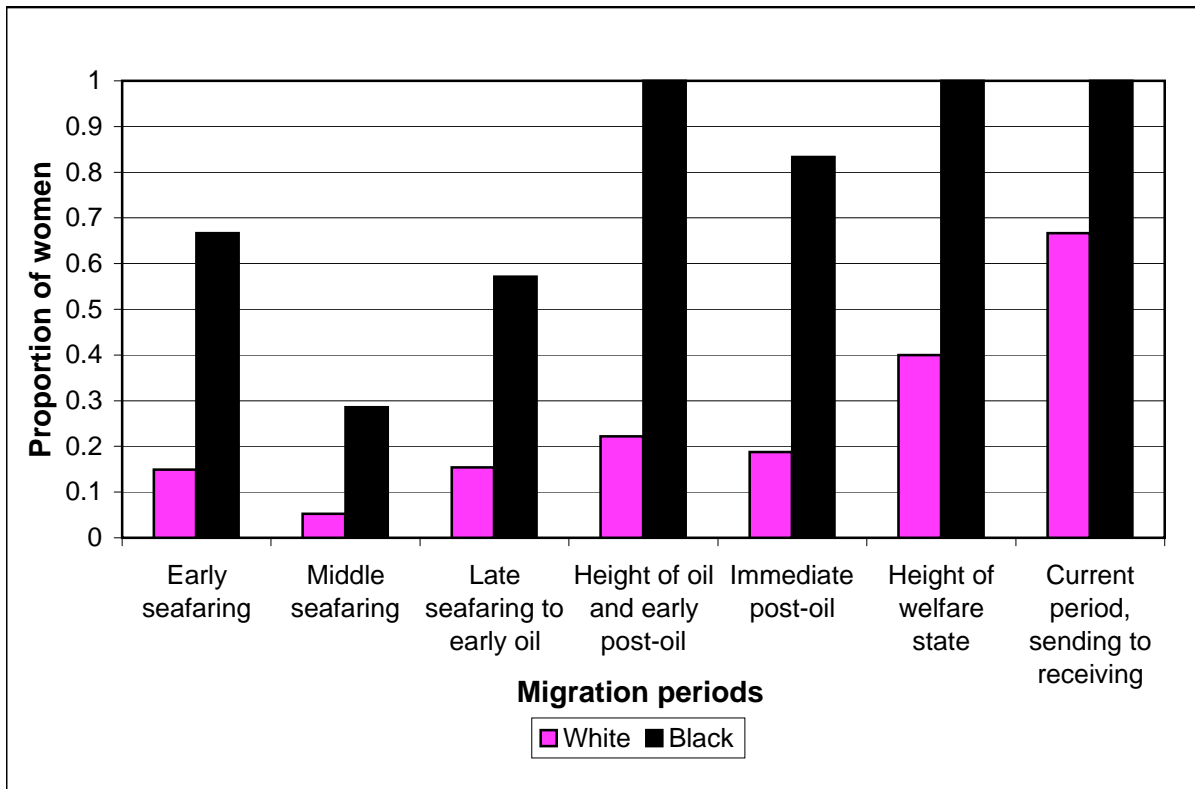
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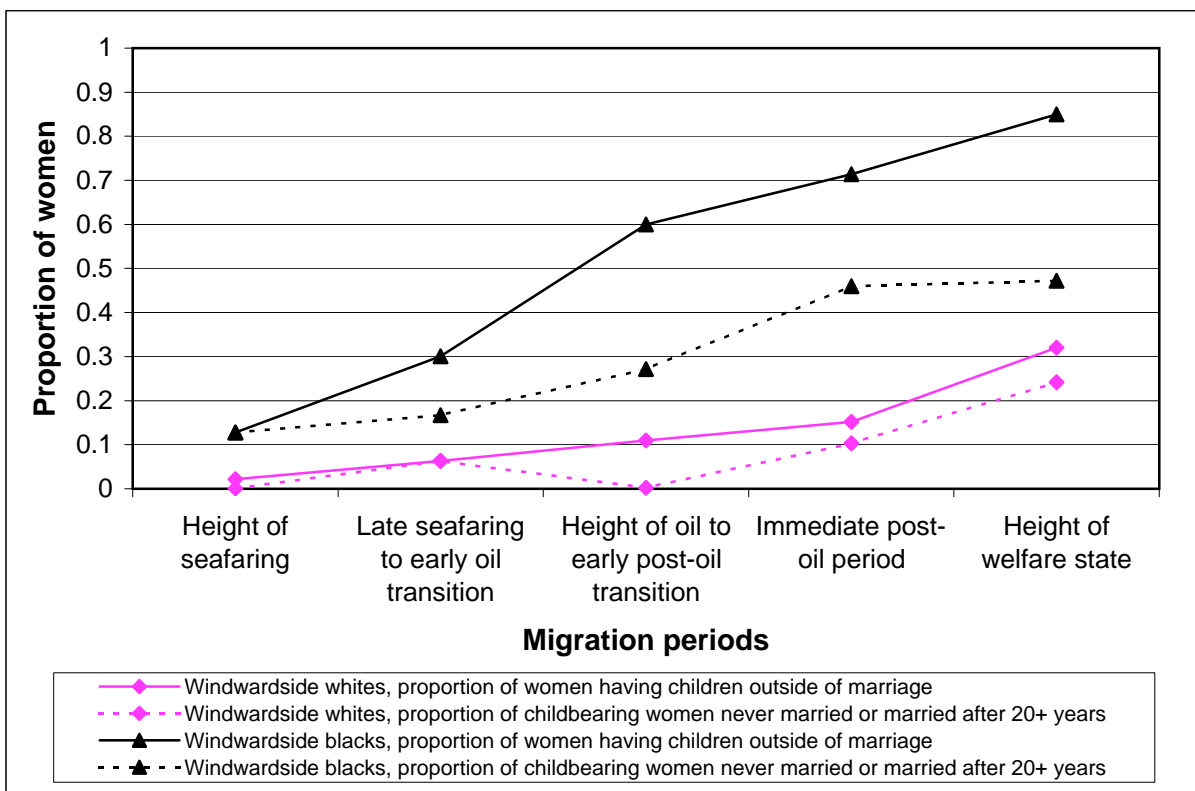
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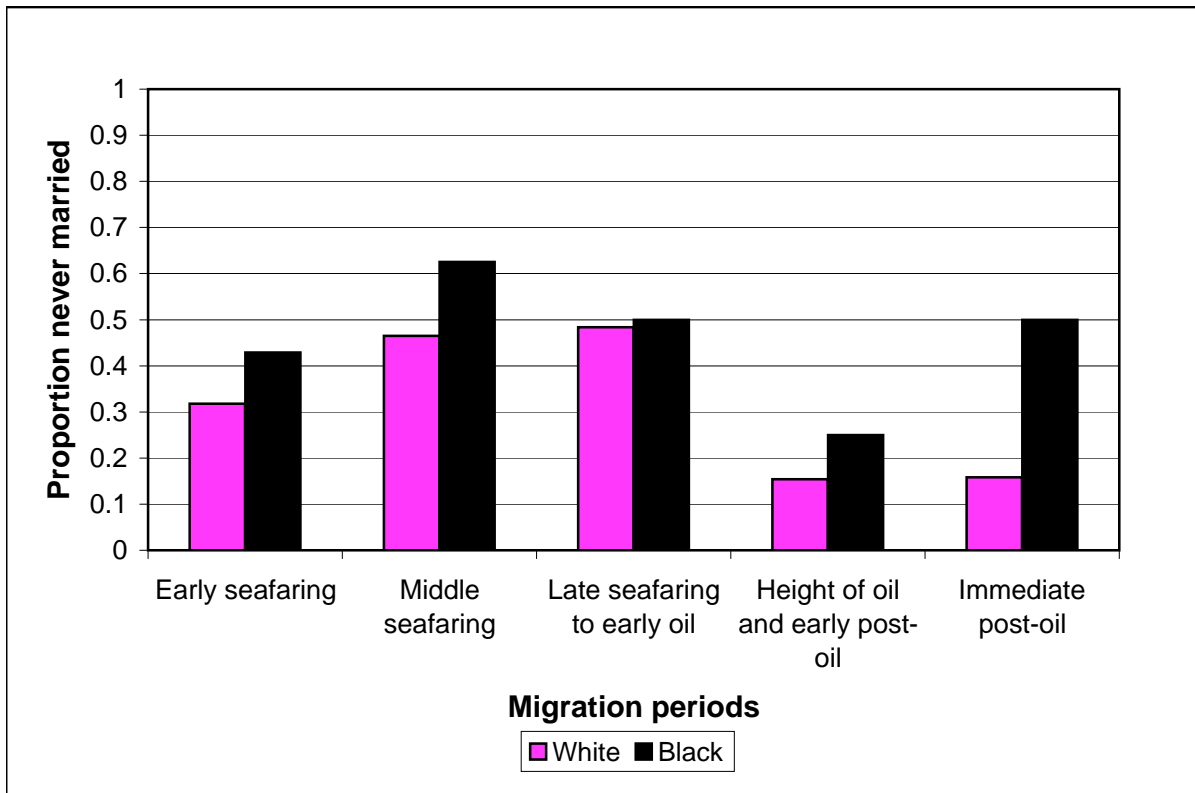
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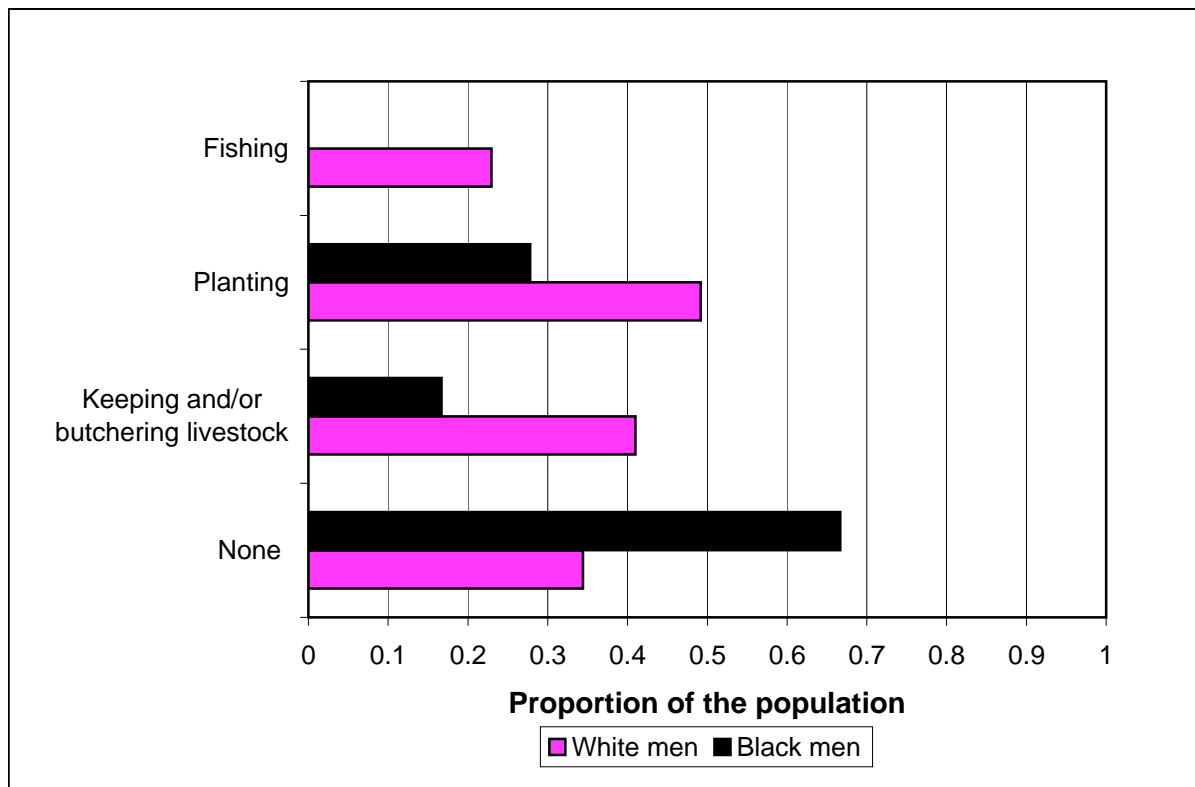
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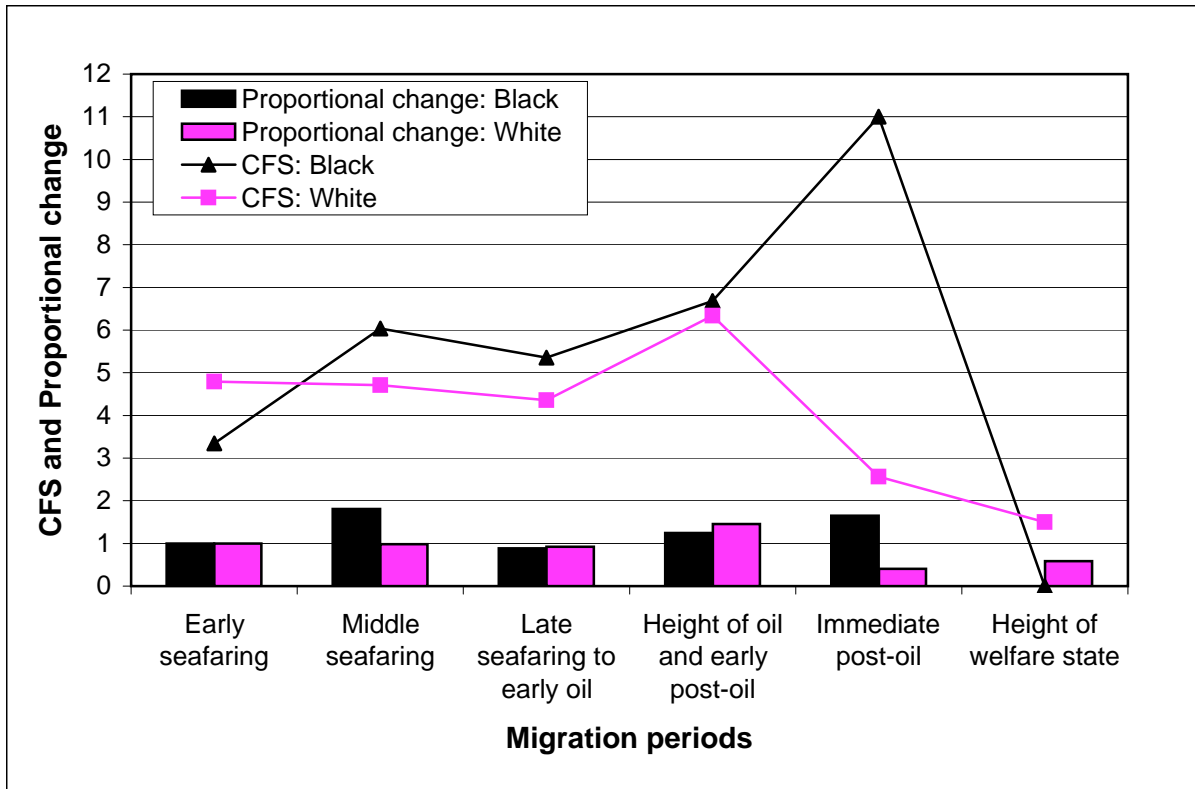
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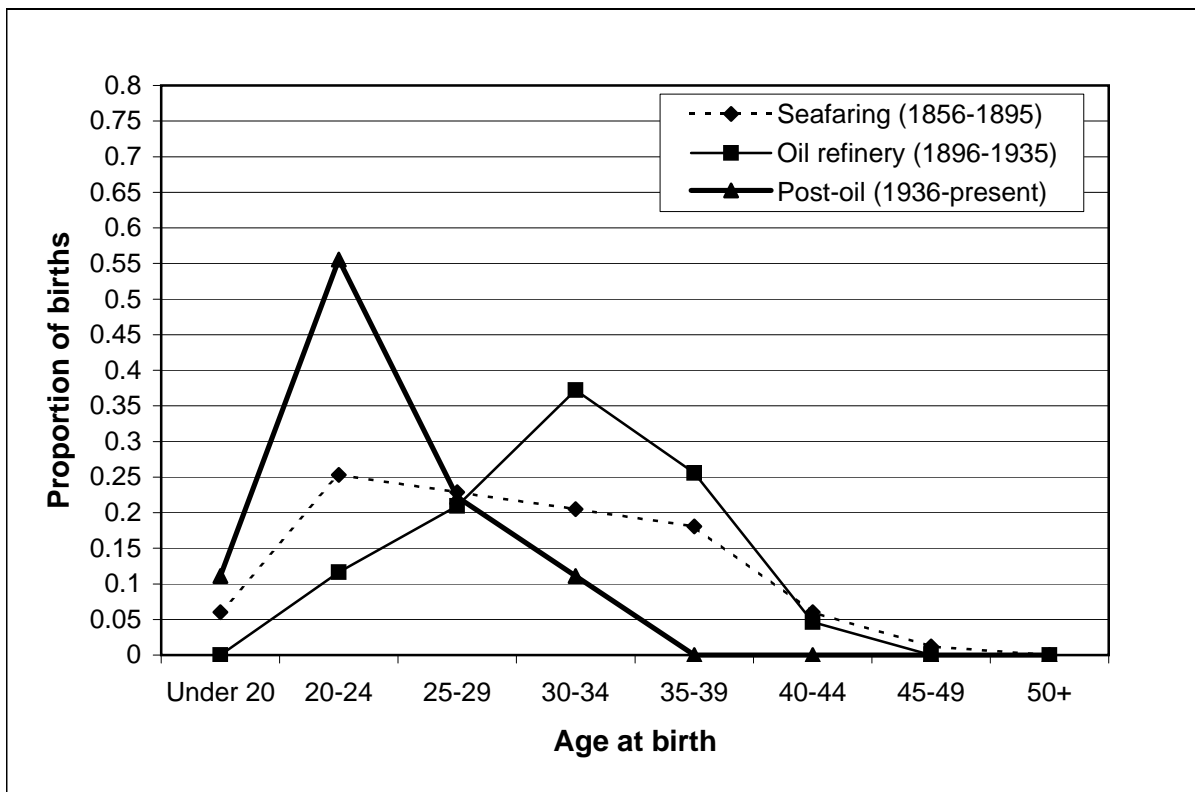
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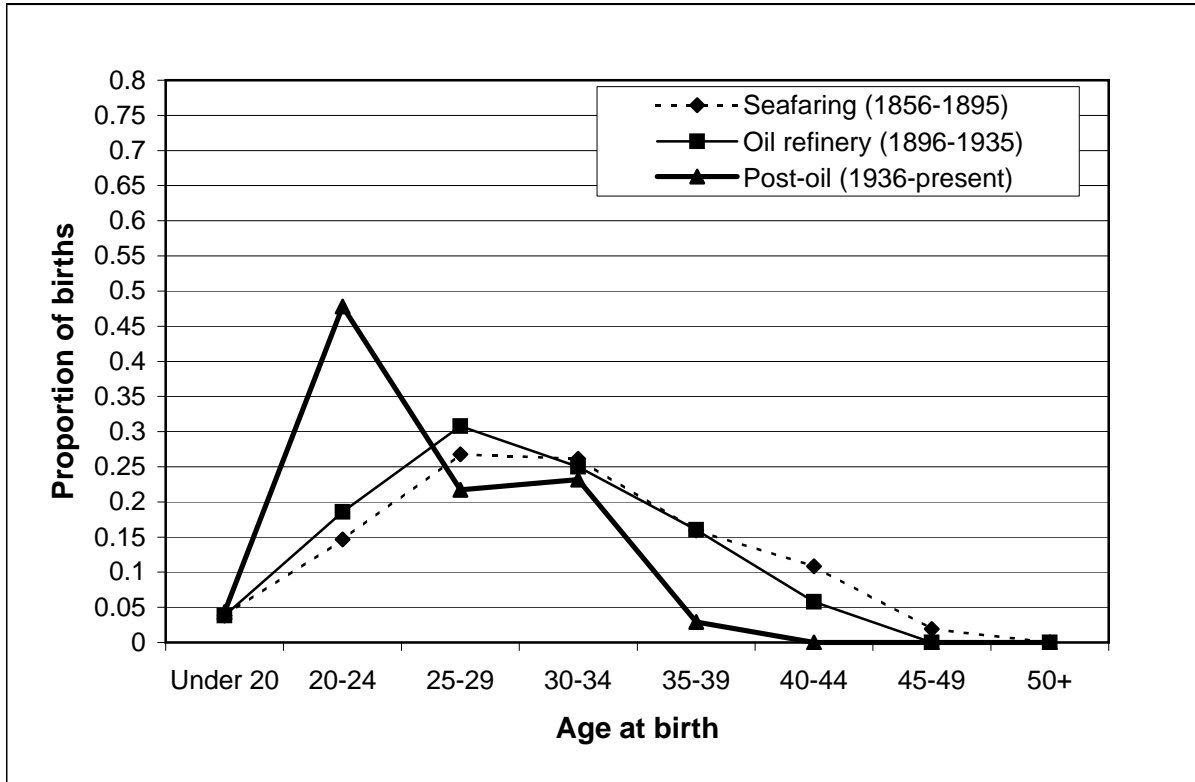
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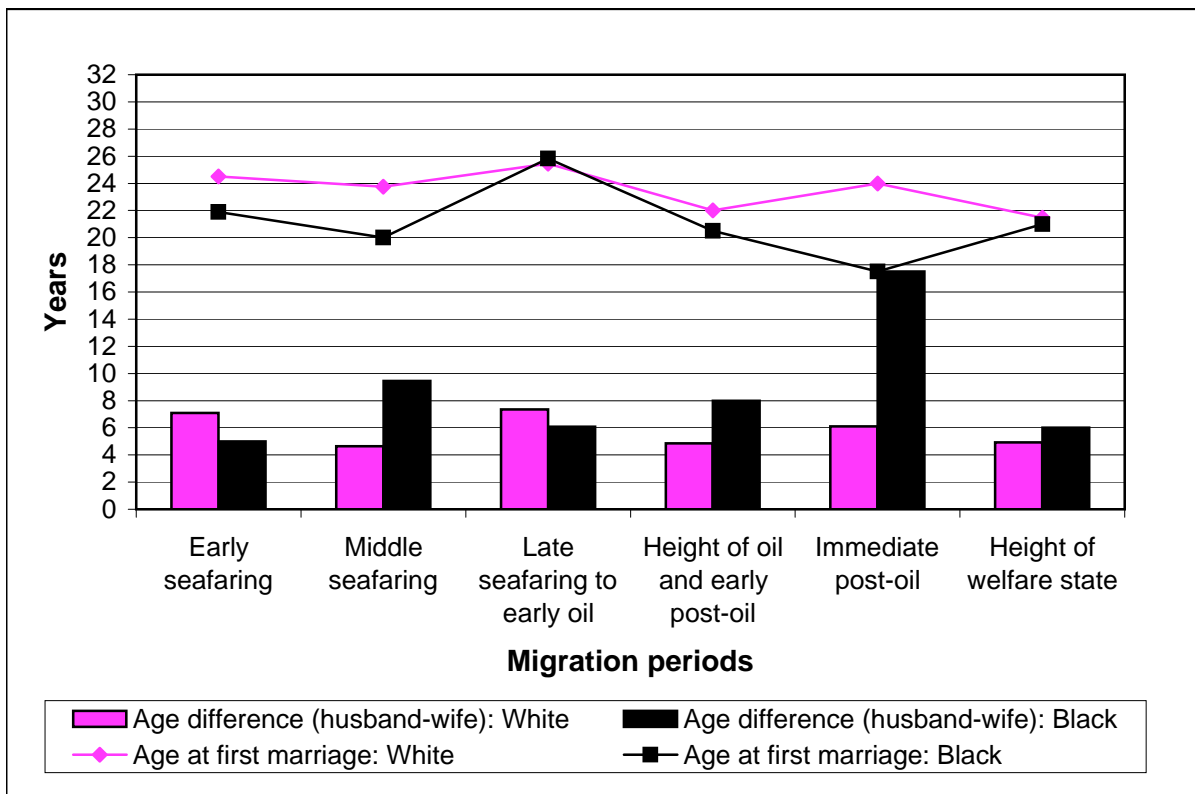
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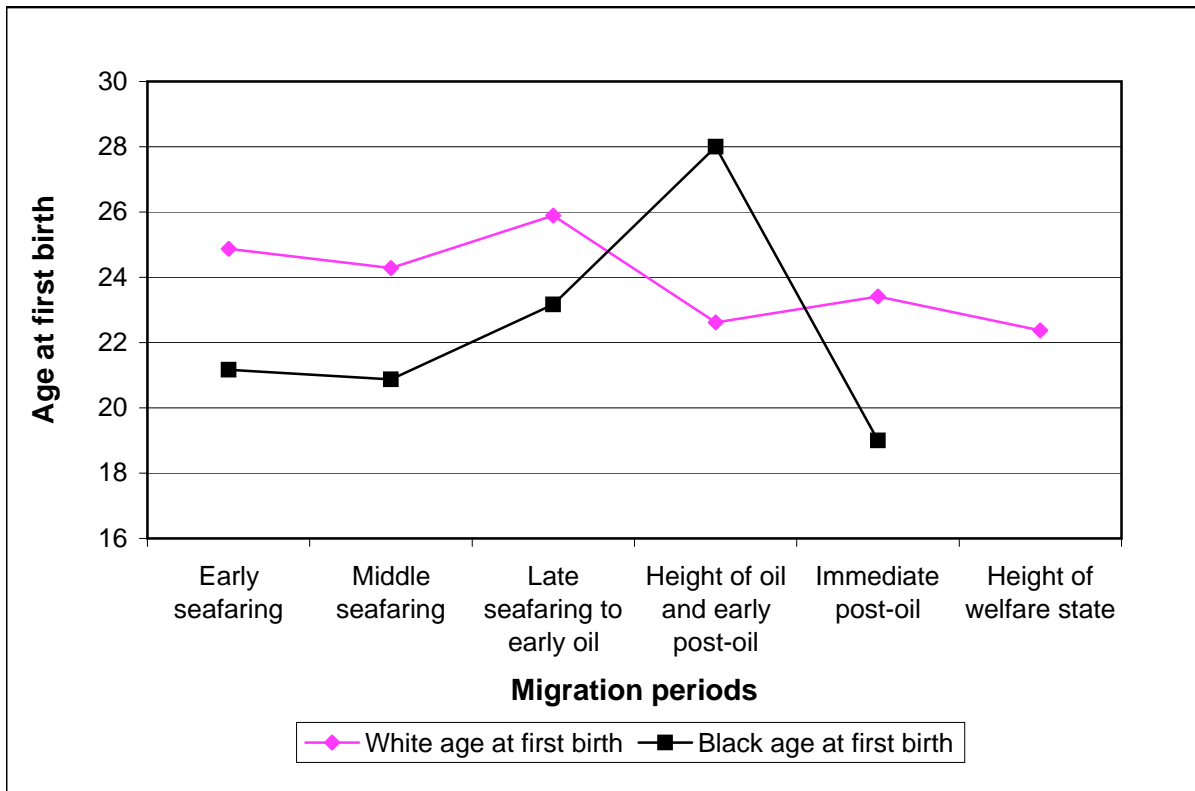
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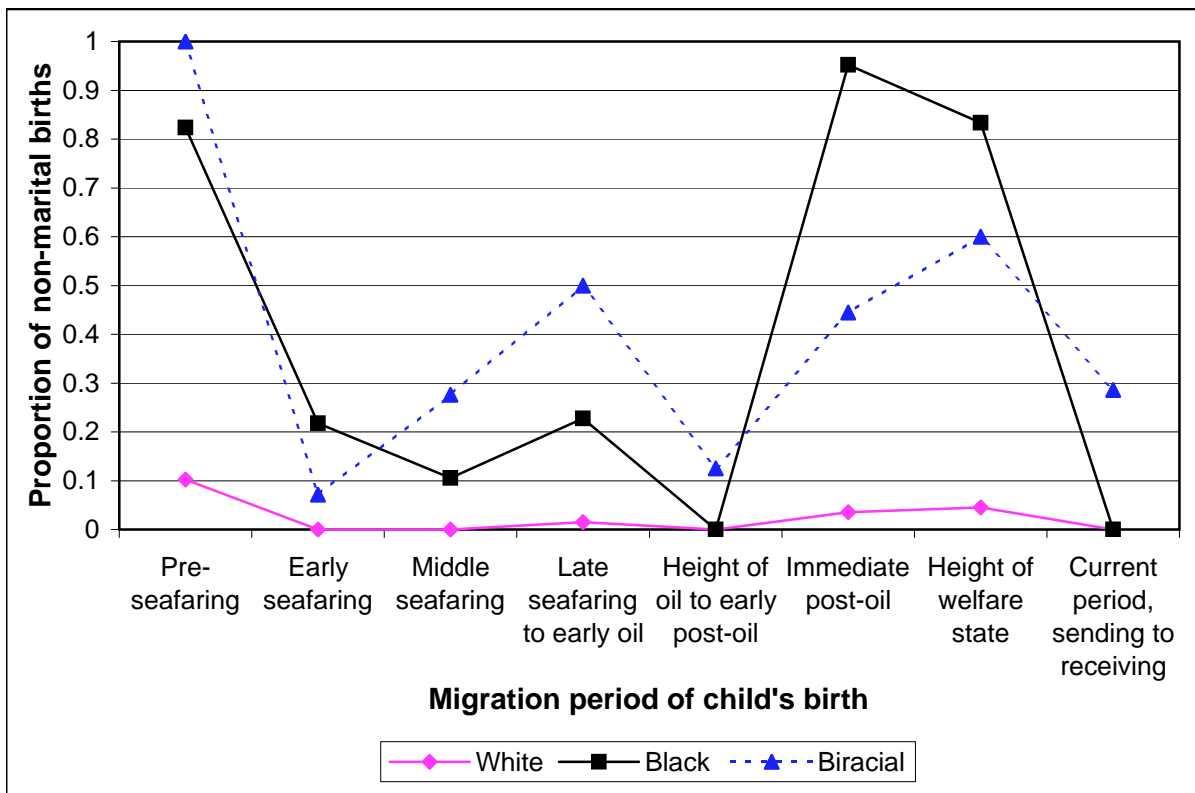
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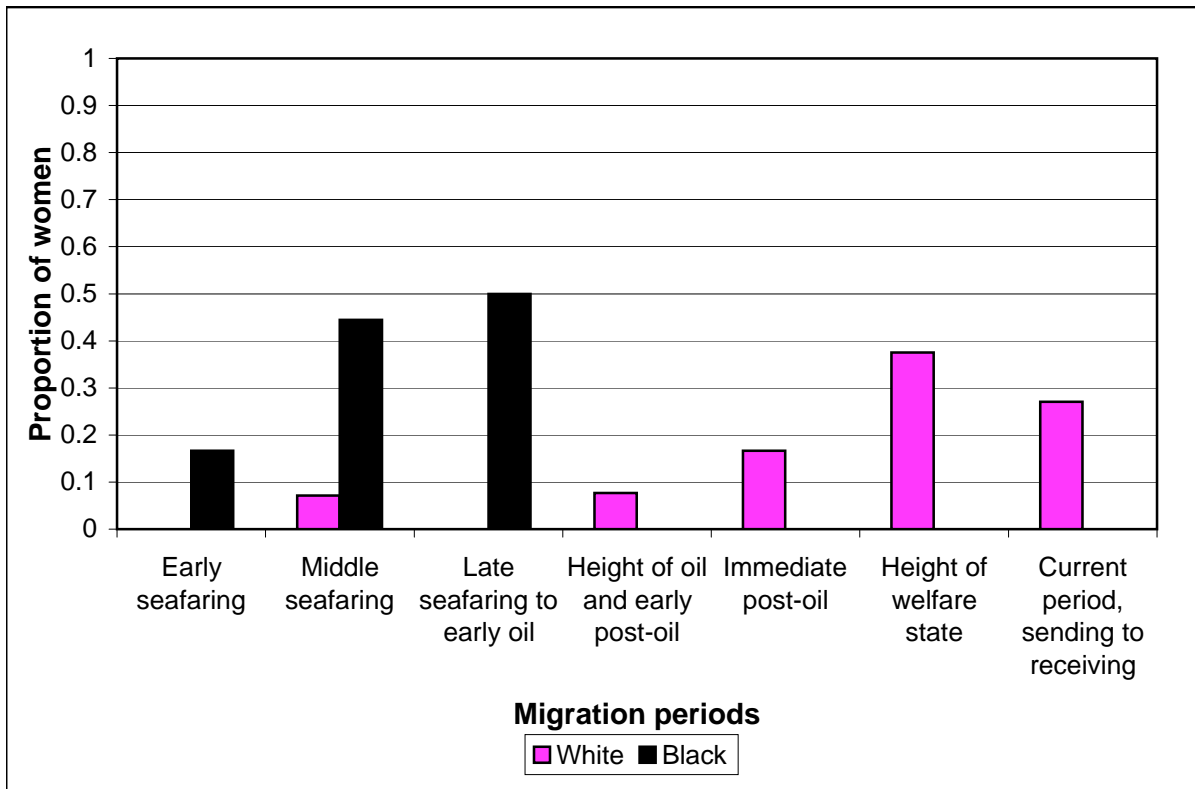
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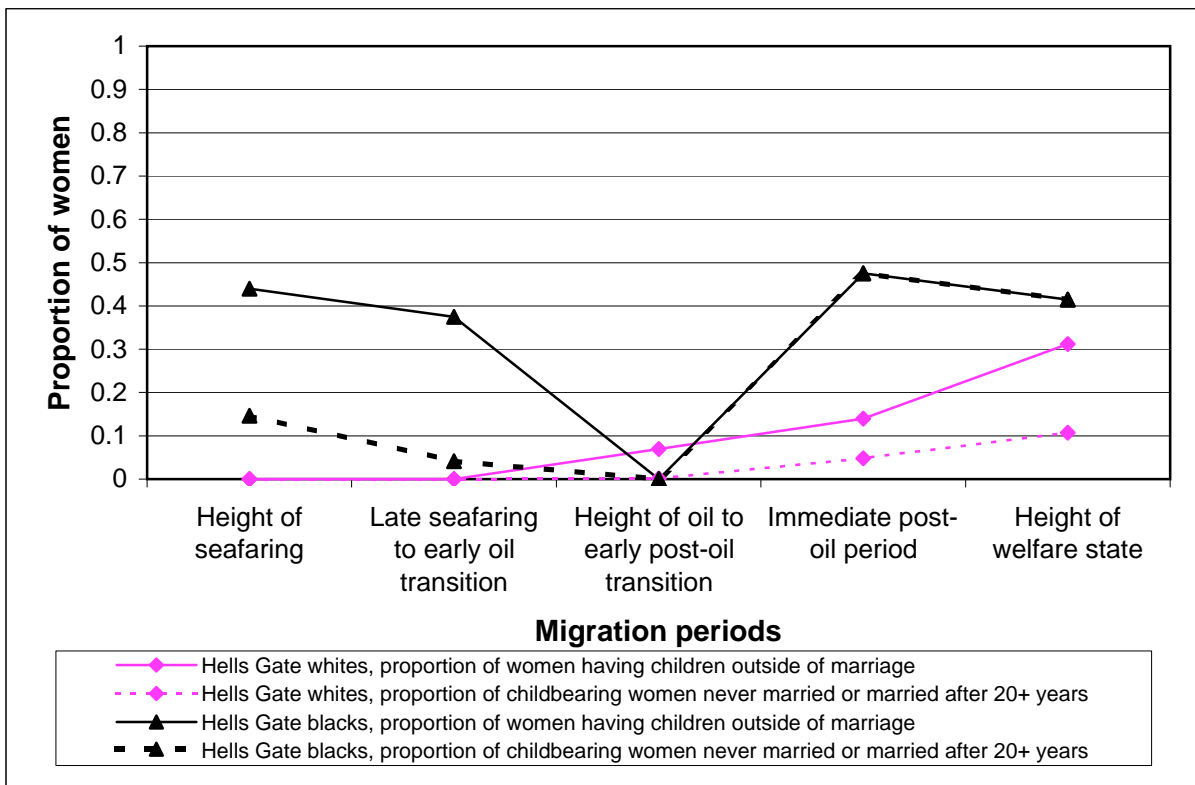
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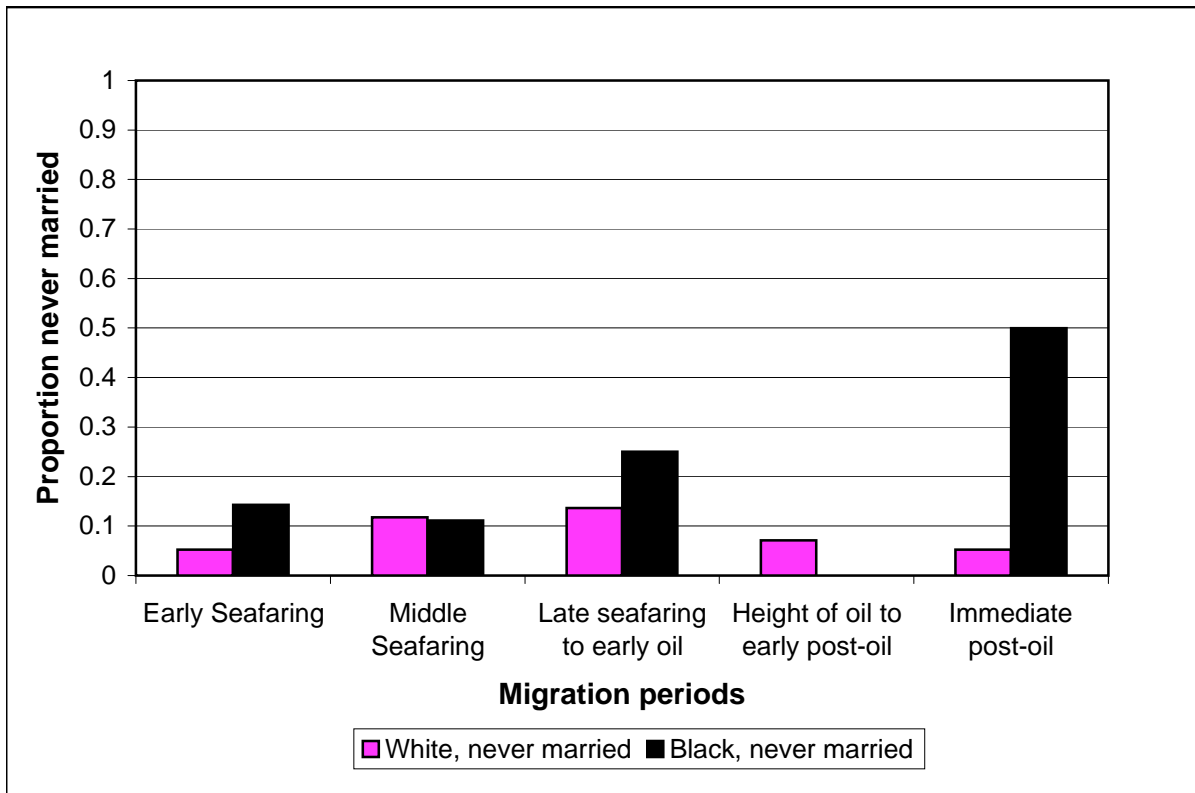
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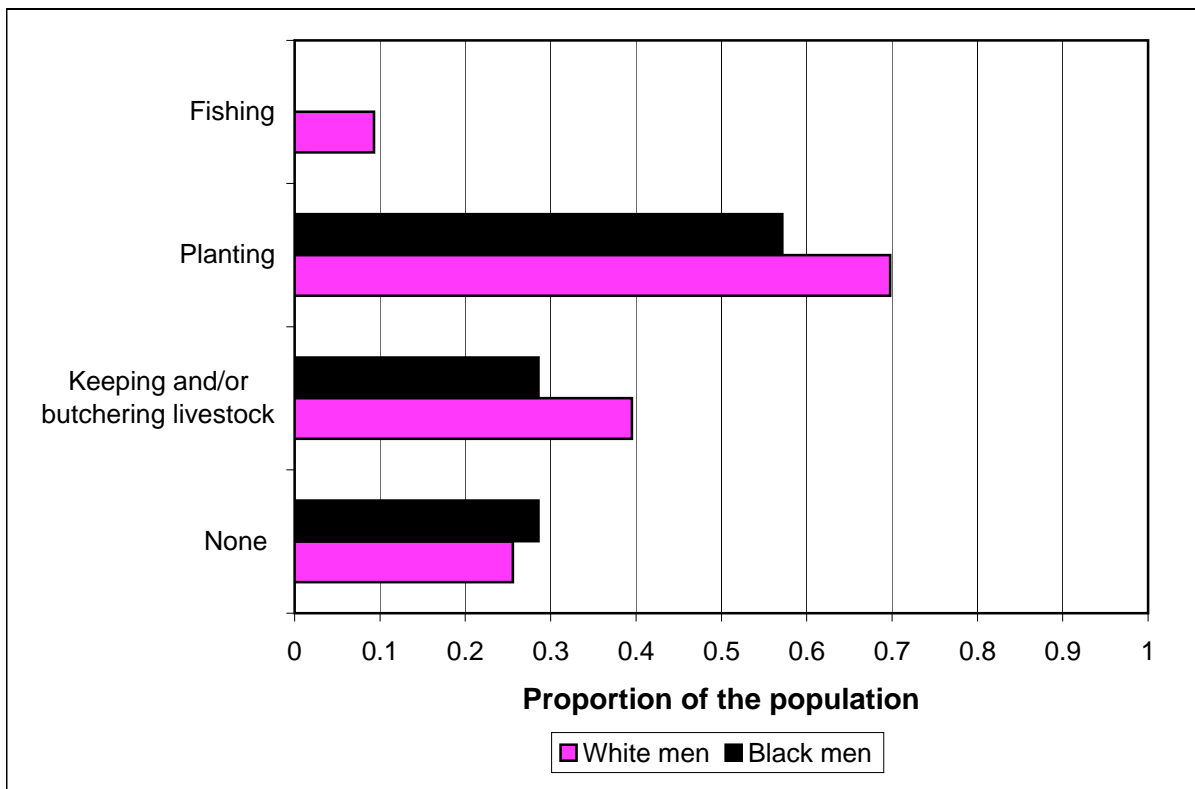
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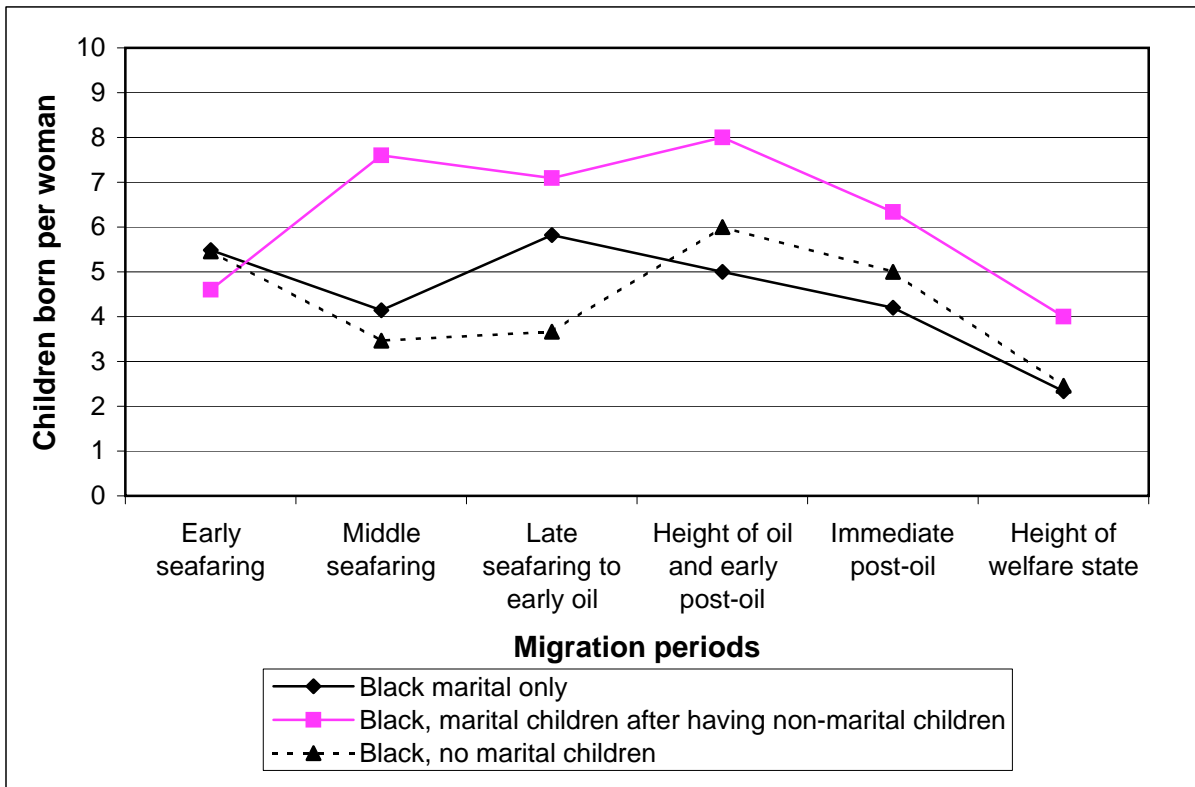
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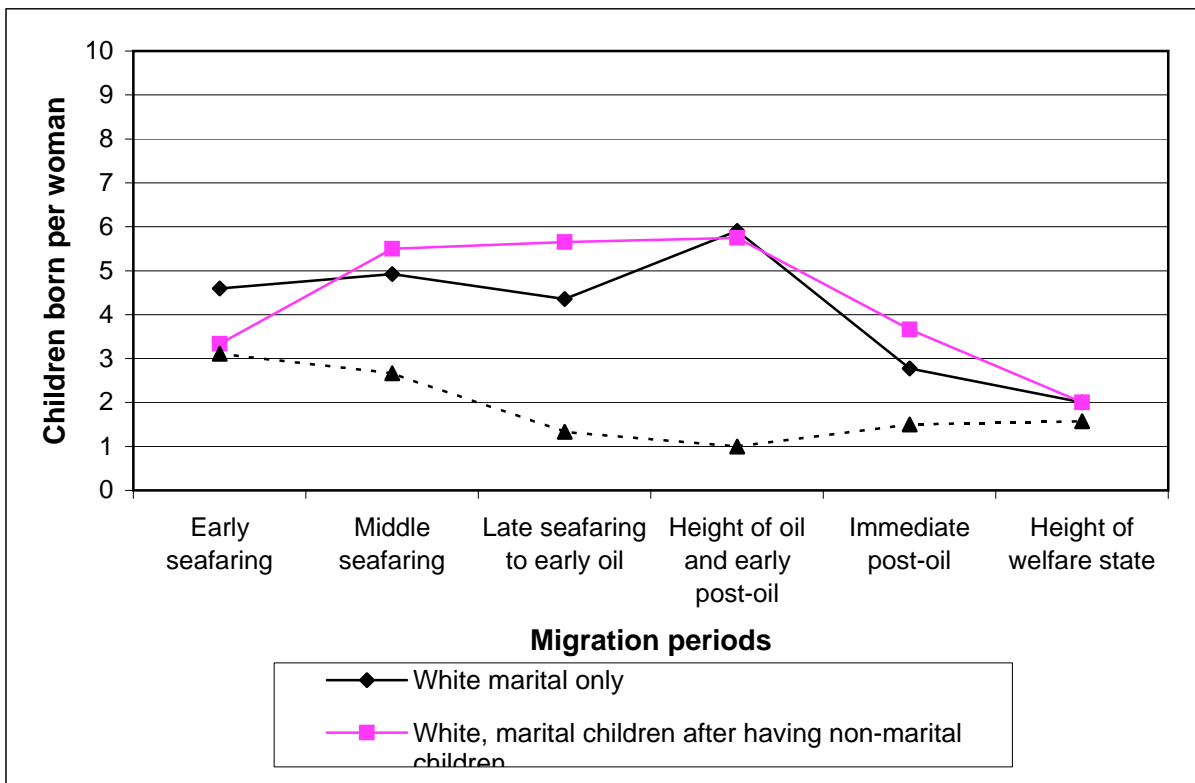
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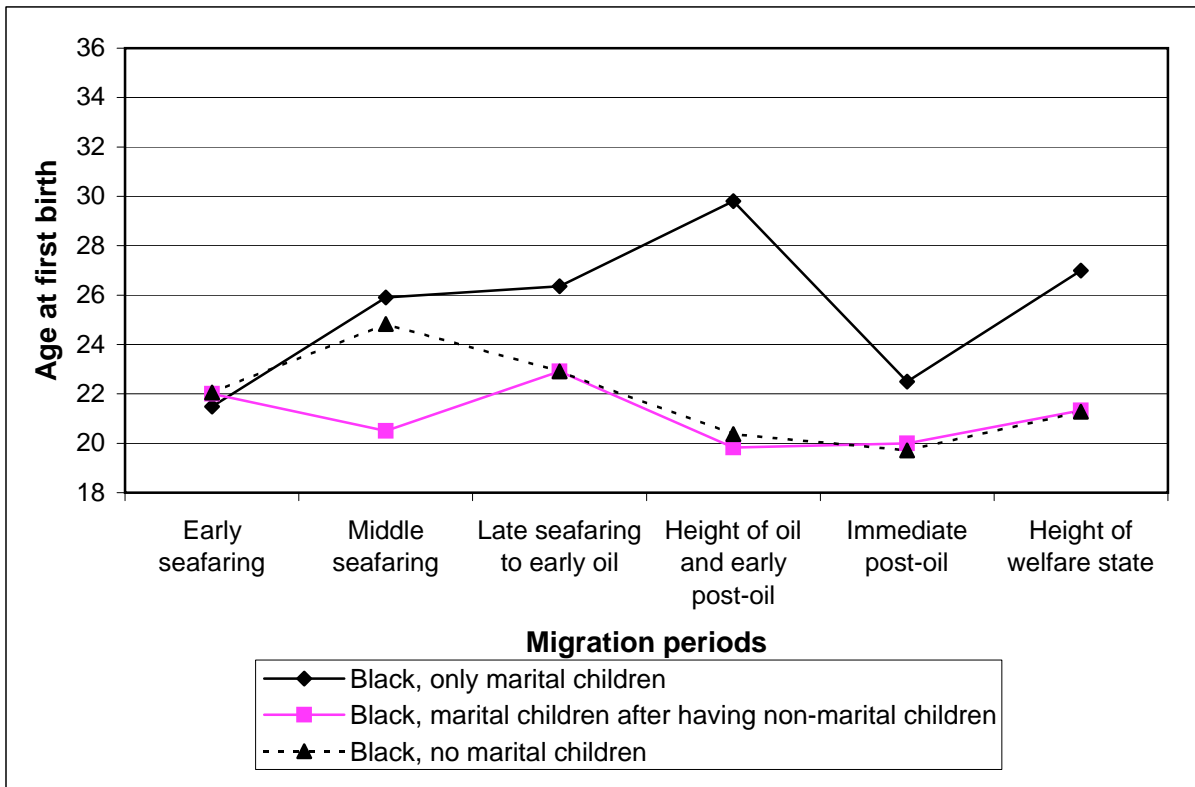
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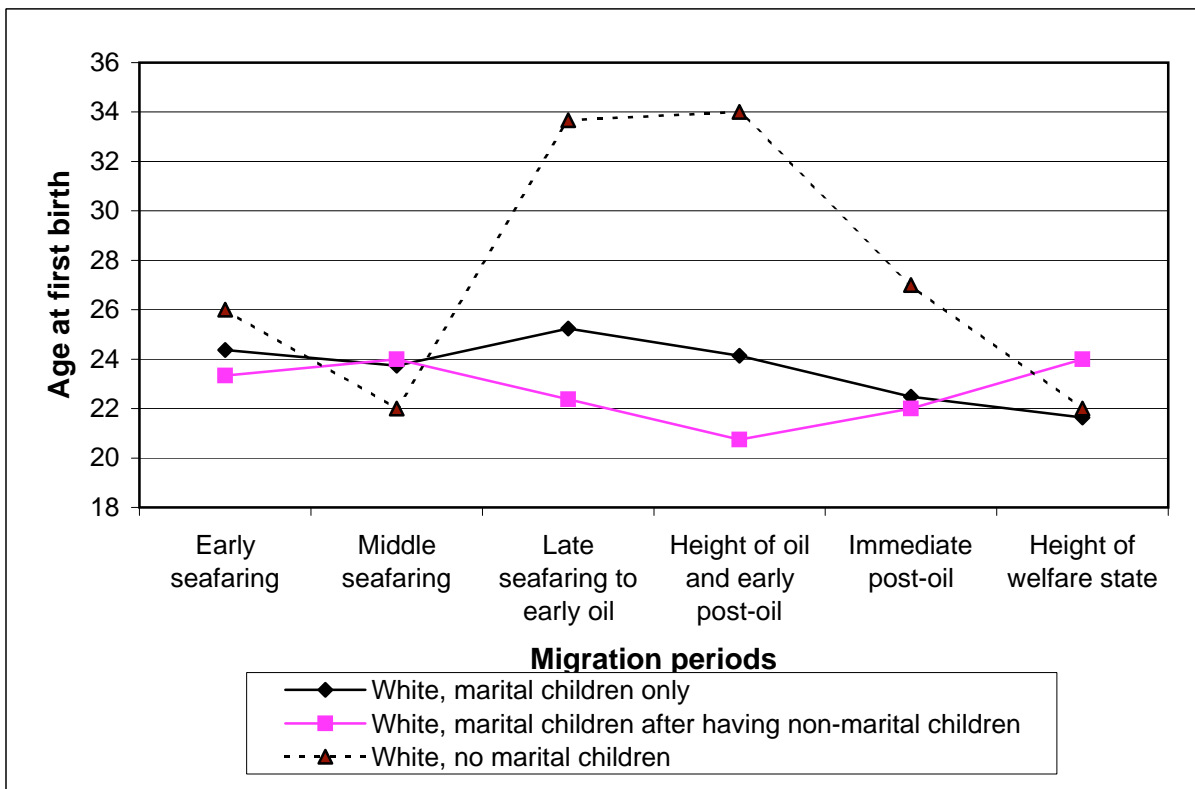
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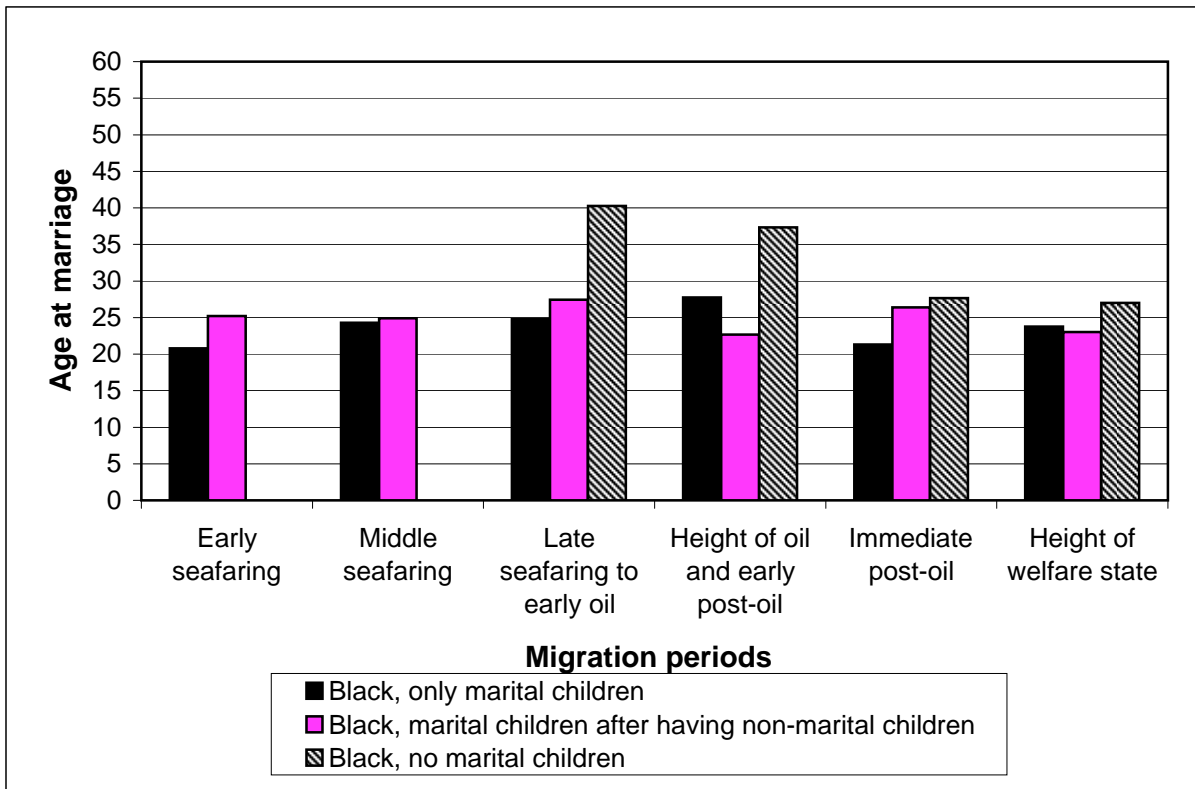
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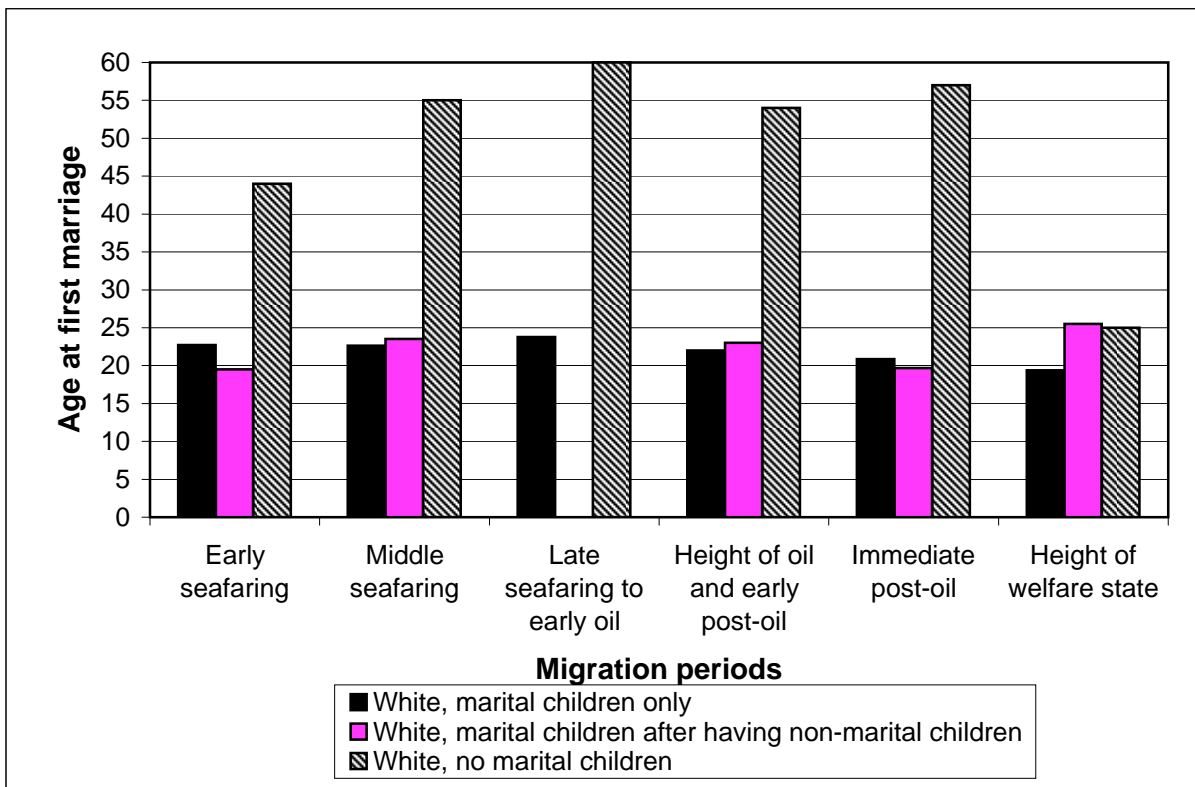
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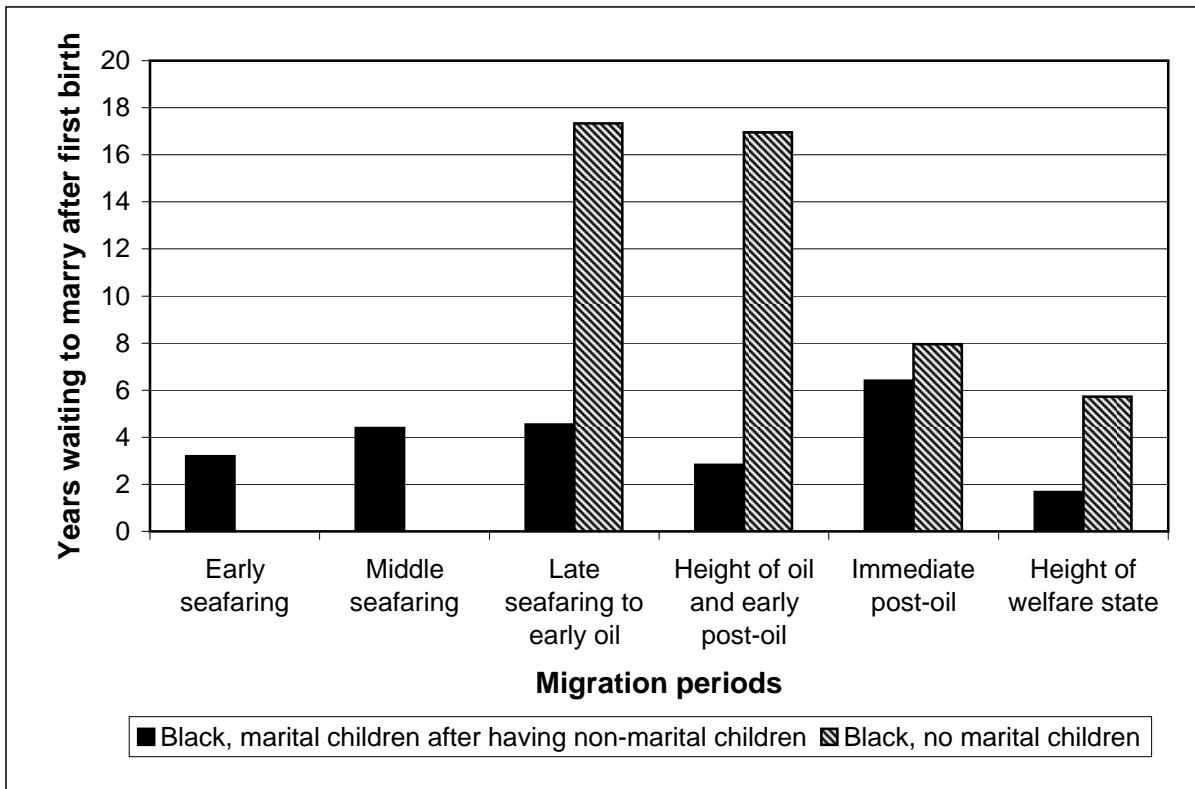
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CHAPTER 8

WORKING WOMEN, RACIALIZED REALITIES, AND FOREIGN FACES: FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE IN A DIVERSIFYING DOMESTIC ECONOMY

The racially bifurcated process of family formation that defined the prior two historical periods continues to manifest itself in modern Saban families but disruptions in the primacy of marriage as a foundation of family life slowly spread to all sectors of Saban society and eventually gave rise to a diversity of family forms in both the black and white communities on-island. This diverse array of Saban families arose through the intersection of economic changes associated with the push towards on-island modernization and the increasingly tense and racially charged dialectic between traditional Saban family building practices and the challenges posed by a growing awareness of alternative lifestyles generated through various points of contact within the Saban Diaspora. The economic shifts on Saba continued trends seen in the previous period and are characterized by economic modernization supported through government subsidies, slow but sustained growth of the private sector, increasing levels of female labor force participation on-island, declining low-skill labor migration coupled with continuing educational and high-skill labor migration, and the transformation of Saba from a sending to a receiving country in the modern global economy. Saban families formed in this economic environment are faced with challenges, both new and old, and take shape in a social climate characterized by a general decline in the importance of marriage as the center of family life, a subsequent increase in the rate of marital dissolution through divorce, a rise in childbearing and non-childbearing cohabitation, a growth in the proportion of women having children outside of marriage, and a strong trend towards interracial and interethnic unions and childbearing.

Although diversification is the hallmark of modern Saban families, trends towards modern family formation practices emerge as a complex interplay between entrenched family building practices that evolved in the past and challenges to those cultural norms posed by the off-island experiences of Sabans themselves, the influx of foreign cultural elements through the growth of ex-pat communities on-island, and the barrage of non-local media that crafts images of desirable consumer-oriented lives in far-away places. In this merging of past and present, Saban voices both for and against changes in family life draw on historical experience and modern realities to continually renegotiate the boundaries of and relationships among Saban cultural traditions and the desire to become "modern", the local and the foreign, Black and White, men and women, and the old and the young both within their own families and across society at large. Since family life and the conditions that surround and support Saban families are key sites of cultural contestation, understanding the nature of these conflicts helps us understand how Sabans experience the dynamics of race, gender and power in their transforming society and how they negotiate the constraints and opportunities of living in a modern Saban Diaspora that still resonates with the historical experiences of those who came before.

The next two chapters will present a detailed understanding of these interactions developed through sociodemographic analysis of modern labor patterns and family forms, ethnographic analysis of family-centered interviews conducted with a range of Saban women during the summer of 2004, and the connections that these quantitative and qualitative trends have with labor and family patterns developed in prior historical periods. Due to concerns about protecting the confidentiality of project participants, it was impossible to continue identifying the village of residence of specific speakers and, thus, impossible to maintain the detailed village-level qualitative and quantitative analyses presented for the previous periods. However, certain aspects of current village and island life can only be understood with reference to these village-level histories and, as such, the knowledge gleaned from these histories will be used frequently and liberally to explore current sociodemographic trends and the attitudes and beliefs that surround them even though individual voices cannot not be

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geographically located. The analyses and discussion presented in this chapter will tackle the current

economic environment on Saba and its relationship to the past and will focus in on the changing

nature of Saban migration, the racialized and gendered discourses that surround on-island labor

practices, and the transformation of Saba into a receiving country for low-skill labor migrants from

impoverished areas throughout Caribbean, high-skill American and European investors in the

ecotourism market, and Medical School students. The following chapter will zero in on how these

economic shifts and continuities relate to the diversity of family formation processes now in play on-

island and how Sabans themselves view family-related issues in their own lives and in the lives of

others. In combination, this integrated history of work and family will give us a strong sense of what

it means to live in a society struggling to maintain its own historical identity and uniqueness while

simultaneously incorporating all of the personal and communal burdens and opportunities of

modernity into the rhythms of Saban life.

Land of want or land of plenty?: Shifting economic opportunities for Sabans at home and abroad

In the historical period just prior to the modern age, Saban economic life was dominated by a

pattern of high-skill labor and educational migration amongst the young, increasing sedentism and

dependency among those of lesser means, and burgeoning hopes of developing a foreign-owned

tourist industry to provide private sector work for Sabans who might otherwise remain unemployed.

These basic characteristics are still manifest in the current socioeconomic climate of Saba although

budgetary concerns have recently prompted the government to make noise about increasing private

industry employment and reducing the amount of capital spent on maintaining the civil service.   In

talking to Saban women about migration and economic opportunity in this socioeconomic climate,

three prominent themes emerged. The first relates to the role of gender in shaping experiences of

movement and work, the second involves the ways that working life and off-island migration are

structured by race, and the third is the impact that in-migration has had on the local economy and in

village life more generally. The general shape of these discussions will be presented below and then

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each of the three themes will be analyzed in detail through exploring the relevant demographic trends and through paying close attention to the narratives shared by women during the course of their interviews.

At the close of the oil refinery period and in the early days of big government, women's work was still by and large confined to the home and an ethic of female domesticity and sexual purity circumscribed the kinds of work deemed acceptable in the whole of the white community and in parts of the black community. Overall, though, black women were engaged in diverse on- and off-island economic pursuits that allowed them to move in their communities in a less restricted way. However, much of this freedom stemmed from a lack of male involvement in family life that made for hard economic times in black female-headed households. This merging of powerlessness in the face of male absenteeism and learned self-reliance as a consequence of single motherhood allowed a segment of the black female community to develop an "I can do it on my own" mentality that was less apparent in their white peers. Even when white men failed to live up to their socially defined roles of economic provider their physical and psychological presence as husbands both in the home and when they were away continued to exert pressure on white women to conform to their traditional roles of wife and mother even if their economic contributions exceeded that of their partners. Conformation to and contestation of these historical gender dynamics continue to play out in the movement of white and black women into the on-island workforce and their decisions to migrate as students and workers in an increasingly high-tech qualifications-based off-island economy.

While the movement of women from intradomestic work into extra-domestic occupations is a main theme of the modern Saban economy, racially segmented differences in migration and patterns of economic dependency also continue to structure Saban experiences of movement and work in modern island life. Dependency in the black community remains more pronounced due to race-based difference in economic status and this dichotomy is apparent in both the migration patterns and employment histories of men and women in these communities. As in the past, government employment continues to function as a social safety net for black and white Sabans who stay on-

island and continues to be characterized by low-pay, low-skill work. However, there are gender differences in the types of government work available to locals with men gravitating towards their traditional roles as laborers on The Road or in other construction-related projects and women entering higher profile professional office jobs that tend to require longer hours, more education, and garner equal or lesser pay than their male peers. While many white men and women are involved in government projects, the wealthier white and black families are engaged in a range of private sector work that includes building and managing rental properties for Medical School students and tourists and running and/or working in restaurants, nightclubs, grocery shops, hardware stores, and other small-scale clothing and souvenir shops that cater to growing demands for entertainment and consumer goods on-island. Since people in the white community tend to have a little more capital than their black peers, they are more visible in the private sector while, for instance, the Government Building is primarily occupied by black women and The Road crews by black men.

This capital-based divide is also present in the migration decisions of black and white Sabans with whites continuing to view the United States as their favored destination and blacks looking more and more towards Holland or nearby islands as places to build a new life. Intergenerational wealth and a history of family migration to and connection with the United States results in wealthier white families sending their children to study in the United States or in family emigration to the United States based either on policies of family reunification or on the fact that some white families can afford and get permission to set up their own businesses in Florida or elsewhere. Black families, on the other hand, have much weaker familial ties to the United States because few black Sabans emigrated there in the past and tend to lack the economic resources either to send their children to school there or to amass enough capital to propose starting a new business venture on American shores. Because Sabans retain the rights of Dutch citizens, many from the black community choose Holland as their destination and tend to move there to further their education, to work, or, in many cases, to draw welfare from government coffers. Given recent trends towards dismantling European welfare states, many of these welfare migrants have found themselves returning home with no

savings, no education, no job experience, and no real way to support themselves on-island. This continuing trend of dependency either in Holland or on Saba is more widespread in the black community and came up repeatedly as a concern of both black and white Sabans interviewed during this study. With all of the housing, childcare, and educational benefits offered in Holland, many Sabans openly wondered why people seemed to migrate to the motherland with no intention of trying to enhance their skill set or improve their work history. This trend signals a mentality of dependence in certain segments of the black and, to a lesser extent, the white communities and is rooted in the rise of the on-island welfare state and a general decline in work ethic identified as problematic by a range of Saban men and women. The reality, however, is quite complex and the will to work is often stymied by a real lack of opportunity that is based both in the structural impacts of race and gender-based discrimination in educational attainment and hiring practices and with the subsequent entrenchment of cultural norms that send the message that studying and working hard will not generate socioeconomic rewards commensurate to the effort expended. These tensions continue to shape and, in some cases, constrain the futures that Saban men and women visualize for themselves and are a constant source of discussion in Saban households.

It is important to be very clear that use of the term "mentality of dependence" in this text refers only to socioeconomic developments in the post-oil period and seeks to describe issues of economic dependency on government work and subsidy and the various orientations towards work that these relationships produced in Saban society as a whole. It is necessary to mark a clear separation between the use of the term "mentality" in this analysis and the historical use of similar terms that often served as code for describing an ill-defined "dependent mentality" among black people that various scholars have posited, either directly or indirectly, as one outcome of the conditions of slavery. Discourse that follows this historical use of "dependent mentality" can be very damaging as it commonly under-girds cynical attempts to blame African-descended people for their on-going socioeconomic marginalization in the present based on anemic appeals to historically-rooted socioeconomically debilitating "slave mentalities" that developed in the past continue to bar black

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people from achieving socioeconomic success. Ultimately, this train of thought absolves those in power from any responsibility to come to terms with the realities of current socioeconomic conditions that stem from on-going histories of racial discrimination or to alleviate suffering because, after all, the "slave mentalities" of marginalized black people are the real problem and the source of their own marginalization. In breaking from the troubled uses of the terms "dependent" and "mentality" in past literatures, no claims are made or even implied that some pervasive "slave mentality" is creating a system of dependence that exists only in the black Saban population or that all black people on Saba feel, think, and act the same when it comes to these aspects of Saban life. On Saba, mentalities of dependence described in this text arose in the post-oil period alongside the development of the Welfare State, are sprinkled throughout the black and white communities, are complex in nature as they bend together real and often dire economic situations with the deeply held historically-constructed belief that "the government should be doing more to help us" even when personal action might be more effective, and generate a lot of positive and negative discussion in the island population as a whole. Dependency relationships are not discussed with reference to the experience of slavery in the black population and are, instead, discussed as the outcome of declining migration opportunities for all Sabans beginning in the late 1950s, the infiltration of European Welfare-State ideologies and increased colonial funding into the local political culture, the subsequent practice of looking towards the government to ease this abrupt transition for Sabans who chose or were forced to remain on-island, and the transformation of those stop-gap measures in the immediate post-oil period into the long-term dependent relationships that currently exist between many islanders, black and white, and the Island Government.

Although largely existing outside the stream of popular discourse about dependency relationships that will be presented here, it is also important to note that there are deep and continuing links between government and the business community on Saba and that much of the economic success of wealthier white and black Sabans can be directly and indirectly linked to government support and facilitation of various types. Whether these relationships positioned different Sabans to

reap the economic benefits of well-paid government jobs, allowed them to accrue enough wealth to

enter the private sector through their work in the public sector, or facilitated the establishment and

growth of local private-sector industries through granting permits and/or allowing unrestrained

pricing and selling of consumer goods, many of the wealthiest Sabans have also made their living

with the helping hand of the government and their success cannot be accurately interpreted or

evaluated outside of this contextual frame.   Dependency, then, takes many forms in Saban society as

it continues to allow well-connected Sabans to advance economically and to project images of

"making it" independently while other forms of government dependency provide daily assistance

with the basics of life, either through direct aid or provision of low-skill low-pay jobs, but do not

create and environment where poorer Sabans can advance from this socioeconomic status.

The third overarching theme in the study of modern Saban economic life is that of in-

migration and all of the socioeconomic issues that are associated with the presence of a diversity of

non-local populations in each of the four Saban villages. The largest ex-pat communities include

people who emigrated from the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Haiti, the United States, Holland, St.

Vincent and the nearby islands of St. Maarten, Nevis, Dominica, and St. Kitts. The distribution of

these communities is not evenly spread across the island and each village has a distinct set of foreign

influences that intermingle with the cultural norms of Saban society. The reasons for in-migration

and the mentality of in-migrants is also different depending on who they are and where they are from

and this, too, influences the ways that Sabans see these strangers in the midst and the ways that they

relate to them in daily life. In Hells Gate, the most significant foreign-born population consist of a

substantial population of Colombian women who tend to come in to Saba, marry Saban men, and then

bring over other members of their families from back home. People from the U.S. also comprise a

large percentage of the non-local population and tend to be transient Medical School students,

retirees, or people involved with the ecotourism industry in some way. While Caribbean people are

very prominent in the ex-pat community of Hells Gate, their geographical origins are spread

throughout the region and, unlike in other villages, there are no dominant concentrations of people

who all hail from the same home island. Since Windwardside functions as the hub of the ecotourism industry, the American presence is quite strong and the rest of the foreign-born community hails from places scattered throughout the Caribbean. St. Johns and The Bottom both have high concentrations of in-migrants from the Dominican Republic and The Bottom also has a significant American presence based on the location of a Medical School dormitory on the outskirts of the village. Much like the population of Colombians in Hells Gate, women dominate the migrant community from the Dominican Republic and many of the Dominican women marry and/or have children with the local population of Saban men. The racial divide in the distribution of foreigners is apparent with most white people clustering in Hells Gate and Windwardside and most black people making their homes in St. Johns and The Bottom. Although most Sabans appreciate the diversity that these populations bring to their villages, many express serious concerns about job competition because many feel that foreigners are willing to work harder for less and that this combination of factors consistently undercuts the attractiveness of local labor. The presence of female-dominated communities of Colombian women and Dominicanas also provides its own set of challenges because they are often in direct competition with local women who are looking for or trying to hold on to male partners. Lastly, although Sabans still comprise a majority of the total island population, the rapid increase in the proportion of foreign-born people living on Saba over the past forty years is beginning to give many Sabans the uneasy feeling of becoming strangers on their own island.

Gendered experiences of education, movement, and work in Saban society

Like any other society, Saba is made up of overlapping groups of people who define various degrees of self and other based on a range of social attributes. When considering the influence that these traits have on the individual lives of Sabans and the ways that they structure the relationships among islanders gender is always a key social experience that manifests itself in different ways at different times. In the context of Saban culture, gender issues intersect with issues of education which, in turn, structure Saban experiences of migration and work. Although not universally pursued,

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education is held in high esteem by the majority of Sabans and is seen as a turnkey for opening

employment possibilities both on and off-island. In the past men had the advantage in pursuing

higher education because families were more likely to view them as potential breadwinners and were

less likely to be concerned with issues of male propriety when young boys and men were living away

from home. However, this general pattern has dissolved to a large extent as women are asserting their

desire to secure advanced degrees or certification that will then allow them to compete successfully

for on- and off-island jobs. To better understand this transformation, it is necessary to track the ways

that the modern Saban economy functions, how education has stratified Saban experience in island

culture and in the workforce, and then to understand how gender comes to play a large role in both

motivating Sabans to pursue education and then reaping the benefits that that education offers.

The general economic climate on Saba is improved in comparison to the past and the

burgeoning ecotourism industry and the Medical School have made substanital strides in the

availability of private sector jobs on-island. In fact, in recent study the Medical School alone

accounted for approximately 30% of the total island economy through direct employment or through

service-related opportunties designed to cater to the in-flux of medical students (Nielsen, 2003; Saba

Government Information Services, 2005). However, the government is still a major supplier of jobs

for Saban and non-Saban alike despite their desire to limit public expenditures. Employment in

different economic sectors has shifted over time and shows major differences in proportions

employed in each sector based on race and gender (Figures 8.1-8.4). From 1977-1997 white men

experienced an initial decline in dependence on government work to a low of 15% but this figure

elevated to around 30% during a period of relatively high unemployment in the middle to late 1990s.

Almost half of white men were engaged in private sector economic activities and a handful were still

active in agriculture. Black men show a trend towards increased dependence on government work

that reached a high of around 70% in the late 1980s and then declined to around 60% by the following

period. Private sector employment for black men declined to less than 30% which contrasts with the

50% rate of white male participation in the private sector economy. White women initially moved

into the workforce through government jobs but later began to diversify their employment base which meant that about half of all employed white women worked in the private sector and half in the public sector. For most of the post-oil period, black women, like black men, show a pattern of dependence on the government for employment and, like white women, black women's entry into the professionalized workforce tended to be initiated through government employment. Black women diversified their labor base in the mid-1980s with about half of all working women securing employment in the private sector and half in the public sector. In the 1990s, however, reliance on government jobs again increased and 50% of black women worked at governmwent jobs while 20% were employed in the private sector. Unemployment figures show mild fluctuations in the jobless rates for men but show a slow but steady decline in the total proportion of unemployed women in both the black and white communities (Figures 8.5, 8.6). The movement of black women into the workforce is the most dramatic and, comparatively, around 70% of black women reported participation in work outside the home in the early to mid-1990s while under half of white women were employed over the same period of time. Although no statistics were available for the period after 1997, it is likely that private sector employment has accelerated, particularly in the wealthier segments of the white community, and that women's movement into the workforce, both black and white has similarly increased.

Although this brief history of employment on Saba gives us some idea of the nature of work on the island it cannot give us a clear picture about the kinds of work that men and women were doing in the private sector. The most common private sector jobs listed for white men included the generic title of "businessman" , driver, and a range of skilled construction jobs like bricklayer, carpenter, and electrician. Jobs that clearly fell in the public sector included the generic title of "civil servant" and "government laborer". Several black men also listed themselves as businessmen and drivers and public sector work was concentrated in the realms of public servant and government laborer. For white women, private sector jobs included a handful of businesswomen, some office work as bank clerks and managers and several women who worked in various service industries as

waitresses and the like. Public sector employment was largely confined to the jobs of civil servant and teacher. For black women, a few listed themselves as "businesswoman" and the handful of other black women working in the private sector were scattered across a range of service jobs that included waitressing and housecleaning. Like white women, public sector employment centered on jobs in the civil service and in teaching but also included a substantial number of nurses and nurse assistants who worked at the government hospital. Economic life on Saba has diversified somewhat from the snapshots of employment across this 20 year period but, for many, work has not changed significantly and still involves civil servant work for men and women, service industry work for women employed in the private sector, business ventures set up by white men and, to a lesser extent, women and black men, and heavy labor in the contruction industry and on The Road for black and white men.

Although most Sabans insist that there is very little in the way of class difference on-island, there are significant variations in wealth that open or circumscribe opportunity depending on where one falls on the spectrum and the ways that people view the job market on Saba also have a lot to do with economic aspirations and the ability of certain career paths to help materialize these needs and wants. One black woman from a poorer family clearly laid out the tensions between asserting economic sameness as a show of individual dignity and cultural solidarity and recognizing blatant differences in the purchasing power among Sabans themselves. Her juxtaposed narratives read as follows:

> Everybody on Saba live on the same level because I can't say that I'm richer than you because if you say that you're richer than me then maybe it's because maybe you built the house different or you do this different. Everybody on Saba do that. Everybody build their house the same and everybody has cars, make a salary. Everybody eating and drinking and there's no poverty so there's nothing to say that anybody is higher than anybody else. The standard of living is just the same thing. You live in a house, I live in a house. It's just the same thing because the government build houses for low income, people who make a low income, that's just as good as the house like you're living in. So, it doesn't make a difference to say, yeah, you're rich, I'm poor. Everybody lives on the same standard. Because if somebody want a car they can go to the bank and get a car. So it doesn't make no difference really between the white and the black I find on Saba. Everybody is the same.

and:

My mother might not have much money to carry me to where you want to go, because we have people here going on vacations to Florida, to America, to Miami, to Puerto Rico. You're all sitting back I wish to go I wish to go, but so that's why don't count your eggs before they're hatched, don't hang you hat higher than you can reach it because don't see everybody with something and you want it too. How they got it, you don't know. You just have to ask one question. How you got that? But when you really see and hear how they got it then you say to yourself, hmmm. And you should sit back and think I got to save or something. You see people go on vacation because they have money or they have businesses but if you ask people how they save or how they done this differently or how they do that different, maybe you can try something. But just don't say like I'm going to try what Amy tried, even if it costs me my last cent or it cost me this or it cost me that. Because, in turn, mind, when you come back you got the bank to pay. You got this to pay, you got that to pay. You know, you could do things like save. Let's all save together, let's put a savings account. You know everybody don't try to do that. They just want to go yeah, I got the money from the bank. Let me go here and let me go there. And when they go, bam, they come bank and they got bills to pay. Sometimes you might think when you hear a rich person's family say yeah, they're going here or they're going there, that's what they do. They save which is what we should do, but we, in turn, go straight to the bank, easier access to money while they're saving they don't have nowhere to pay, no bank to pay.

The poor on Saba live much more comfortably than the poor almost anywhere else in the Caribbean, or in the world, but the realization that others have more and can do more is always a bitter pill to swallow even if those of means don't actively flaunt what they have. The mere presence of this split between haves and have nots creates social anxiety and compels some Sabans to over reach their economic bounds. Increasing desire for travel and for purchasing a range of consumer goods from cars to gaming systems has given many Sabans a sense of relative deprivation and the feeling that they are being denied access to the accoutrements of modernity. This feeling exists not only among people relegated to low paying jobs that afford little or no opportunity to secure these luxuries or among Sabans who find themselves trapped by loan-debts accumulated in their quests to live out certain consumer fantasies but also surfaces in the disappointments that return migrants face when their education does not bring anticipated on-island economic rewards that would foster entry into the elite world of worry-free Capitalist consumption.

After the decline of oil industry migration, Saba was left with a population with very little in the way of education and very limited migration possibilities in an economy that increasingly demanded skilled laborers with higher level degrees. To relieve pressure on the small and government-centered economic based of the island, the government began to fund student aged

sabans to leave the island to finish their secondary educations and, for some, to pursue university level degrees. The hope was to elevate the educational status of a portion of Sabans who could then successfully compete for off-island jobs and, to a lesser extent, who could come home and fulfill the requirements of higher-level government jobs on-island. Although secondary education is now available on-island, this basic pattern is still in force today. A substantial minority of young adults leaves the island in the hope of securing a more financially stable future for themselves while the rest of the population stays behind and either enters low-pay government work or low-pay work in the private sector. Education, then, becomes a dividing line between the haves and have nots and not only propels students to leave the island but also tends to keep them away because there are no jobs available that meet their skill set or salary desires. One black woman succinctly summed up the situation as follows by relaying the discussions that she has had with her own children:

> I say, look, you can reach up until here on Saba but then you have to leave to further your studies, to further your education, to become something in life because without education you can't reach anywhere, even on little Saba. Because first, on Saba, first if you didn't have a diploma or a certificate, you could still get a job and you would learn whatever it takes, whatever it took, you would learn to become part of whatever you were in. But now everything has changed. Maybe there are some people who still get jobs, but if you don't have a certificate with credentials it's not as easy as it was ten years ago.

Another white woman elaborated on the situation by defining the limitations faced by people who have not accessed advanced education either on-island or through educational migration but made sure to be clear that she valued the contributions made by all kinds of Sabans:

> I have actually found from my own personal experience that it's the parents with the drive and have the education, maybe not high education but some form of education, will quicker encourage their children to leave. The children from parents who maybe just went to the sixth grade or they had the seventh grade in those days or maybe not even completed high school, normally those kids in my personal opinion have been encouraged and motivated by other people than their parents. Like by the school, or maybe they see a cousin who's succeeded and they see these cousins come back and they say hey, you know, it's not just the studying, we do this and all of a sudden the students here realize how limited they are so it's kind of like self motivation and building their self confidence. But a lot of parents will look at parents whose children went away and even if they didn't have an education they see the difference. They think, like, why am I just keeping my sons here to work in construction? Although that's a good job too, of course, but there's no growth for that. If you're shoveling cement now and you're not going to improve yourself on the island by a course or whatever, you're still going to be shoveling cement because what else are you going to be doing? Of course, then, there are students who academically cannot make it and, like I said, you need people for everything in life.

It's a good thing that you have those kinds of people. It's not people that I look down upon, not at all, because if people are good in their own field, if I cannot make it academically, but I have other qualities, I am a very practical person and so you'll be off studying but I'll be back home taking care of all the practical stuff. Taking care of people's gardens or building homes or picking up the garbage, and cleaning people's homes. Because we need people like that too. Can you imagine if everyone who came out of Saba's high school left and went to the States eventually we would have all foreigners picking up the slack on the island and doing jobs…Of course, those who stay behind are also very valuable for the island. And I don't think people should look at them and say since you didn't go away you're worthless, not at all. Because they have their own values and because they are good at whatever they do. Sometimes the emphasis is put on those who study but you shouldn't neglect those who stay behind, they are very valuable people. I mean, look at our parents. They never went anywhere to school and my father and my mother I think that they're the best people in the world, you know, I think they worked very hard.

For her, an emphasis on education is a self-sustaining intergenerational process whereby the educated insist on the education of their own children. However, she points out that students who return also provide valuable examples and role models to other children and parents who then begin to think about education in a different light. She rightly points out that not all people have academic aptitudes and that hands-on work like building houses and sweeping The Road contributes significantly to Saban society. The fact that these contributions tend to get lost in the discourse about higher education is worrisome and the needs and desires of those who contribute to society in other ways are, unfortunately, often marginalized in this process. Although no statistics were kept on the number of students who were studying abroad, their whereabouts or degree courses, a quick look at the number of student aged Sabans living off-island indicates that just under 30% of the white population and around 40% of the black population born on-island and falling between the ages of 18 and 22 were not in residence in 2004 (Figure 8.7). Some of these migrants may have left with parents at earlier ages or may have left the island for reasons not related to education but even if these numbers were halved, there is still a significant minority of Sabans leaving the island to further their studies. However, over 70% of white Sabans and about 60% of black Sabans are remaining on-island and form a distinct class of Sabans who have no real opportuntity to secure high-level jobs either on or off-island and who often find themselves in economic competition with foreign workers.

In describing the economic structure of the island, many women identfied tensions that arose

when educational attainment became more and more incongruous with the needs of the island and when the civil service continued to be used as a social safety net for Sabans who stayed behind. Since private sector work is still marginal in the minds of many Sabans, the women interviewed for this study tended to focus in on the process of securing government work, the limitations of working in the civil service, and the need for developing a more robust private sector that might provide a wider range of job opportunities to an increasingly dissatisfied population of Saban youth. When asked about the problems of employment on-island, a young black woman shared her perspective on the situation:

> The hardest part about some of my friends that came from Holland is that: JOBS. That's the hardest part because the government now is not picking up too many people, let's say, too many people, say, hire this and hire that because sometimes they talk about the budget is very low and that's the hardest problem: jobs. And when you go privatize, the work in privatize, that's only like for part time, you know. That's not for way like, when you're with the government, you're inside there. You're covered. Your pension is secure. That's secure. You put in your years and you're secure.

Government work, although low on the salary scale, represents security to the poorer sections of the population and is seen as a way to ensure pension support in old age. In the current economic climate, government officials are trying to move people out of the public sector and into the private sector but this narrative reveals the reasons that underlie people's resistance to this shift. In a very real way, moving into low-pay work in the private sector is a kind of secondary impoverishment that carries no benefits and no means of establishing long-term support. On the other side of the spectrum, migrants who return with upper level degrees or certifications find themselves in a similar bind because the government has already overextended itself by employing those without degrees and cannot bear the extra expense of hiring graduates at their desired level of pay, or, in most cases, at all. A middle aged black woman describes the situation like this:

> Even if there are job opportunities they might be with the government and actually the government on the island is, I think, basically the lowest pay while the private sector would pay high but there aren't many private sector opportunities on the island anyway. I feel that the foreign investors, maybe the government should encourage foreign investors to make an investment on the island where it would give also the locals more opportunities. By foreign investors then investing on the island it will give job opportunities. There will be job opportunities for Sabans and also the government should put a clause where they allow foreign investors to establish themselves on the island

where locals can receive opportunities, their first job opportunities, before the foreign investors come in with their own workers. Saba in general should realize that because of the television that the children of today are being exposed to a different culture, a different world. By exposing them to these different cultures and different worlds via the television they are being made aware of other kinds of job opportunities instead of just seeing farmers and so on. So the children are also being introduced to different education, different schooling. The government should look into these different areas and see what can be done to really have different investors to diversify the jobs people can get.

Pleas for bulking up the private sector in ways beneficial to Sabans themselves harkens back to the chorus of voices calling for similar transformations during Julia Crane's time on-island in the early 1960s. One serious problem that foreign businesses face is that many Saban citizens do not possess the skill sets that private sector jobs require. However, this may be changing given the growing number of educated Sabans who are returning to the island. A clear articulation of need on the part of private sector employers could be used to guide young Sabans into new career paths that emerge on-island. Sadly, this level of cooperation has not yet been attained and the woman from above described the current situation as follows:

> So, actually, I think a lot of the students, because if you look at it today, our students who return home, black descendants, that have qualifications and can't get jobs up to now. While students who are here on the island working with high school diplomas are getting government jobs. I feel that the reason why a lot of those who remain on the island and got a high school diploma remain here have got jobs because of the level of education they have, they are not obligated to be paid that high while the one who goes away and receives his qualification, receives the degree, they expect to be paid a certain salary. They fall in a certain bracket. So, if I as a government can pay an uneducated person 1200 guilders a month, and can get the job done, maybe at a slower rate, why do I have to sacrifice and pay an educated person with all the degree in the world maybe three thousand guilders to do the work maybe at a faster rate, it's just I have to pay the price, while the uneducated person can do it but at a slower rate? So, as a government, you will find that they hire three people to do the one job because of the economic and also because of the situation on the island where jobs are very limited. So I can pay three people three thousand guilders, a thousand guilders each, to do the job that one person was going to do. I will, as a government, you will give everybody the opportunity to have a job. Because as a government you realize that, listen, the person has an education. They are single. They are free. They can always leave and go find a job somewhere else with their background, with their education and skills. While for the ones here, you feel more obligated to the ones here that have nothing.

The cycle of government support through civil service work and the limitations that the educated face on-island were constant themes in discussions with Saban women from all sectors of society. This two-tracked process of government aid creates a system that many identified as "brain drain" because

the most educated members of society rarely viewed Saba as a place to make a life and, more often

than not, if they could live and work elsewhere, they seized the opportunity to do so. This is a

difficult situation both for those educated Sabans who did want to stay on-island and for society at

large who pays to invest in the education of their youth but gets very little in tangible return for their

investment of government resources. The functioning of the civil service certainly suffers from

inefficiency as a result of these decisions but these inefficiencies are weighed in relation to the

governments obligations to the large segment of the population who simply don't have the skills to

compete successfully for jobs off-island. This bind, however, is also related to the ways that the

educated come to view themselves, their economic worth, and the role of government in developing a

career track for educated Sabans. Living off-island opens students up to lifestyles that require a high

level of economic support and some Sabans have come to the conclusion that educated people are just

not willing to make the economic sacrifices it would take to make their way on-island. As one white

woman put it:

> I hear other parents complaining that their children can't be paid what they're
> worth if they come back to live and I think why should that be an issue? As long as you
> can make a living, you can find enough things to do to get through. If you want to live
> here, you'll come back. And it shouldn't be that the government paid for your education,
> sent you away and then turned you into this elite snob who can't come back here to live
> because they can't afford to employ you. I think that that's just a ridiculous situation.

In her opinion, educated Sabans could make the choice to stay home but simply choose not to return

because they want cold hard cash to reward their academic success. This critique of money-driven

migration decisions came to the surface in many interviews and, in general, obsession with money is

seen to be a real social problem on-island. Not only does it compel the most capable Sabans to leave

home, but it is also seen as a primary reason why children suffer emotional neglect from mothers and

fathers who are working all the time. The sense that there is more to life than money and that a new

pair of Nikes won't substitute for a family day at the beach is a strong countervailing theme that

resists the hyper-materialism that characterizes modern life on Saba. Rightly or wrongly, the message

to educational migrants is: you could stay if you wanted to, you just think too much of yourself to

make that sacrifice.

Despite ambiguities embedded in obtaining upper-level degrees, the value of education cropped up in almost all conversations with Saban women and these narratives about education were often intertwined with discussions about Saban experiences of womanhood, motherhood, and work. Education was linked with empowerment for women as shown by one black woman's take on why women have been making the decision to leave Saba to further their studies:

> I think over the years that the women have been leaving more but it's because they choose so. While the men, depends on their upbringing, they will have at a certain point in time, just build a house and decide to settle down and marry someone and just remain on the island and just hands-on skills, do whatever they feel is convenient, you know, drive trucks, mechanic, do something that they have over the years grown to love or learned to do. While women, women have the tendency now that they wants to explore and learn other places and know what the world is all about. I think women are becoming more independent. They don't want to rely on a man as much as before and at a certain point in time, basically I think too, that its because of the way the culture is going. It's because, like, people on the island are not marrying us as early as they used to before. I don't know if years ago that premarital arrangements were maybe something that we don't know about, but maybe they did exist on the island but you do find people getting married at young ages and all that. While you don't find that so much anymore. And I think we as parents, we as women, we are not educating our children to be married. I personally am not educating my children, I am not educating my children like that. I am educating my children, you know, that you need to get an education and you need to work and be able to know that if something happens you know how and its you and you alone while years ago women have this tendency that they were so dependent on men. While now I think that a lot of women are teaching our children to be dependent on themselves.

And another black woman continues these thoughts as follows:

> Women is more interested in education, does better on the school than the men. To me they go to school more, the women, and they learn better, I don't know. The men I don't know what they tries to do. But that's now. But olden days I think both men and women try very hard but nowadays the men is more relaxed, they just get by somehow. If you have education, it counts, you know, because through education you gets a job, you get better possibilities of moving around. Wrong or right? So I would say that education is the most power. If you don't have education, what's the sense? If you look around, nowadays they most educated people is the women on Saba. Where in the olden times not, in the olden days it was the men that was learning the carpentry and the mason work, building buildings. You name it, the men was doing it and the women was home minding the children. But today there's a big difference.

In these narratives, education forms the primary context for women's liberation from male domination and suggests that the power and labor structure on-island does not position education as a requirement for male economic success. An emphasis on the ease of men's life on Saba came up in many interviews and centered around both the structure of the labor force and the general attitudes

that many men had towards work. The division of labor on Saba tends to sort men and women into

gender-appropriate forms of work with men doing much of the manual labor and women working

either in the government offices, in the private-sector service industries, or as domestics. Although

the payscales are roughly equivalent, if not slightly tilted in favor of men, women were quick to point

out that office work required a certain level of education and certification that was not necessary in

most traditionally male jobs. As one black woman put it:

> Maybe a man would be quicker to get a job because he could get a job on The
> Road but maybe there's nothing for you to do and there is something, maybe to clean, but
> you don't want that. At times there are jobs but you need to know how to even if you
> don't have a certificate, you need to be working in that field or you need to have some
> kind of knowledge…But if you don't have anything then it's hard. You end up staying
> home. If they put a man to work on The Road, there are supervisors, on other jobs there
> are supervisors too but the supervisors on The Road they are just telling you what to do
> and they make sure you do. But in the office for instance, a supervisor has their work too
> so when otherwise they'll have to sit with you and train you and that takes time and then
> their work is put on the side. Whereas on The Road it's different. It's a lot easier. You
> just have to shovel cement and put it in a bucket. They should be able to do that being
> that this person is a man. That's the way I look at it.

This point is elaborated on by another mixed descent woman as she shares the following perspective

on why women might ultimately find leaving an easier proposition than men and how this is related to

the structure of opportunity on-island:

> Men more than women have a lot invested on Saba. Because, you know, when
> some guys don't go away to school they stay here on Saba and work so they have no
> girlfriend and either some guys they don't go out a lot or they go out on the weekends
> and they save their money and they start building their house, they get a piece of land
> from their parents and they start building their house. So that's their investment. Most
> men have houses and most women they don't. So it' easier for [a woman] to say "I'm
> leaving". They just pack a suitcase and leave. [Men] have their social buddies and,
> educational wise, it matter how far they went into education. If they never went away to
> school and they just finished their basic carpentry and they are a good carpenter here,
> maybe if they go abroad they just need to be, have an education, to push that, to work as a
> carpenter. If you just have, like CXE, maybe you need something more to get a better job
> elsewhere.

Because the economic structure of Saban society does not necessarily require men to advance their

educations, they are able to join the workforce at an early age and those who show drive and

responsibility are able to begin accruing the resources to build homes and invest more generally in the

Saban economy. Even for those men who do not show this initiative, the incentives to leave are often

less pressing as indicated by another black Saban woman who discussed the processes of black male

migration in her community:

> Usually men don't do too much leaving. I don't see it too much. Maybe before…But the black people, the black men, they leave, a few. But I noticed I saw some that they leave and come back. They come back more often than the women do. Maybe because the way of life, they don't want to adapt. For them, Saba is easy living. On Saba you don't have to put too much effort into anything if you don't want to. So, if you are away you have to do certain things to be able to get benefits or you have to go out to look for work. You know you got to do different things. Here maybe you could dress in your old jeans and your old shirt and maybe you go out and you get a job. If you're off-island, you've got to dress. You got to know certain things. You got to know this and know that. Easy life, some people just want to be.

Many women identified what they perceived as general lack of motivation on the part of men as being

not only a major social problem but also a problem that impacted families who suffered from a dearth

of male financial support. Although this point will be elaborated on further in the discussion of

modern Saban family life, it should be pointed out here that the women themselves always felt that

Saban women worked hard, perhaps harder than they should have to, and tended to contrast this sense

of women's economic independence with the absence of financial responsibility identified in many

Saban men. In one interview, a black woman consciously contrasted her own labor experiences with

both men and younger women as follows:

> I remember I've been working in [a local] shop since I was seven years old. I was being the cash register, cashing money, packing bags, pricing. I start to work when I was small so I know what responsibility is like. And as I grew older I never stood home. I could never see myself stay home, my mother supporting me. How are you? Uh uh. Because when I wanted money, who I going to ask for money? Because understand with my mother she gets support and stuff like that. Get money to give me money? Uh uh, no way. I always tackled my responsibilities. No matter how much I made I always saved my money to know that, you know, I got money aside of some sort so if one job don't work out I get the next one. But that's me, that's the way I move. That's what I would do, but then the younger girls coming up now take that different. Everybody want to walk The Road, living from their mother, living from their father, you understand. Nobody wants to work. Come in the house when you want, when you feel like. Open my door. Close my door. That's them. I guess now they see their parents working. They can stay at home and mostly now I think that it's because the parents haven't forced them. They give them life too easy. As if, like, I'm in my house, right? I live with my mother. You're under my roof. You'll abide by my rules. Get your ass out there and you're going to try to work. Get your ass out there. My mother, you know, we were never lazy. No matter whatever it is, lifting boxes, anything, anywhere we was we were trying to work. The parents now are not coming strict on their children. They're letting them go too easy. Eighteen, nineteen years old, you have to make up their bed. You have to wash their clothes. You got a child eighteen, nineteen years old, he cannot wash his own clothes. He can' t do a dish. He can't do nothing. You have to do it? Uh uh uh. I rear my child how my mother taught me.

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And she continues these thoughts like this:

> Some of the boys on Saba, the young men growing up want to prove themselves as men, right? They are not working. You have jobs out there that people want to give them but they don't want to work. How can you say when someone else hires a foreigner? You want to say to them look, how do you feel sitting down? In your yard, watching the foreigner up there painting the roof? Painting the windows, he's doing everything, mason work, everything? And you are sitting there while you could have done the same thing but you didn't want to go out to work. Or no, I'm sick today I want to do this, I want to do that. You know, that is here. Especially young men growing up. They don't want to do nothing at all. They're worse. The don't want to work.

What this narrative highlights is the fact that job availability is not always the issue when it comes to joblessness. The ways that Sabans view work, the kinds of work that they envision themselves doing, and the salaries that they want to command all play into whether or not a Saban man or woman enters the workforce and also determines the terms of their entry. The fear that not working will bring poverty is not really a relevant factor the way that it was in the past and, for some, an overall elevation in socioeconomic status, partially if not wholly subsidized through government support, has proved to be the mechanism that produces a sense that working is not a social requirement. Women, again, are often the victims of this lackadaisical male attitude about work, especially in single parent homes, because women are seen not only as primary family providers but also have to deal with a sense of entitlement to their support that this social environment has fostered in the younger generation. This is not to say that women are not culpable in creating this situation, especially with their boys, but that, as mothers and partners, they also bear the majority of the negative effects that this situation generates. As one white woman succinctly put it, coddling sons recreates "the same miserable situation that mothers had with their own partners in the lives of their daughter-in-laws".

While education and work ethic play a major part in the structure of opportunity on Saba, gender norms that hold motherhood and domesticity to be the main occupations of women also continue to influence women's decisions both to migrate for education or employment or to seek out work outside of the home. Childbearing at an early age is often an educational and career obstacle for women and entering parenthood weighs on women's decisions much more heavily than those of men. One black woman shared her regrets about missing opportunities earlier in her life by deciding that

being with her children was more important than advancing her education:

> I went to [another island], started working there, but I was young…and I made some stupid mistakes…What ended up happening is I got pregnant. That wasn't a smart choice, either. What happened, I ended up coming back to Saba, had my first born here living at my mom's home. I was [still very young] when [my first child] was born and everything was going okay…My bigger sister said you know what, we're going on vacation and I'm going to take you with us but you could stay there. You could continue your education. You could make something of yourself, but you have to leave the baby here. Because, why you going to take a baby? And at times I regret that decision that I made at the time because I didn't go. I said, why would I go and leave my child? So I just stayed here. Ended up staying here. And when they came back I ended up living [on another island], I ended up staying [there], got more children because I didn't get married until I had [several children].

Love for her children and the self-imposed pressure to assume the role of motherhood constrained the range of possibilities that this woman had for her future and these early decisions had on-going personal and professional ramifications. For other women who either remained on Saba or returned after completing their studies, tensions between household responsibilities and labor force participation created drama in their lives as men either pressured them to stay in the home or expected them to balance full-time work with their traditional roles of wife, mother, and home-maker. In one case, a white woman relayed a story about a conflict that arose with her husband after she decided to participate in a short-term government project outside of the home. He was so infuriated by this that he didn't talk to her for two days and, later, agreed to let her work but only from the home in a business that he specifically developed to keep her happy. She suggested that these kinds of reactions were not uncommon, particularly among white men, and stated that issues of male jealousy and possessiveness meant that many women were more or less forbidden to work outside the home. Another younger white woman shared her thoughts on women working outside the home as follows:

> Some women are still housewives but a lot now go out and help to work also. In some households it's changed and some it hasn't. I think those who stay inside grew up more in the olden times system. I guess they grew up that way and those women also had family that helped get them houses and property so they didn't have to get loans to build houses so they did not have to go out to work to help support their families. But nowadays if both families aren't working, I mean with younger couples who did not have the opportunity to get land and housing and so forth from their families, they have to go out to work to help pay for the loans and support the families.

Class issues permeate this description of female labor force participation and suggests that the dominant image of women's roles as wives and mothers within the home remains strong among

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Sabans of higher economic means and mirrors the attitudes about femininity, domesticity, and sexual purity through sequestering that were so prevalent earlier in Saban history. Still, the burdens of juggling work and home life can be constant sources of stress for women who are expected to essentially hold two full time jobs. When describing a "good woman", the white woman quoted above had this to say:

> She has a good job, taking care of her family, taking care of her household, and they can manage everything, can manage to work out and also take care of the family at home, take care of the house. There are some who don't worry about anything, even if they work out, they don't pay much attention to home. Some women that are working out they don't care if they cook today or they don't. They don't have food, then they buy food out or something like that. But then there are some women who can work out and schedule the home life also and take care of their husband and their children and, you know, manage everything. Like me.

While her description can be read as a critique of women who are failing to meet the expectations of their roles as mother and homemaker, it lays bare the pressures that many women face when they are expected to perform at work and at home. In her opinion, it takes a lot of dedication to keep domestic life and a career synchronized and that this is either impossible for some women or not deemed necessary by others. It is true that more and more working Saban women are requiring household help from their husbands but this stream of thought still runs against older notions of gendered work that assign women exclusive responsibility for maintaining the home front. At the end of the day, though, many women, both single and married, find that working outside of the home gives them a sense of pride in accomplishment. In this way, women's labor is not only a means to cover the financial needs of their families not met by male contributions but also becomes a source of women's empowerment on-island. Although there are many women who work because they have to and not necessarily because they want to, the majority of women interviewed expressed sentiments similar to those shared by this black woman:

> Here on Saba, the majority women, a lot of women are working but in the past, you didn't have many women working outside the home. Women, if they worked outside the home, maybe it was in the hospital, I would think. You had where, slowly but surely, you had women in the post office and that was it. Most workers in the administration building and any other department like public works, even the teachers, were men. Today's date you have where, maybe because the women have to go out to work, you have, take for instance, security: women and men. You have cleaners: women and men.

You have road sweepers: women and men…But now the change from the Administration Building from what it used to be to today, you have pure women, only five men, pure women as to in the past, in the past, every department, even secretaries to the administrator, everything was men. Today's date, everything is women. So, women is playing a big role on Saba and to me I find they's just taking it for granted but I think that by maybe reading history they might realize where they are and they will appreciate it more…

I remember one time I going to the Windwardside. They had a gentleman. He had a little store. My dad used to go there to buy a knife and he was talking to my dad and he said, "Do you know what is happening to our little shops today?" And my father tell him "No, what's happening?" And he say "Do you realize that it's being taken over by the women?" And I sit down there and I have to laugh because as a young person at the time it didn't really register to me and then afterward when I look around I say "Oh, now I know what that man means." He means that in the past most of the shops were run by men. But slowly but surely he was faced with the fact that right opposite him he had this lady that was opening a shop and then on the other side he had another lady. So, he felt overpowered, you know. So slowly but surely we just expand…

Everywhere you go on Saba, you know, the women are there. Today's date, the women are up.

This powerful assertion of the prominent role of women in economic and social life is a growing feeling among young and middle-aged Saban women from the black and white communities. It is important to recognize and honor this sense of liberation and independence without losing sight of the down-side that these economic freedoms have brought to the lives of many women. Jobs on-island tend to require more in the way of education and professionalism for women but rarely confer higher financial rewards than a man working on The Road. Hours worked by women also tend to be longer and more rigid than the flexible work schedules and shorter hours of men who work in physically demanding construction industries but this seldom translates into men picking up the slack at home. In this way the image of professionalism and the requirements of office work put a different kind of pressure on women who are working longer, not getting paid any more than men in menial labor jobs, and who are still often left in charge of almost all aspects of childrearing and home life whether or not their partners are living with the family. Unfortunately, the advancement of women's economic opportunities has, in some ways, also created a social environment where men feel less fiscally responsible for their partners and children because, after all, they feel that women are perfectly capable of supporting themselves. Although this attitude is not present in all Saban men by any stretch of the imagination, it does play a role in the way that many women experience work and

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family in island life. Balancing these downsides with the freedoms felt by not having to depend on a man for financial security is a delicate dance that Saban women are still working out today. While some women are still completely dependent on their partners for income, others are facing a situation where they are expected to fulfill the roles of worker and mother/partner, and still others operate with complete financial independence without the burdens of children or partners. Old gender norms that define a woman's place as centered in the home are set in contrast to new economic realities that have transformed many women into outside-the-home workers by both necessity and desire. The discussion above captures some of the struggles, tensions and ambiguities that women face in their migration and employment decisions as it simultaneously allows us to give credit to the accomplishments, big and small, that Saban women have secured for themselves in this changing economic environment. In sum, these positive and negative poles highlight the complex process that unfolds as Saban women from all walks of life continue to actively seek out socially acceptable and personally rewarding places for themselves in their own families and in society at large.

Racialized experiences of education, movement, and work in Saban society

Active racial discrimination and more passive but still damaging forms of racial stratification of economic and social privilege in a racist world have always impacted the socioeconomic trajectories of Saban lives. Whether it meant access to lucrative employment in the seafaring industry or ease of movement into managerial jobs in the American-run oil refinery on Aruba, whiteness has always carried certain forms of socioeconomic privilege not enjoyed in the black community. Despite this truism, it would be entirely inappropriate to view Saban society as rife with racial strife and it is important to recognize that Sabans have their own views on race and racism in their society. Most Sabans, both black and white, agree that discrimination still occurs but that it mostly takes the form of social avoidance in the older white community and, furthermore, that it is a pattern of behavior that is dying out in the younger generation. When pressed to identify types of racism on Saba, most point to the impacts that racial privilege has had on accruing intergenerational wealth in

the white community and the "color line" that draws a distinct if increasingly challenged boundary between acceptable forms of interracial interactions, like friendly neighborly conversation and office chatter, and unacceptable forms of interracial interactions like dating, marriage, and childbearing. However, the impact that race has had on migration and economic success cannot be underestimated even if white Sabans simply reaped the benefits of race in the wider world rather than actively trying to hold down the black Saban population, although this, too, happened in different times and in different ways. Issues of race that crop up in the context of family and the ramifications that they have had in Saban families and Saban lives will be explored further in later sections but the focus here will be on how current and historical experiences of race open up or constrain the possible futures that black and white Sabans envision for themselves and how this, then, impacts migration experiences, educational tracks, and career paths that Sabans create for themselves.

Migration in the post-oil period on Saba has been dominated by educational migration and, to a lesser degree, by labor migration of both high and low-skill Sabans. In the oil refinery period, black Saban women entered the service industries in Aruba and Curacao in very high numbers and, for the first time, were able to move freely and secure an economic future for themselves not dependent on men. Although many of these decisions to migrate were rooted in the belief that men simply would not or could not support their families, the associated feeling that women would have to do it on their own created an air of self reliance among black women that was slower to take shape in the white community. Educational migration in the post-oil period allowed young men and women to pursue further studies off-island and, even though early patterns of educational migration favored men, particularly white men, they soon came to involve high proportions of white and black women as well. The lack of job opportunities for women in the immediate post-oil period and the lack of movement on issues of women's rights on-island reduced the appeal of island life for the educated class and sparked the permanent migration of many Saban women at a time when men were returning to the island because of declining labor opportunities. Although the proportion of permanent migrants declined over time, migration levels of black men and women remained substantially higher

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than that found in the white population and, in the aggregate, white women tended to leave more than white men and black women tended to leave more than black men (Figure 8.8). Given that economic conditions on the island have improved tremendously over the past 30 years, it is interesting that black men and women continue to leave in higher proportions than whites and that men from the black and white communities tended to stay on-island more often than women from their own racial group. This suggests that the white population, particularly white men, may have been more able to capitalize on recent economic development on-island than their black peers who continue to leave at a very high rate and that the economic opportunities for all women continue to be less socially and fiscally attractive than those available to men. While more, but by no means all, white Sabans are looking to their island as a font of opportunity, the socioeconomic conditions in the black community and among women are such that large segments of these populations continue to find life on Saba unsustainable in the long-term.

When asked if and how race impacts opportunities to migrate, issues of race-based variations in socioeconomic power and historical connections to certain locales were foremost in Saban women's descriptions of racially stratified migration processes. For white Sabans from well-to-do families, the United States remained the ultimate destination both for furthering studies and for securing employment. Conversely, black Sabans who had less in the way of financial means and almost no historical connections to the United States tended towards either migrating regionally, to nearby islands like St. Maarten, or to Holland. One white woman articulated her thoughts on the strong orientation towards the States held by many white Sabans like this:

> I think it's because Sabans have had such a strong link with the US as far back as, I'll say, fifty years ago when the women sewed all their Spanish work, you know, their drawnthread work. They would take addresses out of magazines and write companies in the US and they would have orders come for the lacework. I don't think that I've ever heard of a family sending lacework to Holland. Because the literature came from the States. The first influences were actually from the States. You know, television, the magazines, the shows, you get everything. You know, it's like I said. We are Americans holding Dutch passports…
> People here are quite first with the United States. As a matter of fact, I'm sure that if you did a survey on the politics that you would find that they are more up to date with American politics than if you would ask them, for instance, who are the prime ministers and the senators in Curacao. Because we have very little information about our

own island unless you are going to really look for it in the newspapers because there is no television station. But of course every time you put on the American TV you can't help but hear about American politics and the war and the news and the fashion and the diets and whatever it is, you know. So, like I said, you become one then with the United States. You become connected better…

The white people will go the extra mile. They will tolerate all the red tape and all the bother they have to go through because it is quite difficult to get in the US. It's so much red tape. I think that the white families have a bigger desire or maybe a harder drive to really push to see their goals become reality. Going to Holland, you see there is no red tape involved. I have a Dutch passport so if I want to go to Holland tomorrow, no one can stop me. I have no red tape. It's easier to go to Holland than, say to go to the US but I think for the white families the mentality of the Americans coincides better with us because we may live on a Dutch island but we watch American cable TV, we use the US dollar, our children go to the US, we eat American food. We are more or less synchronized with the United States and I think that white families feel that connection. More than African descent families. You will find very few African descended families moving to the US. They would quicker move to Holland.

As in the past, many white Saban families continue to view the United States as the Land of Opportunity and, as such, prefer to emigrate to America to secure education and, in some cases, to live permanently. The influence of historical connections to the States through migration and the drawn-thread work trade intersect with new connections forged through American media being sent to or broadcast on-island. Present and past interactions with the United States combine to produce a sense of closeness even if many white Sabans have little or no direct experience living or working in the US. In fact, the direct connections to America may be declining as suggested by one mixed-descent woman who revealed the following about the current climate of emigration:

After 9/11 it changed drastically because it was easier to get a job in the States before 9-11. So, a lot of students would stay if they could afford to stay and find a place to work, et cetera. Now, after 9-11 it's become quite hard because if you don't have a job after a certain period of time you have to leave and if you don't have a company to work for or one won't sponsor you, you also have to leave. So it's really now you get your education and you have to come back to the Antilles or to the Netherlands.

This general perspective is reiterated by the same white woman from above:

People who move from Saba, white families, they have a little edge over the rest. They have businesses. They have better opportunities to get into the States. You're not going to get past INS to go live in the States on welfare. You need a concrete reason why you are moving to the States versus Holland. You can go to Holland as a Saban and live on welfare for quite a long period of time before you find a job. You are not going to do that to the US. Either you are going there because a company is sponsoring you in or you have your own company and you can sponsor in yourself. Because you have registered your company. Now, that's what is gong on. Right now it's extremely difficult to get to the US.

When immigration laws tightened in the 1940s and maritime unions really took hold of the American seafaring trades, Sabans experienced a similar decline in their opportunity to start new lives in the States. The post-9/11 climate is creating a similar bottleneck in Saban migration to America but is perhaps even more frustrating given the fact that many young Sabans have tasted life in the US through educational migration and continue to see images of American life broadcast into their homes through the television, Internet, or a range of magazines and other print media. Sabans who may have formerly stayed in the States now find themselves forcibly returned home to an economic situation that cannot support the consumer desires they fostered in while living in America. Another white student who returned to Saba after finishing her degree at an American university adamantly and genuinely expressed her love for her island while, at the same time, expressed sadness that she had been denied the opportunity to stay and work in America. Reflecting on the situation, she mused that someday she might be able to return, perhaps when she had children of her own to educate, but also recognized that her partner had no real interest in returning to the States and was happy to hang out with his friends and family on Saba. For her, then, not only had America denied her entry as a worker and, possibly, as a future citizen, but the feelings of her man also limited her ability to push for a return to the United States. So, although white Sabans have an advantage in going to school in the US because of their generally higher economic status, their opportunities for staying have been restricted and depend either on the intervention of US based companies on their behalf or on their own ability to generate enough capital to start their own US based company. Much like the departure of high-status seafaring families at the turn of the century, Sabans who leave to work and live in the United States tend to be highly educated people with substantial means. Losing this particular segment of the population has damaging effects for island society as a whole because it both drains the local economy of native investors and leaves a resident population of poorer undereducated Sabans who don't have the capital or knowledge to help build up the somewhat anemic largely foreign-owned private sector economy.

Black Sabans are generally less attached to the idea of studying, living, or working in the States even if they are still heavily influenced by the projection of American images through various media sources. This tendency to not view the US as a migration destination is both historical and practical. In the past, black Sabans tended to migrate regionally and fewer black Sabans made their home in the United States. Obviously, this is partially due to American racial bias and discrimination that treated white Sabans much more favorably than black Sabans. The lack of migration connections to the United States meant that few black Sabans had any family support for relocating to America which made journeying to the US much more tenuous and dangerous for black than white Sabans. This history coupled with lower levels of economic power in the black community at large meant that far fewer black Sabans were able to or even considered moving to the States for educational or employment reasons. One black woman put it like this:

> In former days you could see there was a drastic difference. Most black people had to stay on Saba based on the decision made by the nuns, right, and you got that most white people were sent on by government allowance to study. But today's date, not. Today's date it is based on whatever performance the child did in school. That is what you get a scholarship and you go on to study. Of course, you also have where if you ain't got the scholarship the possibility is also there that you may see a white person quicker leave the island because their parents may be financially more stable, However, you have now that the young people are working just even if it is just to get a ticket and, like, they can go to Holland and request there a scholarship. They get the same opportunity. Of course, the black person will quicker go to Holland because they know the opportunities there. You will not see them so quick go to the States because they know that they cannot make it in the States. Their parents will not be able to cover that expense. Because you would not get that scholarship. You see, when you go to Holland you can request a second scholarship. Take for instance here, in the Antilles if your scholarship is denied, you can go to Holland, pay your way to Holland, and when you reach there you can request a scholarship from an organization there and they will grant it to you to take any course. Whereas in the States, we will not be able to do that. We cannot go to the States and request a scholarship. So there you would get that the black people will quicker go to Holland because they know the opportunities there and whereas America, for the white people, if the opportunity is there and their parents have the money, they will go to the States, but they have friends and family there that would quicker help them.

Another black woman who had first-hand experience of sending her child to study in Holland shared her perspective on race-based differences in educational migration:

> I felt, as a single mother, that my daughter did better in Holland not only because of her education but I also felt that we are from Holland and we receive our funds from Holland. So, I find at least let your children learn something in Dutch and get some kind of basic of Dutch and they can come back here and the documentations are in Dutch. So, at least they can get a job if they decide to come back home and not only that

but financially wise, as a parent, you look at it education wise because in the States you as a parent had to come up with the extra tuition but in Holland, as I said in the beginning, education is a must. It's a demand. Each child has a right to education and in Holland you are basically paid to go to school. In Holland you are Antillean. You are Dutch. You are a Dutch citizen. You have a Dutch passport. Once you are there you register and you get your income every month to pay your rent and live there to go to school and so on. While in the States, in the States you're just a number. You are a foreigner and they don't want to know. They don't ask you no questions. They just want you to come and pay your tuition and that's it. While in Holland it's not like that and as a citizen, as a parent, you want your children to get an education so you choose. What do you do? And you don't have much choice as a single parent. You send your children to Holland…I feel if my child can go to Holland and receive and education and I look at it economic wise, if Holland is giving me the money, why not spend it back in Holland? Because tomorrow I will need it back home, so I don't have anything against the States but why are our governments taking all the money out of the Antilles and send it to the States when you can educate a child just as good in Holland?

Another black woman continued this train of thought on the differences between white and black emigration by stating that:

You won't find, I don't think, much colored people from the Antilles, from Saba or somewhere, in the States. Even if they are from Saba, they are white students, mostly, like, white families in the States because their children are in the States or their sons or most like that in the States. But it's not to say its not much colored people from Saba you'd find in the States. They're mostly down here, down this side, down in the Antilles. The reason why, I could tell you one, the thing again is that if you don't have money your child can't go nowhere and our child pays the price because you, the mother, are not saving for the child and if you don't save for your child your child can't go nowhere. You see, all the rest, they'll be going but you'll be left back because your parents didn't save. Okay, if my child is going to have a future, everybody is not thinking of that child, if they're going to have a future or want a future, everybody thinking that no no no no, they thinking that they go to school, they go to five years of school and after five years, bam, they stay on Saba but little do they know now that children wants a future.

While white Sabans continue to look towards the United States as the place to study and live, most black Sabans realize that their economic position will not allow them to cover the expenses associated with tuition and board costs at American universities. Because of these limitations and the lack of family living in the States, an increasing proportion of black Sabans is becoming more oriented towards Holland based on the rights that Dutch citizenship conveys. In the first narrative, this mother makes the shrewd observation that gaining experience with the Dutch language will ease transition into government work because all the forms and other official communications are written in the tongue of the motherland. She also asserts a strong opinion that educational investment that flows from Holland might be better spent in Holland than drained away into the bank accounts of American

institutions of higher learning. The attitude is one of "what comes around goes around" and "if I scratch your back, you'll scratch mine". Developing these kinds of close and intimate connections with Holland is a fairly recent trend even though small numbers of students, workers, and politicians from the black and white communities have made their homes in Holland over the years. Although education is one draw that pulls black Sabans to make the journey to Holland, welfare and other forms of government support are also appealing to the poorer sections of Saban society. Some white Sabans are involved in this cycle of dependency on government aid while living in Holland itself, but it is a far more common economic strategy in the poor black community. The welfare state developed on Saba in the post-oil period created an economic and social environment that fostered a cycle of dependence and, in some cases, a sense of entitlement to government aid among some Sabans of lesser means. This mentality, coupled with poor on-island economic opportunities for low-skill workers, has recently fostered a steady stream of welfare-seeking migrants who move from Saba to Holland to secure a wider range of government services and outright economic support. Criticism of this trend is rampant in both the black and white communities as seen in this take on the situation given by a black woman:

> I think people want to leave Saba too, because they just want to go out there and be different, even if they go out there and they're not studying, they're just living somewhere else and they just want to have a different living. Because some people go to Holland and in Holland there are opportunities to study because you are paid to have your children at home and you could study and you could better yourself. If you don't have certain credentials, you could get them there because the government would even pay for you to go to school. They pay for someone to take care of your children. They pay for your schooling, plus they pay for you to live well. They pay for everything. But it's up to you to take the opportunity. And I know quite a lot of people who are living in Holland who they take everything for granted. They are not reaping the benefits. And they just come back on vacation. Why? Because we know they are in Holland and oh, they're coming from Holland so that's something big, you know. So, it's just like a style. And they have their children, they're probably not married and they're just there. It's like you're living in the mother country, it means something. You're treated to the best, I feel. In the background you wonder, sometimes, when it's all over, what is it all about? Nothing, actually, because you're just living in Holland. You're not doing anything. You know?

Another woman from the black community adds her thoughts by saying:

> Everybody now is going to Holland. Because in Holland there is if you sit home you have children, every child you have you get an allowance for. So, if I have a child 10 years old, one three, one four, that's one thing. I know someone in Holland. She's about

40 years and she has about seven children. Now each of those children she gets what, maybe three or four hundred guilders a month from the government. So, you sit home. And also in Holland you go to the dentist, you go to the doctor and everything is free. But what they don't think about as they grown, and the years gone by keeps on goin' goin' goin', things is going to change. Because they say if the Queen son get in charge the laws, everything in Holland will be changed. So if you're sitting at home thinking that you're going to get money from the Queen, you have to go and work. And that's why some of my family say that they're comin' back to Saba but when they had the chance to say build up, you have the money up there, right, you're getting money from the Queen, send some of that money down here at least to say, maybe, let me try to build up a house or something. So, like, if anything happens, let's say, in Holland, I have something on Saba to come back to. But when they come back to Saba it's like they have to start all over again.

And, lastly, a white woman also chimes in on the situation with the following perspective:

> I think that people follow more where their family live, you know, from the old ancestors, so that they can help them out and so on. Especially Holland, a lot of the Antilles goes there, especially the colored because in parts of Holland, Rotterdam, they call it the Antillean part, and there are lots of Curacaoans, Arubians, so that's more or less Antillean part. So they go in and they make themselves as a community. Also the government help them, you know, and some just go there for sitting down, not only the youth but the elderly from 35 and up to 65. And the way that it's done, I can't really tell you how it's done. But they go in with the family and then have them fix up a paper and the government give them a home and money and it's just live on that. They doesn't go to look for work nor nothing. But for Hollanders themselves, they doesn't do it. They just do it for the Antilles. So that's why nowadays the Dutchmens from Holland want to send home the Antilleans because they is abusing too much Holland's territory. He's getting too much.

All three of these narratives highlight a range of concerns expressed by Saban women that include the themes of missed educational and economic opportunities, an ambiguous social status associated with living in the motherland, a fear that the welfare system in Holland may be dismantled, and a general feeling that the Dutch are coming to view Antillean migrants as social parasites. In the first excerpt, this woman conveys a dissatisfaction both with the way that Saban migrants order their lives in Holland and with the way that on-island Sabans treat family and friends who return home periodically. The social status bestowed on those who live in Holland seems at odds with the reality that most are not taking steps to improve themselves educationally or economically in an environment rich with opportunity. The second woman makes no direct criticism of either the lack of educational improvement manifest in most of Holland-bound migrants or of the ways that they choose to live off the welfare system rather than work for a living. She is most concerned about the fact that Holland might change the social benefits system and that all of the migrants now living off of Dutch social

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programs may eventually find themselves returning home with nothing. She wonders aloud why these migrants are not sending money home to build homes that might cushion return and suggests that Sabans who have lived off the system in Holland are now returning to the island only to "start all over again". The last woman quoted above has no direct knowledge of how the welfare system in Holland works but makes it clear that she is not pleased with Antilleans who are "abusing" Holland by drawing welfare with no intentions of working. The image that Holland has of Antilleans is also at issue and her discomfort with this economic strategy is tied both to a belief in the value of hard work and the desire to have Holland look on its territories and Antillean citizens as social equals rather than as social problems. Collectively, these women project a very negative image of Sabans who migrate to Holland with the sole purpose of living off the government dime. However, it is important to note that this mentality of dependence was born on Saba and that it is a continuation of a pattern set down after oil refinery migration declined in the middle of the 20th century and the welfare state stepped in to pick up the slack. While most Sabans do work, at least part-time, for their living, the attitude that the government is responsible for its citizens' economic well-being is still very strong on-island and the economic realities of Saban life do not allow many poorer people the opportunity to exist independent of direct and indirect government aid. Migrating to Holland can be read as an extension of this general economic relationship between government and citizen even if the absence of trading any amount of work for cash is unsettling for many Sabans from both the black and white communities. In a way, though, transporting this segment of the community overseas lifts a burden off the local government because they are able to export some unemployed or unemployable Sabans into the "money out" column of Holland. It is important to remember that although the reasons for emigrating to Holland for welfare are complex, that the lives of Sabans living there are probably not as rosy and plush as the picture painted by those who have never lived in large Dutch cities. Concentrated poverty, overt racial discrimination, social alienation in a foreign culture, higher cost of living, and a rising tide of anti-Antillean feeling undoubtedly make life difficult in ways not experienced in their home communities on Saba. In fact, when the second woman above wonders

why these migrants don't send money back to build a home, the answer is likely that the amounts received in welfare don't often exceed the cost of living and that many Sabans, and Antilleans in general, find themselves caught in a cycle of poverty that is difficult if not impossible to escape.

As shown above, migration choices and experiences of living abroad are structured by race in important ways but it is also necessary to keep in mind that aspects of the local economy are also deeply embedded in the socioeconomic relationships that have evolved between the white and black communities on-island. When asked if racism exists on-island and if economic opportunities were different for black and white Sabans, most interviewees were hesitant to ascribe race as a central issue in hiring practices while almost all of the women shared experiences of racism that were based on patterns of social avoidance and, in particular, sanctions against interracial relationships and childbearing. A general lack of feeling that race played a part in on-island economic life is very interesting and may have to do with the fact that white and black people tend to interact with the local economy in very different ways. Although plenty of white people benefit from government employment, the participation of the white population in the private sector is more pronounced whereas the participation of black people in the local economy is more centered on securing the benefits of government employment. As such, many times white and black people are simply not in competition for the same kinds of jobs. However, opinions on the role of race in employment are diverse and range from having a strong belief that racial discrimination holds black people back, to a more muted critique the involves the role of race and family in hiring decisions, to outright denial that racism is a factor in Saban economic life. The following excerpts from six different black women span the range of these beliefs and clearly show that there is no one experience of race or racial discrimination in their lives:

> Colored people don't have the same opportunities as white folks. Some employers have the thinking that all black people are thieves. It makes things hard, you know, because sometimes you have to put up with racist bosses just to get bread.

and:

> Job wise when you going out there and you looking for a job, white Sabans

stand a better chance than you, the black Saban, although you may have a little more
education a little more experience than that person. You see that in job relations.

These first two women clearly believe that discrimination occurs not only in the process of securing

employment but also in the experiences of working with employers who see performance through the

prism of race. Their perspectives were formed both through personal experience and through

interactions with other people who felt that they had been similarly marginalized. However, this

reality is not the only one expressed on Saba and other women from the black community are very

careful to delineate the effects of race on the structure of opportunity in the Saban economy. A

biracial woman articulated a different perspective by sharing the following:

> They [people in the black community] have this mentality that because, you
> know what, I'm black and they aren't going to give me an education and I said, someone
> said that once, and I said that's very stupid of you to think that way and I also said I
> thought you were better educated than that. To think that way. You don't have to think
> you're not black, you don't have to think you're white, but there's fair game for you.
> That's brought down from their parents. But I'm like, if you do well, you'll get it just
> like everyone else.

And she continues like this:

> You can see it when people are in charge of a business and they have a job
> opening, you see it, you have whites and blacks and mixes and whatever apply for the job
> and on Saba just about everyone knows your educational status so if you don't get it
> they're like well, "why did this person get it when she's got this and that?". Oh, probably
> because she was white and the owners of the company are black. Or probably because
> she was black and because the owners were white. Or family, oh, this one is family to
> that and that's why she's got it. And, like, there's a debate going on now about hiring
> people because the board wants to hire this and that, it comes about the family. And then
> they turn it to color and then it becomes a problem…But then it's all about family, it's all
> about who you know in that position, kind of in that job area. It's one knot. It's color,
> it's family, in one bundle.

In the first quotation, this woman identifies a mentality that circulates in the black community that

conveys a message that black people will not be treated fairly when it comes to securing education or

the economic benefits that education might bring. She indicates that this is a strong feeling in some

sections of the black community and she feels that this mentality is passed down intergenerationally

irrespective of the current forms that racism takes on-island. This mentality is clearly rooted in a long

history of discrimination but is here pointed out as an influential factor in how some black people see

their chances in Saban society even if the beliefs that construct this mentality are not based on a clear

and honest assessment of current patterns of racial discrimination. History carries its own weight and the mental perspectives of some black Sabans continue to be influenced by this collective social memory irrespective of how true these indictments might be in the present tense. In the second quotation, she tackles the issues of race and family in the economic functioning of Saban society. The fact that Saban families have been by and large racially homogenous over most of Saban history means that race and family continue to be entangled in the economic lives of islanders. Although race and racial discrimination have historically drawn a color line that sorts families into black and white, it is hard to see where race ends and family loyalty begins in whether or not individual Sabans secure specific jobs. Did Jane get that post-office job because she is white or because her cousin is on the hiring board? It is easy to see how economic stratification based on race could emerge and become entrenched in an environment where whites initially controlled most of the political, social, and economic capital but the shifting demographics of the island have placed a good deal of political power in the hands of the black population over the past 40 years. Because of this it would be inappropriate to describe Saban society as controlled by a white elite the way that it was around the turn of the 20th century although it is indisputable that early manipulation of the Welfare State by savvy and well-positioned white Sabans did help certain families accrue significant amounts of wealth that have, subsequently, been transmitted intergenerationally and used to generate even more wealth in the present tense. However, the social memory and current manifestations of racial bias still impact Saban society in significant ways and the lingering effects of race continue to concentrate economic capital in the hands of white families at higher rate than black families. If white people own more businesses, more white people may be hired to work in them and if more white people secure higher education, more white people may have the qualifications to compete for certain jobs. These subtleties blur the lines among family, overt racism in modern economic life, and the palpable effects of past practices of discrimination on the present economic conditions experienced by these communities. Another black woman had this to say about the situation:

> I always say there is no racism in Saba but everybody don't look at it that way,

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right? And sometimes I has some big heavy discussions about that. Racism, I look at racism where white is against black and won't give black opportunities make something of themselves and I don't see that, right? Because especially today's date, the opportunity for a black man to make something of himself is there but does the black man want to do it? To me racism more exists in black amongst black and white amongst white. Like take for instance, a black man would quicker put a black man down. If a black man is trying to achieve something you wouldn't see the next black man trying to say "I'm going to be supportive to you and help you reach your goal". If they see you there hanging they will leave you hang and maybe even leave you drop. Whereas you go in the white community and you see them, they are working together, they are a team. So that's why I always feel, and I even find that a black man would easy go and ask a white man advice and he would receive it quicker than what he would receive from a black man. And that's why I say that to me, in Saba they don't have racism. You need to go out in the world and you will quicker see racism than what you would see or experience here on Saba. To me if take for instance job opportunities are open for both people, of course, if you have maybe someone, maybe a family member in the government to give you a job, the job is there as a white person, right? But today's date with the law and so going around and certain things having to go down, you know, writing a letter, advertising and things, if you want to get that position you can get that position and that is all over. I always tell them okay, if an advertisement goes up in the office that this is a vacancy, why didn't you sign up? Why didn't you send in a letter that you would like to have that position? Instead of waiting until they choose someone, a foreigner, to come in a do that job and then sit down and criticize? It's no sense in criticizing, the opportunity was there for you to do the same thing. And then again it's based on your education. You know, if that other person has a better education than you what do you expect? Somehow I don't see racism that much. I don't really see it. Take for instance I am a black man, I ask a white man for something and he doesn't give it to me. Right away I will look at that as racism. But what happens then if that same white man give it to some other black man? You can't call that racism. You see where I'm coming from. If a white man can sit down and hold a conversation with a black man and one day it could be ever so good and the next day maybe they might not have a positive communication but they are able to sit down and communicate. Right? But this same white man cannot communicate with me or he may tell me something that I don't like, can I say it's racism? So we have to be very careful with what we identify as racism. Here on Saba they have the tendency to quick say that it is racism. But to me it's based on what steps you took to get where that white man got.

In her description of racism in Saban culture, she identifies a trend towards labeling all negative interracial interactions as acts of racism perpetrated by the white community but then turns the tables by asking what truly constitutes race-based discrimination in Saban society and what responsibilities the black community has in keeping their own back. She questions the practice of ascribing racism a central role in limiting economic opportunities for black people on-island and suggests that people who do so often have not taken the necessary educational or bureaucratic steps to successfully compete for jobs on-island. She cautions her peers against inferring racism without fairly evaluating the situation and, again, points to the debilitating effects of maintaining a mentality that fuses together the belief that black people are not allowed to succeed, the belief that black people should not support

one another in achieving success, and the belief that all strained interactions between blacks and whites are the product of racism. These general feelings are reiterated by two other black women in the following narratives:

> If the colored man had the ambition like the olden time people then, but these colored people don't have no ambition, so where you going with that? They have opportunity and they ain't using it because they don't have no ambition. Am I wrong or right? They have golden opportunities but no ambition. Those old time men, they worked like slaves and they build theirselves. These people got it so easy and is sitting down. So what they going to do? You say to them, where you going?

and:

> Let me be honest with you, black people are like crabs. You ever saw a crab trying to climb up the side of a wall here? You ever saw how they pushed each other down? They push each other down trying to get to the top. So, you know, everyone is trying to get to the top but in the process of trying to get to the top you are pushing the other one down. And that's not the idea because nobody reaches the top because you are so busy trying to kill each other in the process of getting up there that you never really see the top. So, they have to work more together, that's my opinion. We as black people need to come more together and work more together to create harmony if we want to achieve.

These women, like others, express dismay at what they interpreted as a lack of motivation that manifests in some members of their community and the perceived lack of support and togetherness among black people in their own villages and across the island as a whole. This perceived lack of unity is contrasted with the view that the white community functions as an economic and social unit to achieve their individual and collective goals, although there is plenty of disharmony in the white community as well. Solidarity in the black community is thought to be blocked by individual desire and jealousy and success is stymied by a mentality that places little value on hard work and ambition. In combination, these assessments of the current situation show just how complicated issues of race become on Saba and highlight the impact not only of overt acts of racial discrimination but also the influences of family, an intergenerational mentality that expects discrimination and sees it everywhere, and the lack of racial solidarity in the black community.

However, the fact remains that the black population on Saba has endured the horrors of slavery, the struggles of post-emancipation life, the history of wealthy white flight and subsequent economic collapse in The Bottom and elsewhere, and experiences of racial discrimination during

seafaring, oil-industry, and, to a lesser extent, modern times that not only limited where you could go but how high you could climb up the economic ranks either at home or abroad. Economic insecurity has been a fact of life for generations of black Sabans and some of the attitudes that expect discrimination are not only related to personal experience but are also firmly connected to social memories passed down from one generation to the next. Insecurity was a hallmark of black migration during seafaring and oil refinery days and many black Sabans clearly delineated the differences in risk that favored the migratory success of well-to-do white families over poor black families. Even poor white people had an edge because of the color of their skin and found it much easier to integrate into life in the States or to move up the ranks in American-owned companies that operated on the basis of institutionalized racism. When asked about the differences in risk associated with leaving the island, one black woman shared the following thoughts:

> Black people have more of a tendency of holding on to what they have. If they build themselves a home or something they hold on to it while the white people usually sell. I feel maybe they feel that they sell and if they do come back, the intention is that they are going over there to establish themselves somewhere else and they will prefer just to sell what they have here and if they return here to just rebuild whereas the black person I think they just not sure where they are standing and they feel like they should hold on to what they have, rent or whatever, and, if it doesn't work out, they will return home and still there's something left behind…I think for the black person who have really achieved something over the years they do learn how hard it was to receive it, to get it, whereas the white person, they are more, they feel more secure and they feel that even if it doesn't work out for they, they will and can return home and know financially they are still going to make it. We have a tendency of pretending on the island that there is not a racial issue, which I feel we have to admit that there is a racial issue. People don't like to speak about it, because they say it's not true, but it is. It's true. We go along with it and pretend it's not here and say no, oh, its not here. It is there. It is there, they don't discuss it and I don't know why. I have no idea why, really. People are just afraid to talk about it.

This experience of economic insecurity in the black community is an intergenerational phenomenon and takes form within the economic realities of modern life, mentalities that developed from a wealth social memories that tied black experience to an historical legacy of racial discrimination, the tangible long-term effects of that history of discrimination, and on-going personal experiences with discrimination in Saban society. Just like the labor migrant who left to cut cane in Santo Domingo in the 1920s, or who left to work as cabin boys or on oil tankers in the 1940s, black Sabans have always faced a different set of economic circumstances at home and abroad than their white peers. This, in

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turn, has shaped the way that many black people see their place in economic structure on-island and the alternative futures that they can envision for themselves either as active participants in the economic life of Saba or as migrants who build their economic and social lives away from home. However, it is important to keep in mind that people from the white community are not monolithically wealthy or highly educated and, as such, all white people do not share the same access to migration and economic opportunities. As in the black community, class intervenes to limit the kinds of lives that poor people can create on and off-island but the sheer density of family connections in the white community and the strength of family bonds means that most white people will have family to fall back on in times of socioeconomic distress. Although this is also true in the black community, their generally lower level of economic stability means that lending a helping hand often taxes black families more than their white peers. When there is little to go around, it is even more difficult to meet everyone's needs. As in the past, the stakes are often higher for black migrants who already struggled to survive and to build something for themselves at home and the intersections of economic insecurity at home and abroad create anxieties in black people that are not fully shared or understood by the white community.

From a sending to a receiving country in the global economy: In-migration in Saban society

From the above discussion, it is clear that gender and race both play a role in the socioeconomic lives of Sabans but, in recent years, in-migration of non-local people and return migration of Sabans themselves have also changed the forms and flows of island life. Establishment of Saba University School of Medicine, chartered in 1989, has increased the diversity of the island population but has also maintained Saban connections with the States by attracting a large number of American students. The ecotourism industry has also had similar effects with American and European business people dominating these trades. Increased demand for labor in the pier project at Fort Bay, in on-going construction on The Road and in the housing market, and in the service industries associated with the tourists and Med School students have attracted a large number of

foreign workers who have established immigrant communities in each of the four villages. This reversal of migration flows prompted one white woman to say "First, we called this place Saba. Now we call it little Colombia, little Haiti, and little Santo Domingo" while another biracial woman mused that "Before, if you wanted to see a strange face, you had to leave the island. But now, there's so many people here". The effects of the transformation of Saban from a sending to a receiving country can be seen in both in changes in population structure and the positive and negative socioeconomic experiences that the integration of a large foreign population has had on native Sabans.

The total number of native Sabans on-island declined slightly over the past 40 years while the proportion of non-locals has increased ten fold. This has had a major impact on the racial and ethnic compostion of each of the four villages and each village has its own unique relationship to these shifts. Comparing the 1964 household census with the 2004 household census, the total population of Sabans as declined from 978 people in 1964 to 832 people in 2004 which represents a 15% loss of population (Table 8.1). However, population loss has not been evenly spread across the white and black communities. Over this period of time, the white population lost about 22% of its population (95 people) while the black population lost only 6% of its aggregate population (21 people). Together these changes shifted the proportion of black and biracial people from a majority of 55% in 1964 to a slightly greater majority of 58% in 2004 (Table 8.1, Figures 8.9, 8.10). While population shifts in the native Saban community are characterized by slow but steady population loss and slow proportional growth of the black community, patterns of in-migration changed radically over this period of time and shifted the island population away from being a small insular culturally homogenous native group of people to a place where people from all over the world have come to work, live, and study.

The foreign population on Saba grew from just 55 people in 1964 to 554 people in 2004 and now represents about 40% of the total island population (Figures 8.11, 8.12). The racial composition of in-migrants indicates the influence of attracting white American medical school students and ecotourism entrepreneurs to the opportunities of island life and the pull of labor demands and comparatively comfortable living that drew black Caribbean people to Saba from across the region.

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The proportion of black and white in-migrants mirrors the general composition in the population which means that foreigners swell the size of the island population but change the racial composition only slightly. However, as will be discussed later on, the impacts of black migration from the Caribbean and white migration from the United States and Europe have had different effects on the local communities because white in-migrants tend to be more transient in nature and don't mix as much with local people while black migrants not only interact more with the local community but also tend to date, marry, and have children with local men and women. In fact, the total black population of the island and, in particular black women, have much higher proportions of non-native people when compared to either white men or white women while white women, as a whole, have the lowest proportion of non-natives of any other group (Figure 8.13). The lack of foreign white women indicates a male biased pattern of in-migration as medical students, the migration of a higher proportion of Dutch men into political and entrepreneurial professions on-island, and a lower rate of intermarriage between foreign men and women and the native white population. The high proportion of non-local black women in the population at large stems from a very high proportion of female in-migrants from the Dominican Republic who tend to outnumber their male compatriots 3 to 1 (Figure 8.14).

This explosion of growth in the non-local community represents a diverse cross-section of nationalities although the majority of the nations represented are located in the Caribbean (Table 8.2; Figures 8.15, 8.16). In 1964, the foreign population hailed from only 9 different points of origin and in 2004 this number had expanded to include a total of 57 different nationalities that represented every region of the world (Table 8.2). The rapid rise in the proportion of Spanish speakers is of interest and is comprised of a large group of Colombians who live primarily in Hells Gate and a large group of Dominicanas who live mainly in The Bottom and St. Johns (Figures 8.17, 8.18). Although these groups are culturally very different and interact with the local people in very different ways, the general influence of these Spanish-speaking groups can be seen in the grocery stores that now sell foods like empanadas, the clubs that regularly have Spanish nights, and the schools that now struggle

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with increasing demands for bilingual education for adults and children.

As suggested in some of the above discussion, each of the villages has its own relationship with non-local residents and, as such, has different experiences of and perspectives on in-migration. In Hells Gate, population trends over the past 40 years show a 2% reduction in the native population and the maintenance of a majority white population and a minority black population (Table 8.3). Like everywhere else on-island, in-migration increased dramatically from 1964 to 2004 and Hells Gate now has 33 times the number of foreigners than it did forty years ago. The racial composition of in-migrants mirrors the racial composition of the community itself so in-migration has not shifted racial balance in the population as a whole. However, the foreign born population now accounts for 35% of the total village population and is comprised mainly of white Americans and Colombians who are, for the most part, defined as being socially white (Figures 8.19, 8.20). The remaining in-migrant population is evenly spread among various Caribbean nations like the Dominican Republic, Dominica, Curacao, St. Vincent and St. Maarten. In contrast to the relatively stable native population in Hells Gate, the native population of Windwardside experienced a 36% decline in the Saban population over the past forty years with losses being higher in the black than in the white subpopulations (Table 8.4). The increase in the non-local population is equally stunning. Windwardside now has 20 times the number of foreigners in their midst than they did in 1964 and the foreign population comprises almost half of the total population of this village. The racial composition of in-migrants makes up for the loss of more native black residents and, in this way, has kept the racial balance in Windwardside fairly stable over time. One-third of the foreign population is from the United States and the rest of the foreign population is evenly divided among Colombia, Holland, St. Vincent, and other Caribbean nations (Figures 8.21, 8.22). Collectively, Hells Gate and Windwardside absorb most of the white in-migrant population from the United States and have also become home to the majority of Colombians on-island. St. Johns is the only island village to show an increase in the local population over the past 40 years and has increased its native population by almost 1/3 over 1964 levels (Table 8.5). Mainly, this is the result of intra-island migration from The

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Bottom to St. Johns and, not surprisingly, this has increased the proportion of native blacks living in St. Johns. As in other villages, the racial composition of in-migrants mirrors the racial composition of the native population and, as such, has not shifted the racial balance in the village as a whole. Foreigners account for around 35% of the village population and are primarily drawn from nations scattered across the Caribbean (Figures 8.23, 8.24). Although 20% of non-locals are from Holland or the United States, Caribbean migrants dominate the rest of this migration flow with 20% hailing from the Dominican Republic, 15% from Dominica, 10% from St. Vincent. The remaining group of in-migrants is evenly spread amongst other Caribbean nations. Life in The Bottom has also changed over this period of time and native islanders have experienced a 15% loss of their population over the past 40 years with proportionally more whites than blacks leaving over that time (Table 8.6). The racial composition of in-migrants makes up for this loss of white population based on the movement of white Dutch bureaucrats into the local population and white Med School students living dorms on the outskirts of The Bottom. As a whole, The Bottom now has six times the number of resident foreigners and this group now comprises about 30% of the village population. As in St. Johns, in-migrants are mostly from Caribbean nations and migrants from the Dominican Republic (22%), and Dominica (15%) are very visible in the community (Figures 8.25.8.26). Apart from the Med School presence located mainly in a dormitory in The Bottom, St. Johns and The Bottom have a much higher concentration of in-migrants from the Caribbean and, specifically, from the Dominican Republic and Dominica, and a much lower concentration of white in-migrants from the U.S. and Colombia than seen in the villages of Windwardside and Hells Gate.

This distribution of the foreign population mirrors the population composition of the island that developed during seafaring and oil refinery days and suggests that the experiences of in-migration are very much structured by race on the island. While race clearly plays a role in where in-migrants choose to live, it is also important to recognize that the majority native white populations in the villages of Windwardside and Hells Gate have been more oriented towards the States over the past 100 years and that this orientation may also make living in these villages more comfortable and

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attractive to in-coming whites from America. Additionally, living in Windwardside makes sense for those involved in the tourist industries because most of the tourism infrastructure is sited in this village. For black migrants who lived in social environments where black people were a clear majority, life in The Bottom and in St. Johns may have been an easier transition particularly if they had friends and family already living in these locations. However, it is unclear how much of this segregation is chosen based on personal preference and how much is forced through racial bias in patterns of home rental and ownership. Regardless of how this pattern came to be, it has clearly exerted different kinds of influences on the native-born communities in each island village and has both reinforced patterns developed over time, like maintaining American ties in Hells Gate and Windwardside, and created new sociocultural exchange between native Sabans and new groups of people like Colombians in Hells Gate or Dominicanas in The Bottom.

Growth in and differential distribution of the non-native population on Saba has impacted the economic and social experiences of island life in many ways and has been the source of much discussion amongst Saban women and the native population more generally. Concerns that relate to economic competition, social problems linked, rightly or wrongly, to in-migration, and underlying fears of being "take over" have all come to the surface in recent years. A key difference in the forms that in-migration takes relates to the reasons why in-migrants come to Saba and this, in turn, structures the relationships that develop between native and non-native populations across the island. First and foremost, there is a big difference between the transient population of mostly white American medical students and elite whites in tourist industry who don't really mix with local population and the influx of permanent or semi-permanent black Caribbean migrants and "socially white" Colombians who interact with the local population and even start families on the island. Since the family-related effects of these differences will be tackled in later sections, the focus here will be on the economic roles that these different groups play on-island and the ways that Sabans view the economic impacts of living with a large and growing foreign population.

White in-migrants from the United States and Europe usually have one of two goals in mind when living on Saba: making a living through the tourism trade or studying to become doctors. Ecotourism entrepreneurs who sell the stunning underwater and terrestrial beauty of Saba often find themselves in conflict with the native Saban population over who should control this industry and what sacrifices should be made to keep Saba the "Unspoiled Queen". Fights over employment erupt when foreign business owners hire non-local people with appropriate skills rather than investing the time to train locals or taking the gamble of hiring local people who have no experience in the industry. Differing expectations of the pace and content of work also led many non-locals to prefer hiring foreigners who can meet expectations with little or no negotiation. Although some locals make a living as drivers, tourist-shop owners, and service-workers in the ecotourism industry and its satellite businesses many still feel like this industry is for foreigners and by foreigners and, as such, carries little weight in community decision-making.

Conflicts between ecotourism entrepreneurs and the local population tend to triangulate around issues of environmental protectionism. In particular, fights have erupted over controlling the free-ranging goat population and controlling the number of vehicles entering the island. In the first case, a politically powerful block of native goat owners repeatedly stymied attempts to enforce tagging and population control of the island goat population that became mostly feral after the decline of agriculture on-island in the early to mid 20th century. Although goat owners claim to know which wild goats are theirs and hunt them on a semi-regular basis, goats became a serious nuisance within villages and a serious source of environmental destruction in the unpopulated areas of the island that were being "developed" as tourist attractions for avid hikers. This unwillingness to control the goat population revolved around three main reasons which included a lack of desire to expend the financial and labor resources necessary to re-domesticate the goat population, a reticence towards being told what to do either by their fellow Sabans or, most of all, by foreigners, and general lack of connection to or understanding of how the goat problem might ultimately impact the environment of Saba that underlies part of the success of the tourism industry.

During field research it became clear that an astronomical increase in vehicle ownership also threatened the natural beauty of Saba but that this fact did not tend to register in any meaningful way with the local population. In 2002, the total number of registered vehicles on-island reached 556 and in 2003 rose to 679 for an increase of 18% (Nielsen, 2004). The small size of Saba and the fact that the villages are connected by a single road meant that traffic congestion began to emerge as a problem on-island. Some of the increase in car ownership can be attributed to car-loving Americans living on Saba but a lot of the increase is rooted in Saban's desires to own their own vehicles as emblems of modernity and available financing options that help make this goal a reality. Pollution issues aside, when asked how to resolve this situation, one Saban woman suggested that a bypass should be cut up through the rainforest that currently holds many of the hiking trails most cherished by tourists and this solution was widely circulated as a possibility on-island. Public transportation was summarily ruled out because the convenience of being able to move where you wanted when you wanted trumped ecological protectionism. Furthermore, development of a strong system of public transportation would put a dent in the lucrative driving industry that carried tourists to various destinations across the island. An overall lack of willingness to sacrifice for the sake of the environment stems not only from a me-first materialism that mirrors many of the attitudes so prevalent in the United States but also reflects a deep ambivalence about an ethos of environmental protectionism that emanates from outsiders, the demands that environmentally conscious outsiders try to place on locals, and, in some cases a complete lack of understanding about ecosystem fragility or the impact of human action on Saba's wealth of marine and terrestrial resources. What these two examples show is that Sabans, for the most part, feel some level of social and economic alienation from the ecotourism industry and tend to see it as something that functions outside the sphere of Saban lives. While people in Windwardside and Hells Gate deal with the constant presence of the tourism trade and of tourists themselves, people in St. Johns and The Bottom have very limited interactions with either ecotourism entrepreneurs or the tourists they attract and, as such, feel even less connected to this segment of the in-migrant population than their peers on the other side of the island.

Medical school students, on the other hand, have provided Sabans with many opportunities to turn a quick buck as grocery store owners, landlords, and restaurant and bar owners in all of the four villages but have also created an atmosphere of rampant price inflation and, in some cases, unchecked greed. As with the tourism trade, however, not all Sabans benefit from the presence of Medical School students whereas all experience the effects of price inflation, the housing crunch, and the accelerated stream of American-oriented goods and services that infiltrate daily life on Saba. Because students tend to come from privileged backgrounds, they often have more disposable cash than less wealthy Sabans and the desire to attract a chunk of this change has created a divide between shop and property owners on one side and every day Sabans on the other. The price of rental properties has increased to a level that most Sabans cannot afford and even the price of staple goods in local grocery stores have steadily increased as a function both of demand and of the ability of shop-owners to extract more money from their captive local and non-local audiences. Some Sabans profit while everyone else pays the price. This general sentiment is offered by one white woman who shared her perspective on the situation:

> I think that the government really needs price control. I don't think that it is fair towards inhabitants that I can say, go to St. Maarten and buy something for fifty cents but because there's no price control and I know that nobody's going to be controlling me or tracking me that I can actually convince you to buy it from me for 10 guilders. And that's with everything. It's with the rent and the groceries. It's everything. There's no price control. It's because government officials have their own businesses. In some stores you can actually see it go up every week. People don't realize it if every week you put ten cents on your product in a couple of months its, you know.

And another biracial woman echoed this by saying:

> It [in migration] can jack up the cost of living. That's also because of the Medical School coming in. And then there's not much that a person can do. It's the government. They have to put a cost control on things. I don't know why nothing is being done about it. It's all because someone is family to someone that owns a store. Everybody else suffers, unfortunately.

As with foreigners who profit from the ecotourism trade while most Sabans see no slice of that pie, in the case of catering to American students, the Saban population itself is divided between those who have the capital, drive, and, in some cases the ruthlessness, to tap into the lucrative real estate and provisions markets and those who reap little or no economic benefits but who feel the pinch of

inflation in the grocery stores and housing prices. As with the tourist industry, a lot of these profits are concentrated in the pockets of wealthy people, mostly whites, from Hells Gate and Windwardside although the daily presence of students at the Medical School in The Bottom and the constant presence of Medical students who live in the dorm have allowed some to profit in that village while apartment construction and rental have brought some money into St. Johns.

While the growing population of Medical students and, to a lesser extent, the expansion of the ecotourism industry have brought economic opportunity to the island, the migration of Caribbean and Colombian people to Saba is based on their desire to tap into money generated by these and other industries on Saba. For them, Saba is the Land of Opportunity and Sabans often find themselves not only in closer daily contact with labor migrants who are trying to build permanent and semi-permanent lives on-island but also in direct economic competition with this foreign-born labor pool. It is not surprising, then, that most Sabans had more to say about labor migrants than the student and ecotourism entrepreneurs who remained by and large removed from local life and who did were not "taking" local jobs. When it comes to family relationships, people from the Medical School and the ecotourism industry rarely get involved in romantic relationships with Sabans while many of the labor migrants do date, live with, marry, and have children with Saban men and women. Although this will be discussed within the context of changing family formation practices, it is important to note that some of the feeling of being overrun by foreigners expressed by Saban women are related to the fact that both the Colombian and Santo Dominiguan populations are dominated by women, some of whom come to the island with the explicit goal of marrying Saban men. When prompted to identify racial issues on-island, one black woman said:

> We have the issue of culture raised, the issue I was telling you about the Dominicana versus the Antillean. A Dominicana is going to treat a person different to us and then maybe you think, oh, a Dominicana is going to take over your man. So, I don't know if you would consider that a racial problem. They are black but they have a different culture.

By sharing this, she disrupts the idea that race is a universally shared category of experience, draws cultural lines between Caribbean people who share African ancestry, and reveals an underlying

tension that exists between Saban black women and black women who migrate into their communities with the active or passive goal of finding a man. This feeling of being under siege cropped up in many Saban women's perspectives on in-migration, particularly in the black community, and shows a general concern not only that Saba's unique culture is being lost but that people coming in do not respect the ways of Saban life. A cross-section of Saban women shared the following thoughts on the presence of a large non-local population in their villages:

> When say like if people come here to migrate that they should at least follow the rules of Saba and just do like if a Sabian goes abroad. They have to follow the rules. They just can't come over on the island and just take over. They have to follow the rules.

> I don't want no more to come in. Because we have the tendency to feel that when they come they want to take over. They feel that they are in charge. Because, I mean, you come to my country and you have to respect, you know, what we have…To me, we haven't pushed our way of doing things aside and taken over other people's culture. I feel that we are still doing our own thing and because maybe we are in the majority, I feel that is why maybe we have kept on to our own way of doing things. If people keep coming in then that could change. Well, I am getting older, I am getting down, I don't feel so much threatened by it. So that's why we try to tell the young people on Saba that when they go away to study, come back home. If you come back home, you could be in the majority but if you don't one of these days when you do come back you will be in the minority because you let other people take over. We can only hold on for so long.

> The onliest thing that I think is that eventually we will become strangers in our own island. I think eventually a lot of the locals are going to leave. Because once they leave and they get educated somewhere else, and because of not having job opportunities, they're not going to return. That's my opinion. I feel so. I think that once my children get the opportunity to leave, I don't see them returning. Maybe one might return but I don't see it.

> I think eventually, when you come to Saba, it won't resemble anything of the past because the majority will be Spanish and the Spanish will be the dominating population in this island in the years to come. Then the black and then the white. It's not necessarily a bad thing, it's just that it's sad maybe my grandchildren or great grandchildren will have to ask where have all the Sabans gone, you know?

The first three quotes are from black women who clearly feel that their ways of life are being challenged by the presence of a large number of long-term non-local residents in their communities. The feeling of "holding on" against an almost inevitable transformation into minority status pervades their thoughts as does a simmering resentment of the perceived lack of respect that foreigners have for Saban lifeways. The last quotation from a white woman poignantly envisions her own descendants asking her the question "Where have all the Sabans gone?" after Spanish-speakers

assume a majority in the population.

These feelings of unease are sometimes exacerbated by the fact that labor migrants from the Caribbean are competing for and often receiving employment in a range of industries on-island and that they tend to send a sizeable portion of their earnings off-island to their families at who stayed behind. One biracial woman summarized the situation like this:

> If you really want to look at it, the Caribbean has a large black population and the blacks that are coming here, they do the hard labor, the hard work, like construction work or cleaning or cooking, cooking in restaurants. And then you have the white person that's coming in and they are educated, so obviously they get the higher positions. Or they just set up their own business. But I don't know where the Colombians fit in here, but for example there's a large population of Colombians and Santo Dominguans and they have their own businesses. Santo Domingans do dressings, at two places they do hairdressings. They have a salon, sort of. And the Colombians, they more clean houses or they work for their husband's family in their businesses and then they bring along eventually their other family members and sponsor them when they are able to and they also work continuously for their families business. And that also can hurt the younger Saba black people that can't find a job because they're taken by the Colombians who are willing to work, maybe, for two guilders less because they are used to living with nothing while the Saba person who is used to living a certain standard can't work for two guilders less, for example.

And another white woman expanded on these thoughts by pointing out that:

> Haitians mostly come because here they can get a lot of construction work and they charge less so they get lots of jobs and then they can help support their families. Some people feel like, some of the men in construction, they get angry when these Haitians get all the jobs and they don't but then sometimes they end up getting jobs with the Haitians. But some of the Saba people are glad to have them because then they can get them to work for them and they don't have to pay the contractors on Saba big sums of money.

Together these statements show that poor Sabans are the ones who suffer from reduced economic opportunities through competition with foreign labor and that wealthier Sabans are either not really effected by these changes or that they actually profit by not having the expend as much money on manual labor or domestic service. Merging this with the fact that a large majority of Sabans do not have the education or skills to compete for jobs off-island means that poor Sabans are put in a real economic bind. Either work harder for less money or watch a foreigner take your job. For Sabans who already feel as if their material desires outstrip their ability to fulfill those desires, this is the final act of humiliation and not one that is easily swallowed. The intersections of price inflation, increasing consumer desires through American media and a strong American presence on-island, and

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a decline in both the availability of and compensation for employment make life seem bleak for lower-status Sabans whose promised "better future" has yet to materialize. While individuals may be unhappy with their own economic possibilities, many Sabans also expressed concern for the island economy as a whole because the change from a sending to a receiving economy has redirected the flow of money from one of net gain to one of net loss. A white woman had this to say about this abrupt reversal in the Saban economy:

> Now we have people coming to our island that's taking money out of our island and sending it back to their families. It's a drain on the economy because years ago money came to the island and now its leaving the island. Actually, I don't think the people so much think about it unless it's pointed out to them. I don't think that they actually realize that there's a lot of people here on the island who marry Sabans and actually they're building homes back where they came from, they're sending money to their families. Everything they work for is leaving.

And another biracial woman added that:

> Certain ethnic communities come here, they live, and their money goes out. For example, the Saba man is working and he's supporting his family and the wife is probably working as well but half her salary sometimes goes back to her family in Colombia or Santo Domingo or wherever. And also they have men here who are contracted by companies and they work, they have no wives or children here, and they work and their money goes back home. So the money is at certain points leaving the island, it's not staying.

That a remittance economy that sends wealth away from Saba has developed in an economic climate where many local people are unemployed, underemployed, or dependent on government jobs or aid is quite astounding. Trying to understand these incongruities makes many Sabans wonder why their government has not exercised more control over both immigration and the employment of non-local people in both the public and private sectors.

Unlike the vast majority of white in-migrants, most black in-migrants are fleeing economic conditions on their own home islands, bring little in the way of economic capital to the island, and tend to drain away resources that might otherwise be reinvested on Saba. Compassion for the terrible situations that many migrants endured at home and the reality that many non-local people are deeply integrated in the fabric of social life as partners of Saban men and women and as parents of Saban children is set against the economic reality that more Sabans would have better paying jobs if the

foreign labor pool was substantially reduced. A subsequent reduction in the demand for consumer goods could be off-set by increasing the number of Medical School students and tourists but this would not mitigate the fact that reducing the foreign labor pool would limit the number of partners that Sabans could find on-island, could subsequently reduce the lifeblood of the community that flows through the children of migrants, and could reduce the interactions that Sabans had with other Caribbean people who are largely of African descent. Fairness for all parties becomes the critical issue as does the shape of the future that Sabans envision for themselves. Ultimately, Sabans themselves must do the difficult work of determining how to manage their own economy and of handling all of the socioeconomic consequences and opportunities that those decisions will bring.

Expansion of the non-local population through labor migration and the interactions that Sabans themselves have had with this resident population or while living and working in other Caribbean countries has also created a growing sense of the Caribbean as a social space dominated by black people although Sabans are also quick to point out differences that emerge from myriad cultural misunderstandings between themselves and their Caribbean neighbors. When asked about how many racial groups existed on Saba, a black woman made the following comments:

> Black and white. That is what you have here on Saba. You have the black and white and eventually that black and white came down to different identities. Okay, so you have, take for instance, Spanish, English, Dutch, but you have two races, the black and the white. Take for instance: if you are a Dutchman, you are a white man; if you are an Englishman, you are a white man. You can be a Dutchman, from the time you say you are a Dutchman then they reckon you as white. But you can be a black Dutchman, but then you black. So, they quicker say, like take for instance, if you are black and you come and say you are a Dutchman, they will say no, you are a Caribbean. You see? You were from one of these islands and you came up to Holland and became a Dutchman. I'm a Dutchman. I can say I'm a Dutchman but I'm a black Dutchman from the Caribbean. If you come, take for instance, if I am on the airport standing and I see a set of people come from the plane I have a black man coming and a white man coming. If I see a black man coming, I automatically feel that he must be from the Caribbean. He must be coming from St. Maarten or somewhere. Not until I stand and talk to him then I hear him speaking Dutch, but still, although he's speaking Dutch I'm saying to myself, well, he went to Holland and he studied Dutch. But I can see a white man coming and I'm going to say, well, he's an American or he's from Holland. I'm not going to say well, you know, he's from St. Maarten.

In this narrative, she uses race the visually sort people into those who came from the Caribbean and those who are from outside the Caribbean. This is interesting given the racial composition of her own

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island, and would likely ruffle the feathers of a few white Sabans, but she puts her finger on an undeniable truth: most Caribbean people are black people. However, this identification with the Caribbean is important as it both increases the feeling of being in a race-based majority and draws boundary lines that separate foreign whites as total outsiders and native whites as a minority population not only on their own island but in the Caribbean at large. So, in sharing these thoughts this woman asserts that people from the black community on Saba have a racial identity that intersects with a large proportion of the region and identifies a bond of blackness that black Sabans share with other Caribbean people. This, obviously, does not always translate into a feeling of kindred spirit when cultural or ethnic divisions trump any appeal towards racial solidarity. A white woman shared this perspective on race and cultural identity on Saba:

> I think that Sabans regard black Saban families that they are familiar with, they regard them more as friends, than, for instance, if you have five families here from Haiti. So they will make a distinction of where you came from, not only the color of your skin but where did you come from with this skin color?

Evaluating race includes an evaluation of origins that draws a line between black people who are familiar and black people who are unfamiliar. Despite ideas of racial solidarity, Sabans continue to define self and other not only through the lens of racial identity but also through a shared cultural identity and familiarity that they established within and between the two communities over the years. When asked what changes immigrants brought to the local community, one biracial woman fore grounded the distinctions between Saban and non-Saban as follows:

> It changed, but not always in a positive way. We have the Colombians and the Santo Dominguans especially in the schools, we have those two groups where some of them have children that were born down there that they brought here with them, maybe that got acknowledged by their husbands or whatever and you can see a different trend in the way how the Saba children start to think after they came to live here. It's not something big but they were more like lying types, groups and stuff. Like with girls, a Spanish child, although she's a child, everything is about money already, like style and money and, you know, "if you like me you have to buy me a soda". It starts from small and the influence it's having onto the Saba children, to a certain extent you can see that it's not really a positive thing that's being brought over…And the influx of drugs and things too is because of foreigners. It's sad but it's true. Also because of the medical school being here and because now they control it much better because I understand that they drug test a lot of their students if they suspect them of anything on a random basis so you don't know when it's going to happen. So, that's good but there's been students that used to have the drugs Fed-Exed, well, maybe not Fed-Exed but you know in packs, you know, whatever. Let's say I'm on the island and I'm friends with you and I say hey, you

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know, here's so much money, have it come in for me, and nobody is going to suspect you and whatever, whatever. Like right now I think we have like 84 different races staying on the island and the influences from all of them are here. And I guess there are some positive things that happen but usually when you look at them, you see the negative ones faster than you see the positive ones. Like having weapons and stuff like that usually that was not something that the young boys here talk about before. Before times it was more like "I'm going to see what girl I can kiss" and stuff like that and now it's kind of like, "let's see how many joints you can smoke, how many drugs you can smuggle in, how much marijuana you can smoke or how many drinks you can drink" or something like that. So, and, again, a lot of it comes from children because some of them, they were brought here when they weren't really small anymore. They were teenagers or old enough to have seen and heard, you know, stuff in their country and then be able to bring over that influence with them when they came.

Another biracial woman adds educational constraints to the list of problems brought in by non-local people:

The migration into Saba, they come with their kids and now their younger kids go to school and now, this is the reason why you can say the composition on Saba of blacks is increasing, because a lot of the people who migrate to Saba are of color, like I said, the Colombians I don't know if they think they are white or black, I don't know, but they come with their kids and their kids reach a certain age and they're finished with their CXE Comprehensive school. They graduate and what happens now? Well, number one, if they're not Dutch, they can't get a scholarship because the scholarship is just for Dutch kids. So, they end up remaining on the island and they work or they get, via politics, stuck into a job that a Dutch person could have gotten when they come back from their studies or it's hard for them to get a job, they get the lower paying jobs, the foreign, and then they also, to a certain extent, become a problem to this society.

In the first narrative, in-migrants are thought to be responsible for a range of social problems that mainly manifest through the children that are brought over after living on their home islands or in their home countries for extended periods of time. Saban children who interact with non-local children are encouraged to fall into a pattern of bad social behavior that is clearly delineated as "non-Saban" in the eyes of this woman. In the second narrative, limited educational opportunities for non-Saban children mean that the island is supporting a growing segment of the non-local population who has few, if any, off-island possibilities for educational or vocational advancement. Alien residents, even those born on Saba, face a lifetime of limited opportunities and often take local jobs through political favors, drop into a pattern of poverty brought about by entry into low-skill menial labor where competition with locals is fierce, or experience periodic or long-term unemployment in their adoptive communities. This captive population that is partially of Saba but not from Saba has the

potential to evolve into a serious social problem as dreams deferred grind against the economic

realties of being "foreign" in Saban society.

Summing the parts to a greater whole: Saban economic life as the context for Saban familiy formation practices

Detailing the effects of gender, race, and nationality in the economic lives of Sabans helps us

develop a deep understanding of the economic opportunties and constraints offered to men, women,

and children in Saban society that, in turn, provide the complex substrate that gives rise to a diversity

of modern Saban family forms. Gender is a powerful social construct in the economic lives of men

and women and is of particular importance when it comes to the issue of women working outside of

the home. On Saba, there is a diversity of opinions about the roles of women within and outside of

the home. Some families cleave to a traditional division of labor where men are breadwinners and

women take care of the home and children. Prohibitions against working outside of the home relate

to a long history of sequestering Saban women to preserve their sexual purity but also relates to the

historical role of men as primary wage-earner and head of the family. Not all relationships formed

within this division of labor are rigid in their assignment of men as familial authorities but many do

function within a paradigm of male superiority and female subordination. Others simply function

with the belief that children benefit from the presence of a full-time parent in the home and the couple

decides to make the financial sacrifice of having the woman stay home. Over the past 40 years

women have steadily increased their presence in the work force with upwards of 50% of white

women and over 70% of black women now working professional jobs outside the home. In situations

where women work, single women often find that self-reliance in all areas of island life is an off-

shoot of economic self-sufficiency. However, many women, particularly black women, chart their

careers with the suspicion that future partners will not live up to their financial responsibilities as

fathers or husbands. White women, though, are becoming more aware of their own financial

instability as wives and homemakers in a social environment where divorce is on the rise and where

men are often allowed to shirk their financial responsibilities in the wake of divorce. Mothers who

work can be torn by the pressures to conform to societal expectations of womanhood that are centered in the home with the children and run ragged by the double-duty of being home-maker and worker in a social environment that does not compel men to pick up the slack at home. Educational opportunity is also related to gender and, although men and women have equal opportunities to secure scholarships for advanced study, many men are not encouraged to take education seriously because the economic system of the island allows them to make good money doing skilled and unskilled manual labor while many women are required to have a certain level of education to compete for office jobs that are primarily seen as women's work. This makes failing to get an education even more economically damaging for women than for men and early childbearing, failure to advance educationally, and the lack of male financial support often locks women into a cycle of poverty that is difficult to escape.

Race also plays a role in structuring economic experience and the mental and material effects of a long history of discrimnation provide challenges to the black community not experienced by the white community. Although educational scholarships are available for students regardless of race, the lack of economic resources to cover incidentals and an ingrained mentality that makes many people feel as if they are barred from educational opportunties combine to constrain educational achievement in segments of the black community and, to a lesser extend, in the poor white community. The generally higher levels of financial stability in the white community and their tight historical connections to the United States continue to point white Sabans towards America as the prime location for pursuing education and, in some cases, for building a new life. Migration restrictions post 9/11 have made permanent migration to the United States more difficult recently and labor and family migration has been restricted to the "lucky" few who can find a U.S based company to sponsor them in or who can afford to set up and finance their own U.S. based companies. The drying up of migration outlets in the United States and the lack of jobs, particularly high paying jobs, on-island has not only left many educated white Sabans unable to find what they deem to be suitable employment but also left them wondering why they made the financial and social sacrifices to secure advanced

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degrees. Government energies still tend to be focused on giving employment to those who stayed and the common practice of job-splitting not only provides a means to employ more low-skill people but also simultaneously reduces government efficiency and prevents educated Sabans from assuming well-paid high responsibility jobs in the civil service. Beyond the question of educational attainment, the higher financial status of white Sabans also allows for a little more in the way of family-supported entreprenuerial activity, but opportunties in the private sector are, as of yet, not fully developed.

The social landscapes of most black Sabans do not include migration to America as limited financial resources and a lack of historical ties curtails the possibilities and the desire to leave Saba for American shores. Recently educational and labor migrants from the black community have turned their sights to Holland and have tapped into the resources that the motherland has to offer. Return migrants in the black community also encounter similar constraints to those in the white community but the lack of economic capital in many black families that could support various forms of entrepreneurial activities means that smart, educated, and savvy young black men and women have a hard time finding work in the private sector and tend to still look towards the government for employment. Apart from educational migration, there is much criticism about the practice of living off of welfare in Holland and concerns over changes in welfare laws have sent a stream of black migrants back to Saba with little or nothing in the way of accumulated economic resources. This recapitulates an on-going cycle of dependency fostered through the development of an extensive on-island welfare state that was initially designed to mitigate against the disastrous effects of on-going poor economic and migration opportunities afforded to lower-status Sabans with few skills and insufficient education. Unfortunately, the long history of racial discrimination in Saban society created a system where these sorts of dependencies still affect black Sabans to a higher degree than the white population even though the general socioeconomic status of black Sabans has improved markedly over the past 20 years.

In the labor market, race and family are closely intertwined and family favoritism can be interpreted as racial discrimination against both blacks and whites. Although some Sabans see racial

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discrimination as a key component that restricts the economic advancement of black people, others are more reserved in their criticisms and desire to root out racism where it exists without allowing the charge of racism to be made to scape-goat personal responsibility. The historical reality, though, has meant that a larger proportion of the black population experienced high levels of economic insecurity at home and abroad which not only made building a life on Saba a difficult proposition but also meant that labor migration tended to carry higher risks for black people. This was true because black men and women often found similarly poor, racially stratified economic environments abroad and because many black famillies were less able to absorb the fallout from failed migration attempts. It also led to a generally cautious and conservative attitude among many black people who tended to hold on to what they had built on Saba while white Sabans tended to sell businesses and property before leaving home because they were confident in the belief that they would succeed abroad or be supported by their families in the case of failure and return migration.

In-migration also exerts differential effects depending on who you are and where you live on-island. Hells Gate and Windwardside contain the highest proportion of non-local whites, most of whom are either engaged in the local tourism industry or are students at the Saba University School of Medicine. Americans comprise a large proportion of non-local whites and their concentration on this side of the island exists within the context of a long history of connection between white Sabans and the US and is likely related to both the comfort level of these communties with one another, overtones of racial prejudice that remain strong in American society, and the proximity of these villages to centers of the tourist trade located in downtown Wndwardside. The white population of in-migrants are financially stable and either establish businesses on-island or bring money into Saba by paying for housing and the necessities of life while pursuing a course of studies or enjoying a comfortable retirement. Tensions over employment practices have surfaced as has disgruntlement over balloning rents and commodities inflation that stem from Saban desires to extract more money from the comparatively wealthy ex-pat community. However, Sabans rarely find themselves either interacting with these migrant communties socially through friendships, dating, starting families, etc. or through

competition for jobs in a difficult economic environment. The same cannot be said for the large, mostly black, population of Caribbean labor migrants who have made their home on Saba in recent years. Complaints about preferential employment of foreigners, decreasing salaries through the availability of cheap foreign labor, and the increasing foreign influence in Saban life, especially through the relationships formed between Saban men and foreign women, have all become hot topics of conversation among native islanders. The racial stratification between regional labor migrants who are, for the most part, black and U.S. and European entrepreneurial and educational migrants who are, for the most part, white raises the question of race as category of social experience that gives rise to and supports a clear economic heirarchy operating both within the foreign presence on-island and between local and non-local people. In effect, this racialized economic hierarchy recreates, or, depending on how you look at it, reinforces an economic system that puts the majority of economic power in the hands of an elite white class of foreign investors and wealthy white students while poor blacks, Saban and non-Saban alike, act as a ready labor pool when someone needs to build a house or a road but who are never really given the opportunity to break out of a life of low-skill, low pay work. Despite these limitations, many regional labor migrants can and do amass enough wealth to support themselves on-island and to support their families back home. Many Sabans are dismayed at the fact that so much money is leaving Saba to build homes in other Caribbean locales and openly wonder about the socioeconomic impacts of hosting a large foreign population in their home communities.

Gender, race, and in-migration are all crucial intersecting elements of modern Saban life that surround, create, and give meaning to Saban families. The economic and educational opportunties that people imagine for themselves are connected to the ways that men and women not only envision their families but also how families are built in the real world under real socioeconomic conditions that may or may not have been anticipated by mothers and fathers. External influences, media projections, and interactions with foreign people both on and off-island also influence the ways that Sabans view family building practices and how they act on these changed perspectives even if they run counter to deeply held beliefs in traditional Saban society. The next chapter will explore

stabilities and transformations in Saban families over the past forty years by delineating the intersections between historical patterns of Saban family formation practices and the challenge of emerging alternative family building strategies, the social ideals and brutal realities that are embedded in traditional and alternative Saban family stuctures, and the relationship of these trends to the changing structure of educational and economic opportunties detailed above.

Table 8.1: Population dynamics: Total island population

Population composition change	2004	1964	Change		
Racial composition of native Sabans					
Proportion White Saban	0.41	0.45	-0.04		
Proportion Black Saban	0.41	0.37	0.04		
Proportion Mixed Saban	0.17	0.18	-0.01		
Racial composition of non-Sabans					
Proportion White non-Saban	0.41	0.36	0.05		
Proportion Black Non-Saban	0.47	0.62	-0.15		
Proportion Other Non-Saban	0.12	0.02	0.10		
Racial composition of total population					
Total proportion White	0.41	0.44	-0.03		
Total proportion Black	0.54	0.56	-0.02		
Total proportion Other	0.05	0.00	0.05		

Population size, Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Proportion retained	Proportion lost
White	343	438	-95	0.78	0.22
Black	340	361	-21	0.94	0.06
Biracial	145	179	-34	0.81	0.19
Other	4	0	4		
	832	978	-146	0.85	0.15

Population size, Non-Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Increase in non-local population	
White (includes Hispanics)	229	20	209	11.45	
Black (includes Hispanics)	258	34	224	7.59	
Other	67	1	66	67.00	
	554	55	499	10.07	

Total population growth (number of people)	353				
Proportional population growth (2004/1964)	1.34				
Proportion decline/growth of Sabans	-0.15				
Proportion increase non-Sabans	10.07				

Table 8.2: Geographical distribution of in-migrants: 1964, 2004

Geographical distribution of in-migrants, 2004	Nationalities by region	World regions	Nationalities by world region
Caribbean	23	Caribbean	23
North American	2	The Americas	8
Central America	1	Europe	9
South American	5	Asia/South Pacific	9
Western European	5	Africa	6
Eastern European	4	Middle East	2
African	6		
Middle East	2		
Central Asia	1		
South Asia	6		
East Asia	1		
New Zealand	1		
Total nationalities	57		
Geographical distribution of in-migrants, 1964	Nationalities by region	World regions	Nationalities by world region
Caribbean	6	Caribbean	6
North American	1	The Americas	2
Central America	0	Europe	1
South American	1	Asia/South Pacific	0
Western European	1	Africa	0
Eastern European	0	Middle East	0
African	0		
Middle East	0		
Central Asia	0		
South Asia	0		
East Asia	0		
New Zealand	0		
Total nationalities	9		

Table 8.3: Population dynamics: Hells Gate

Population composition change	2004	1964	Change		
Racial composition of native Sabans					
Proportion White Saban	0.71	0.73	-0.02		
Proportion Black Saban	0.16	0.14	0.01		
Proportion Mixed Saban	0.13	0.13	0.00		
Racial composition of non-Sabans					
Proportion White non-Saban	0.72	0.00	0.72		
Proportion Black Non-Saban	0.26	1.00	-0.74		
Proportion Other Non-Saban	0.02	0.00	0.02		
Racial composition of total population					
Total proportion White	0.72	0.72	0.00		
Total proportion Black	0.27	0.28	-0.01		
Total proportion Other	0.01	0.00	0.01		

Population size, Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Proportion retained	Proportion lost
White	137	143	-6	0.96	0.04
Black	30	28	2	1.07	
Biracial	24	25	-1	0.96	0.04
Other	1	0	1		
Total population	192	196	-4	0.98	0.02

Population size, Non-Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Increase in non-local population	
White (includes Hispanics)	72	0	72	72.00	
Black (includes Hispanics)	26	3	23	8.67	
Other	2	0	2	2.00	
Total population	100	3	97	33.33	

Total population growth (number of people)	93	
Proportional population growth (2004/1964)	1.47	
Proportion decline/growth of Sabans	-0.02	
Proportion increase non-Sabans	33.33	

Table 8.4: Population dynamics: Windwardside

Population composition change	2004	1964	Change
Racial composition of native Sabans			
Proportion White Saban	0.65	0.63	0.03
Proportion Black Saban	0.18	0.23	-0.05
Proportion Mixed Saban	0.15	0.14	0.01
Racial composition of non-Sabans			
Proportion White non-Saban	0.46	0.50	-0.04
Proportion Black Non-Saban	0.41	0.50	-0.09
Proportion Other Non-Saban	0.13	0.00	0.13
Racial composition of total population			
Total proportion White	0.56	0.62	-0.06
Total proportion Black	0.37	0.38	-0.01
Total proportion Other	0.07	0.00	0.07

Population size, Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Proportion retained	Proportion lost
White	140	209	-69	0.67	0.33
Black	39	78	-39	0.50	0.50
Biracial	32	47	-15	0.68	0.32
Other	3	0	3		
	214	334	-120	0.64	0.36

Population size, Non-Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Increase in non-local population
White (includes Hispanics)	85	4	81	21.25
Black (includes Hispanics)	76	4	72	19.00
Other	25	0	25	
	186	8	178	23.25

Total population growth (number of people)	58			
Proportional population growth (2004/1964)	1.17			
Proportion decline/growth of Sabans	-0.36			
Proportion increase non-Sabans	23.25			

**Table 8.5: Population dynamics: St. Johns**

Population composition change	2004	1964	Change
Racial composition of native Sabans			
Proportion White Saban	0.09	0.22	-0.13
Proportion Black Saban	0.71	0.61	0.11
Proportion Mixed Saban	0.20	0.17	0.02
Racial composition of non-Sabans			
Proportion White non-Saban	0.15	0.50	-0.35
Proportion Black Non-Saban	0.84	0.50	0.34
Proportion Other Non-Saban	0.01	0.00	0.01
Racial composition of total population			
Total proportion White	0.11	0.24	-0.13
Total proportion Black	0.89	0.76	0.12
Total proportion Other	0.00	0.00	0.00

Population size, Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Proportion retained	Proportion lost
White	12	23	-11	0.52	0.48
Black	95	63	32	1.51	
Biracial	26	18	8	1.44	
Other	0	0	0		
	133	104	29	1.28	

Population size, Non-Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Increase in non-local population
White (includes Hispanics)	10	3	7	3.33
Black (includes Hispanics)	57	3	54	19.00
Other	1	0	1	
	68	6	62	11.33

Total population growth (number of people)	91
Proportional population growth (2004/1964)	1.83
Proportion decline/growth of Sabans	0.28
Proportion increase non-Sabans	11.33

Table 8.6: Population dynamics: The Bottom

Population composition change	2004	1964	Change		
Racial composition of native Sabans					
Proportion White Saban	0.18	0.18	0.00		
Proportion Black Saban	0.60	0.56	0.04		
Proportion Mixed Saban	0.22	0.26	-0.04		
Racial composition of non-Sabans					
Proportion White non-Saban	0.31	0.39	-0.08		
Proportion Black Non-Saban	0.50	0.61	-0.11		
Proportion Other Non-Saban	0.20	0.00	0.20		
Racial composition of total population					
Total proportion White	0.24	0.20	0.03		
Total proportion Black	0.69	0.80	-0.11		
Total proportion Other	0.08	0.00	0.08		

Population size, Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Proportion retained	Proportion lost
White	54	63	-9	0.86	0.14
Black	176	192	-16	0.92	0.08
Biracial	63	89	-26	0.71	0.29
Other	0	0	0		
	293	344	-51	0.85	0.15

Population size, Non-Sabans	2004	1964	Change	Increase in non-local population	
White (includes Hispanics)	62	13	49	4.77	
Black (includes Hispanics)	99	20	79	4.95	
Other	39	0	39		
	200	33	167	6.06	

Total population growth (number of people)	116				
Proportional population growth (2004/1964)	1.31				
Proportion decline/growth of Sabans	-0.15				
Proportion increase non-Sabans	6.06				
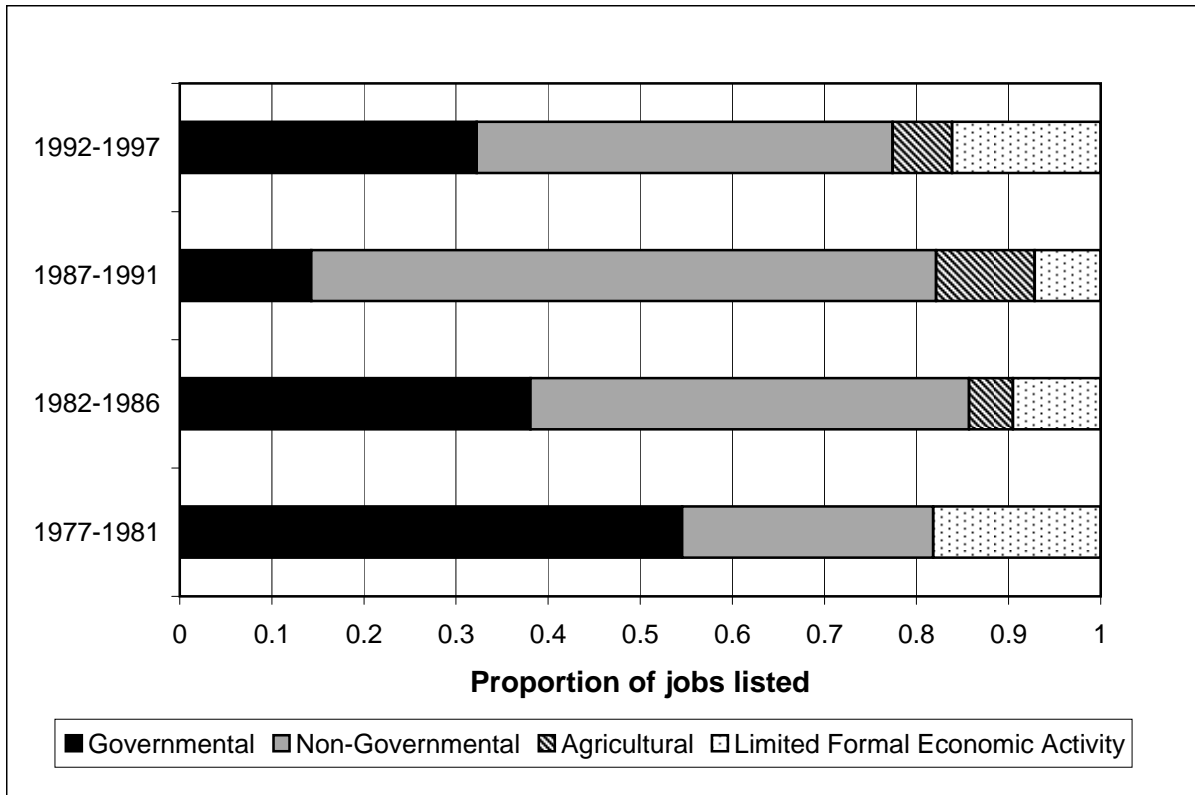
Figure 8.1: Employment trends, 1977-1997: White men
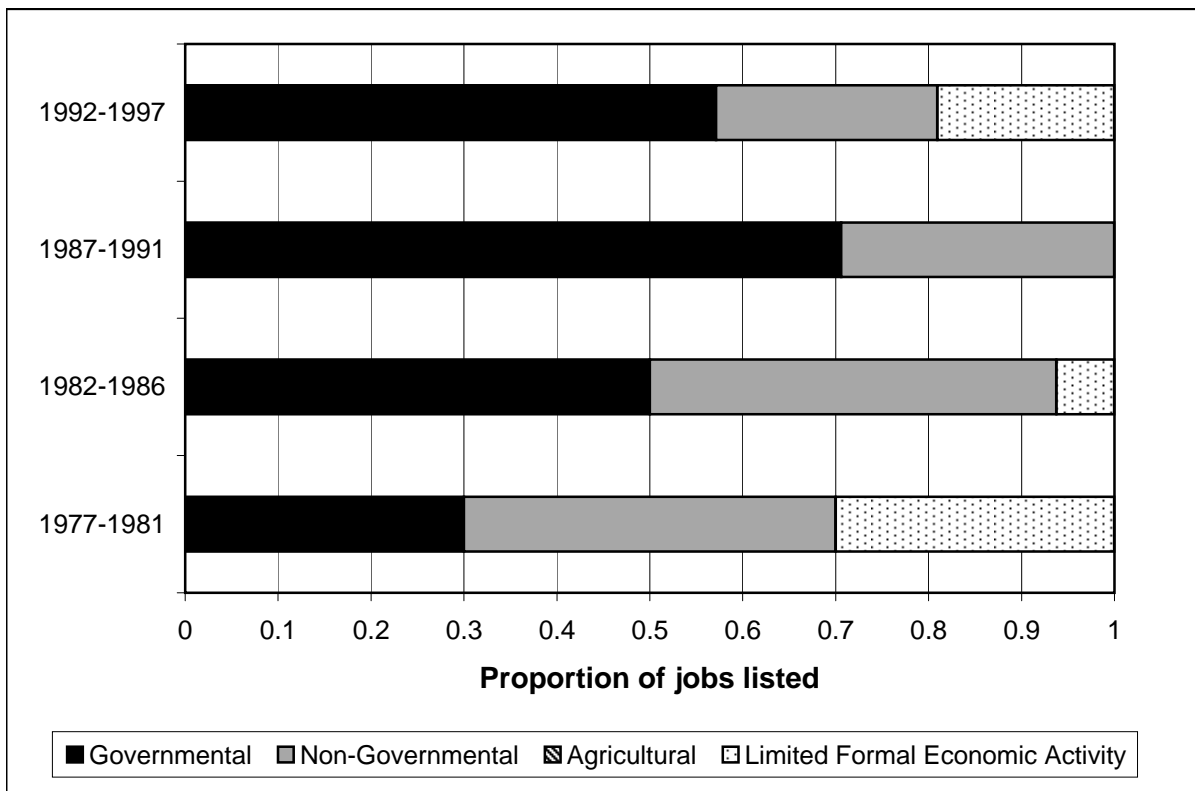
Figure 8.2: Employment trends, 1977-1997: Black men
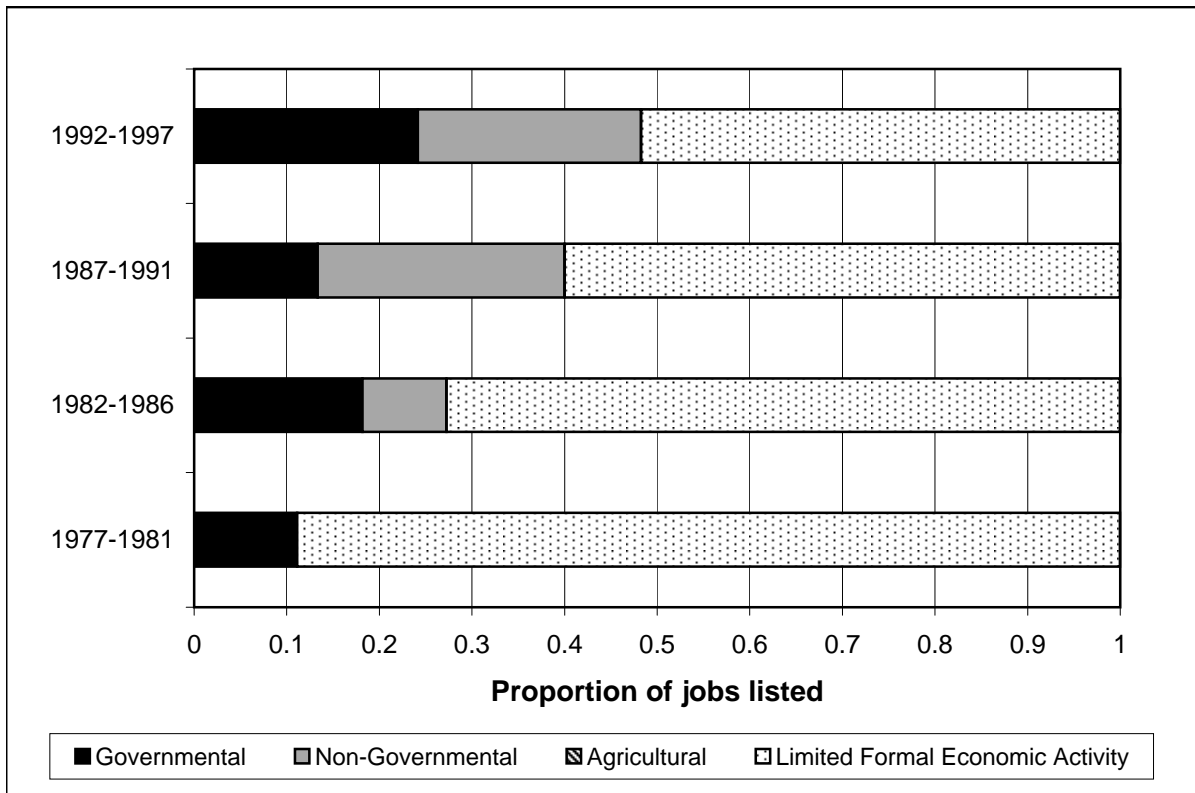
Figure 8.3: Employment trends, 1977-1997: White women
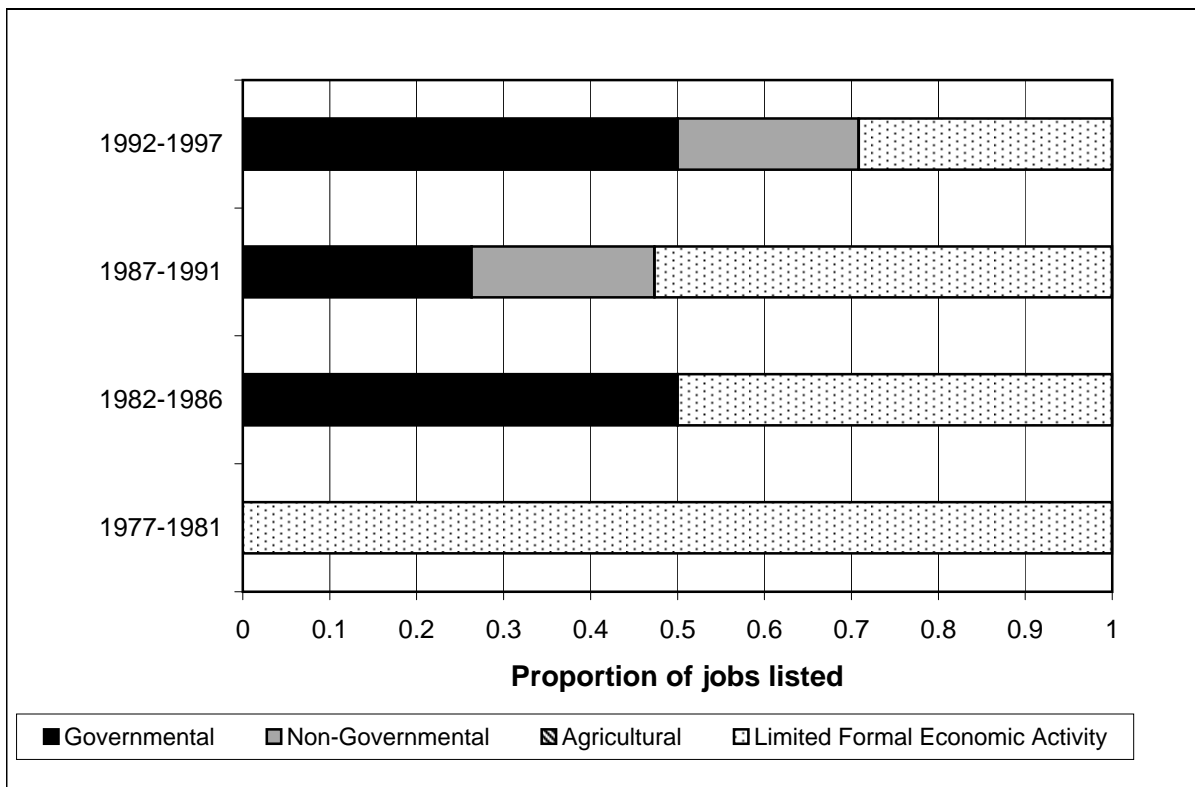
Figure 8.4: Employment trends, 1977-1997: Black women
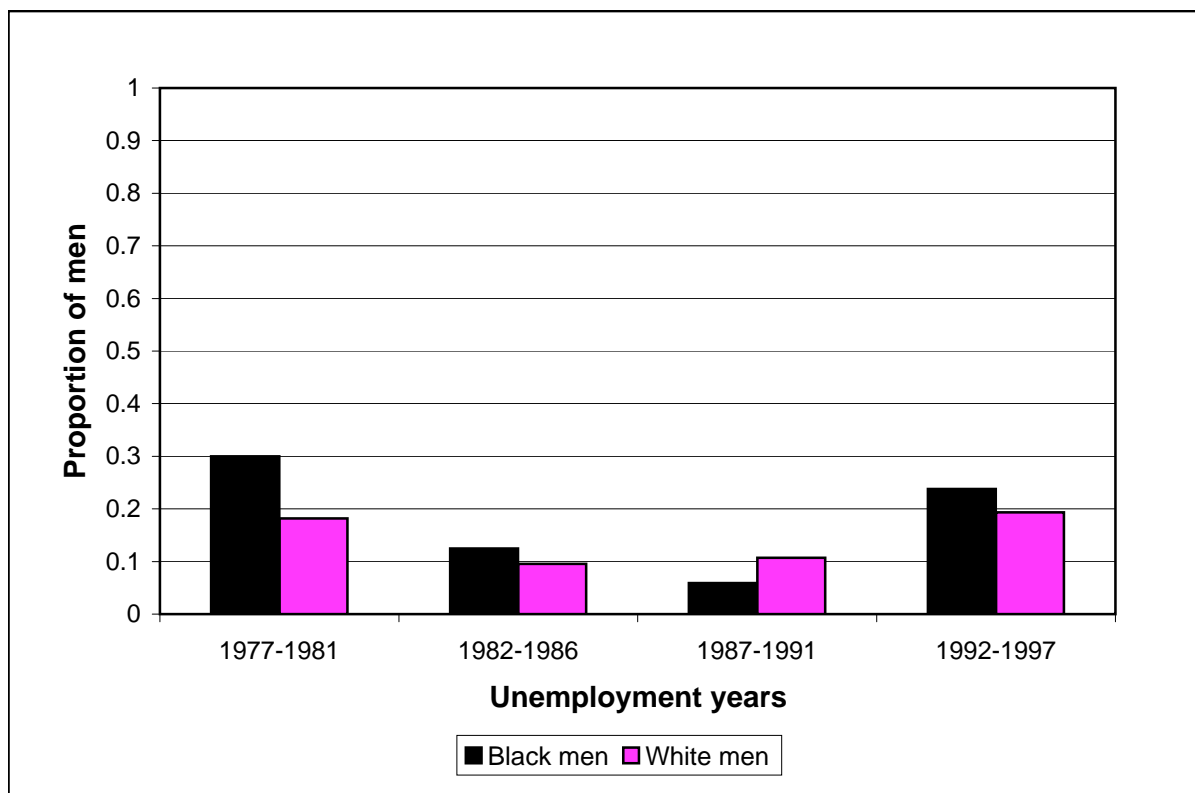
Figure 8.5: Unemployment trends, 1977-1997: Men
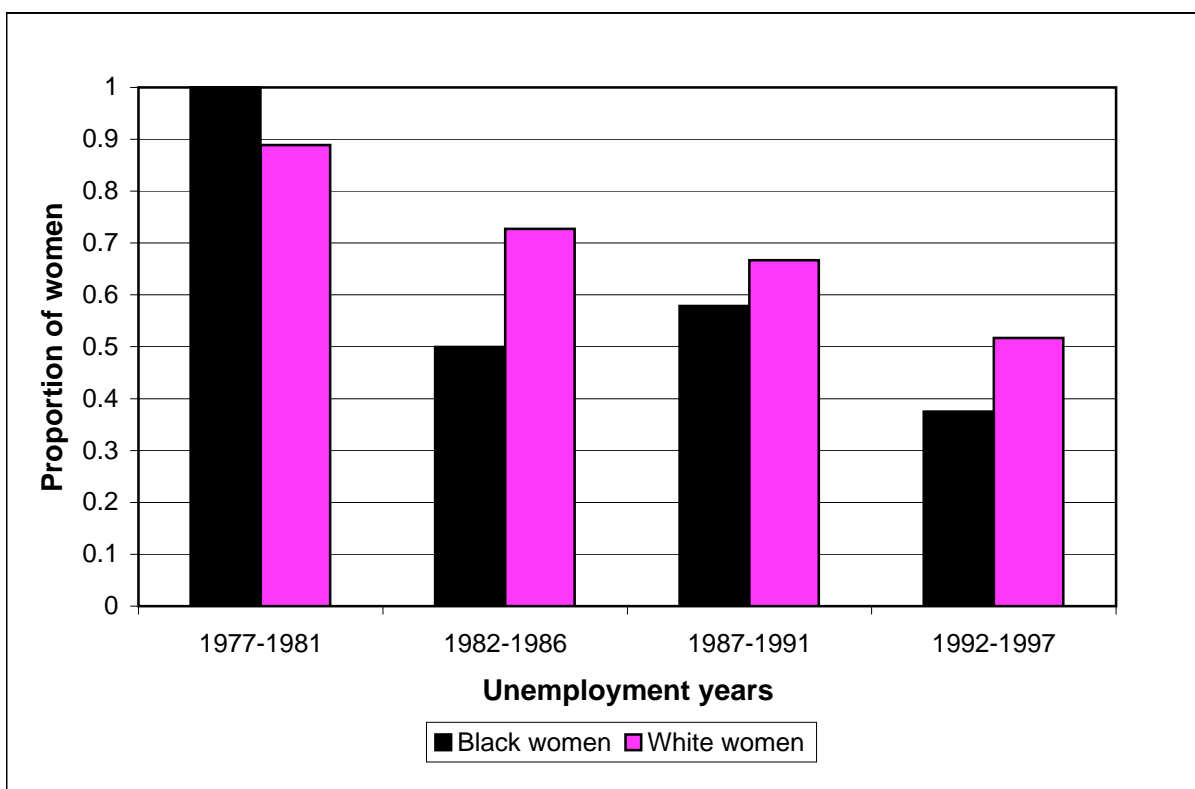
Figure 8.6: Unemployment trends, 1977-1997: Women
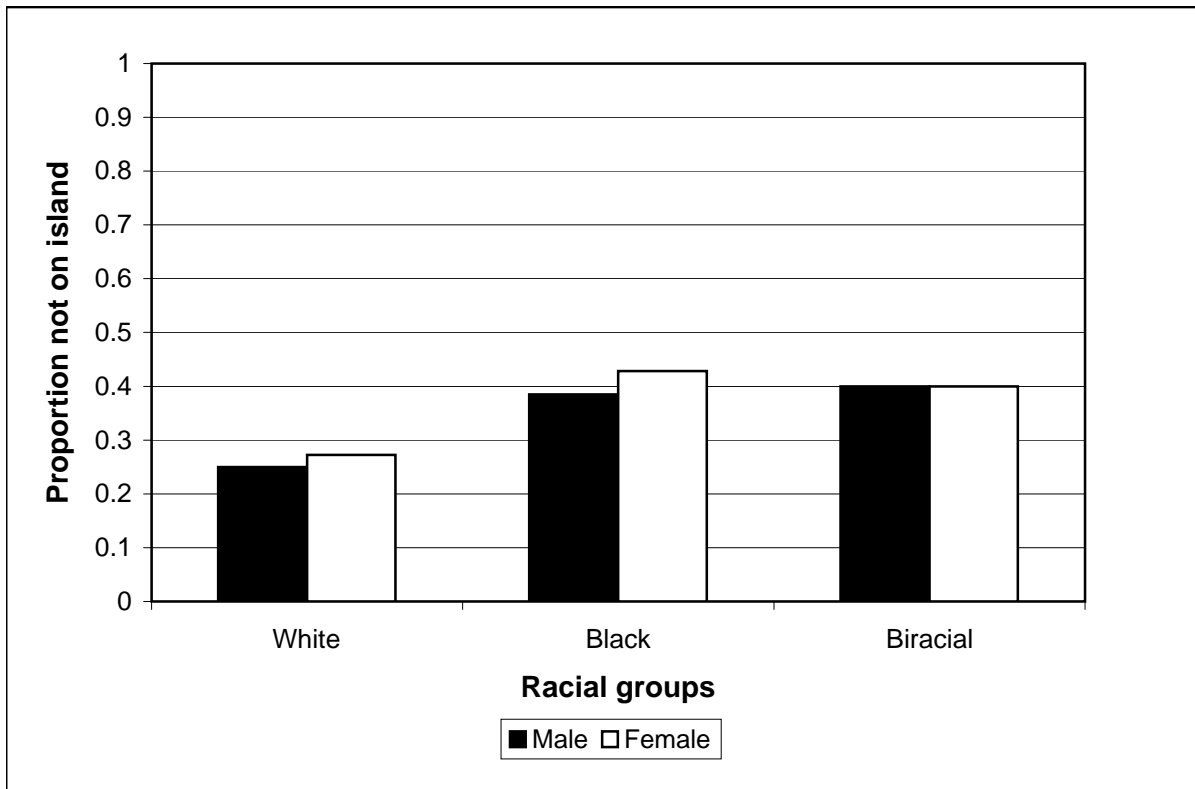
Figure 8.7: College-aged Saban youth not on island in 2004
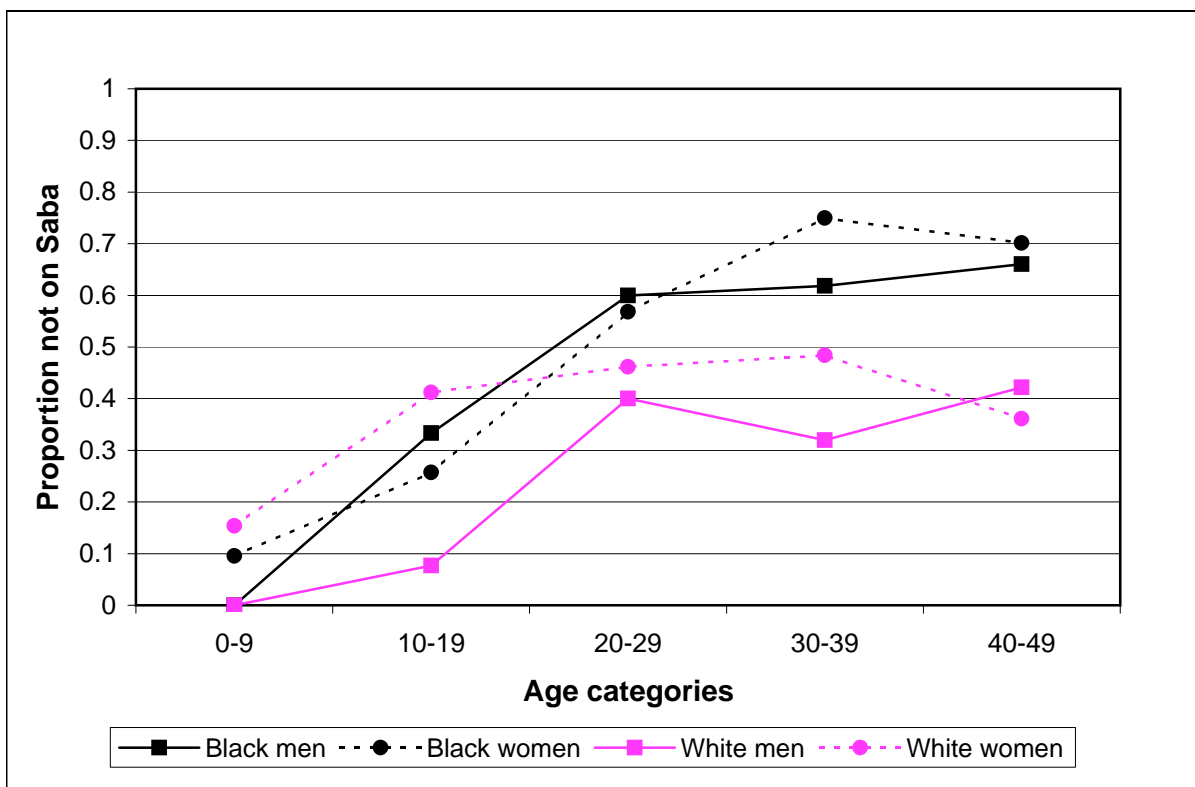
Figure 8.8: Proportion of Sabans under 50 not on island in 2004
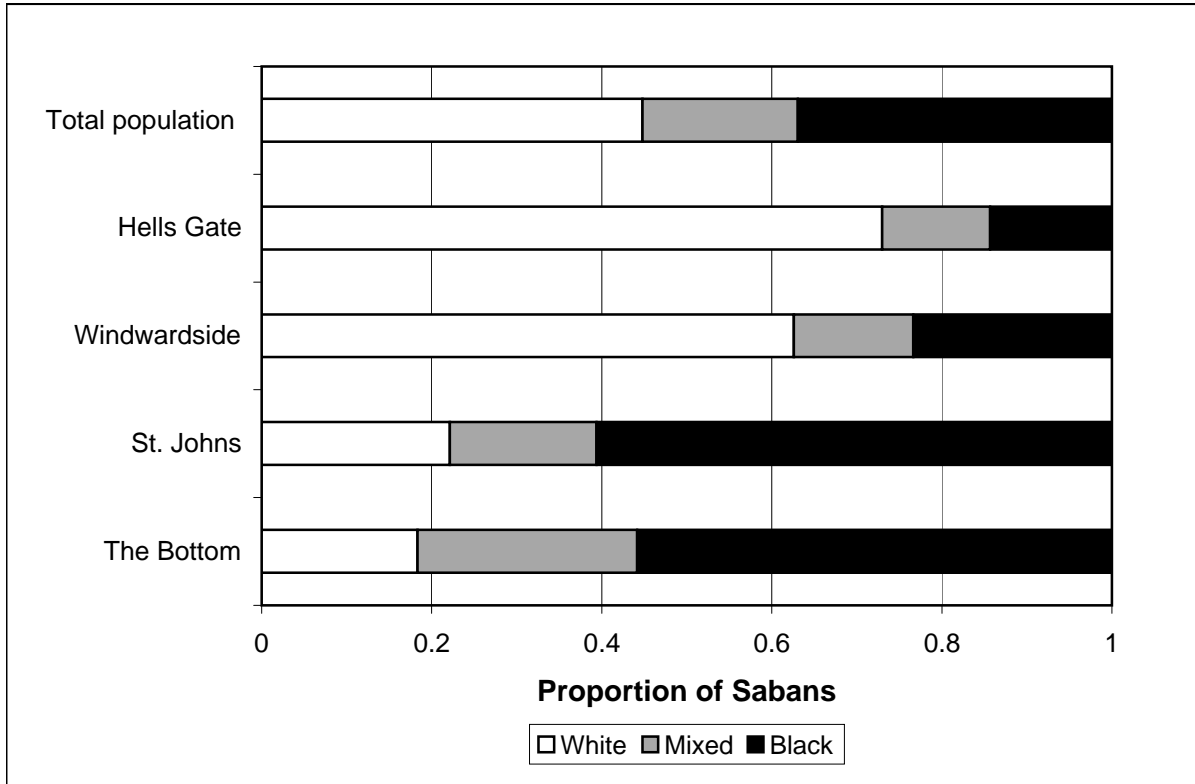
Figure 8.9: Population composition, Sabans: 1964
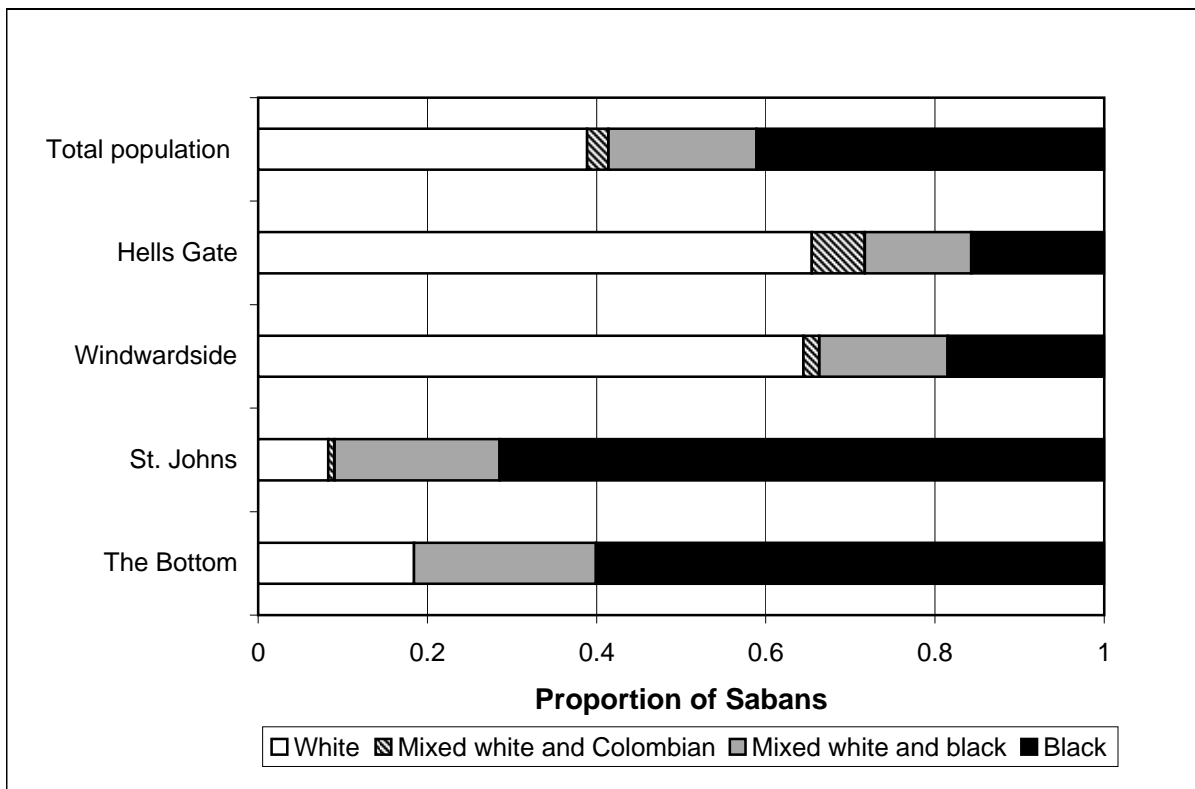
Figure 8.10: Population composition, Sabans: 2004
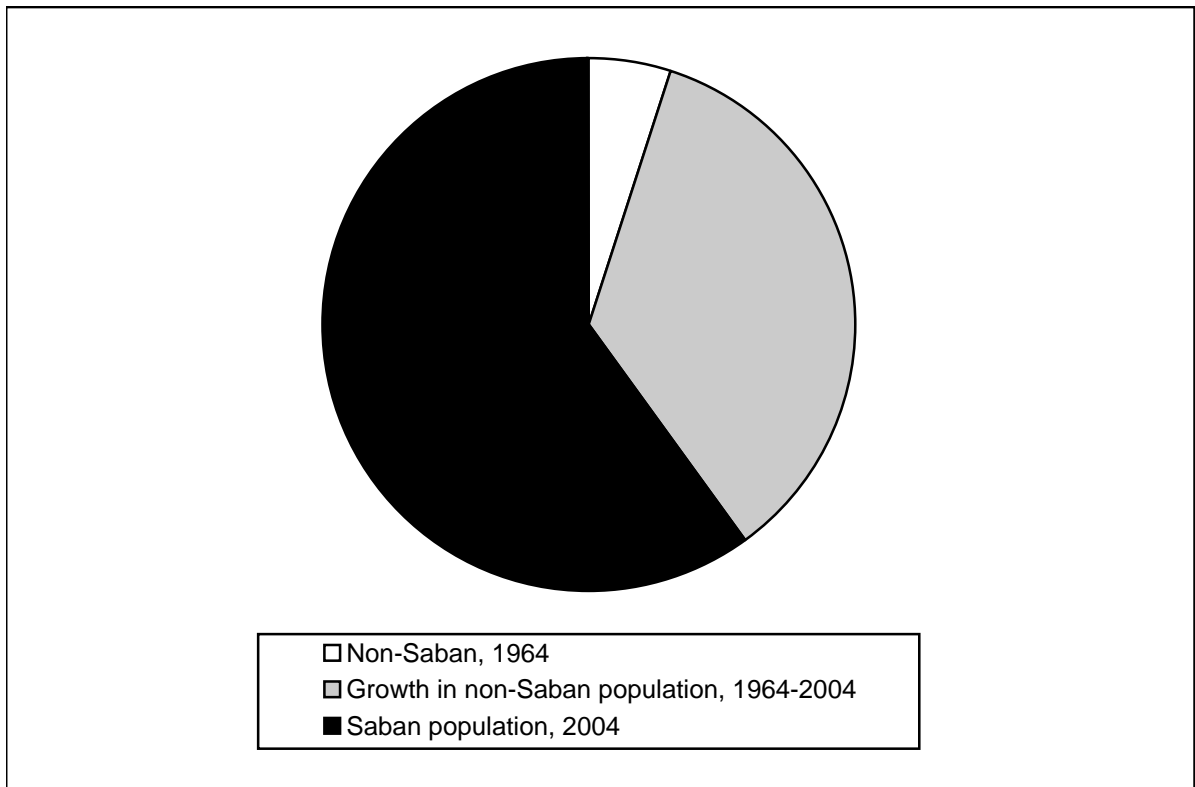
Figure 8.11: Growth in the non-Saban population, 1964-2004
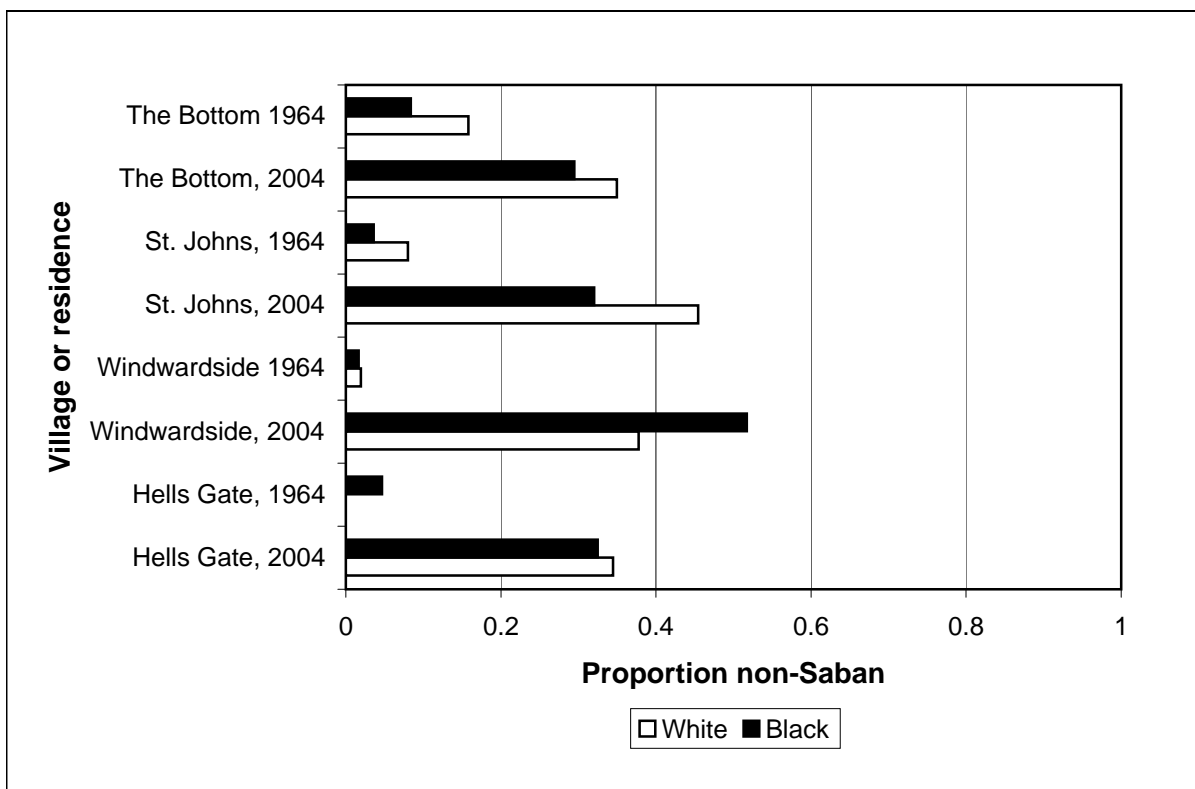
Figure 8.12: Proportion non-Saban by village: 1964, 2004
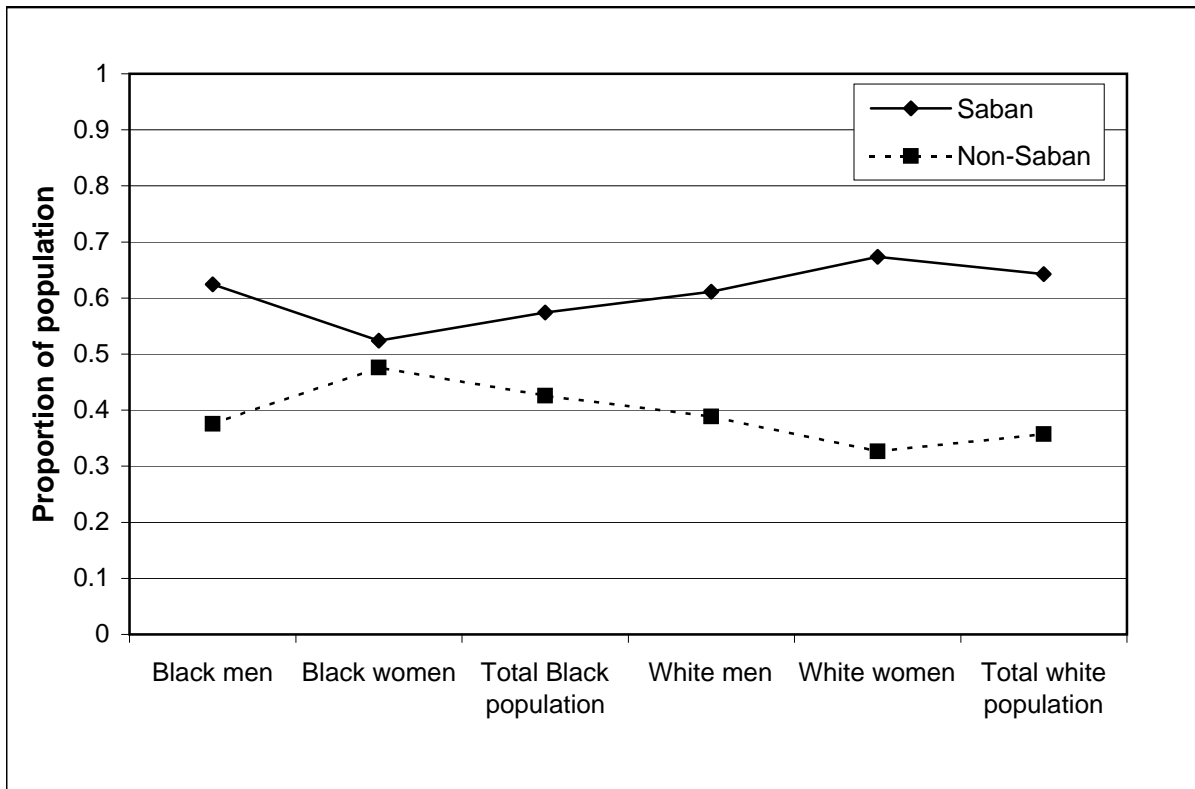
Figure 8.13: Proportion non-Saban by race and sex: 2004
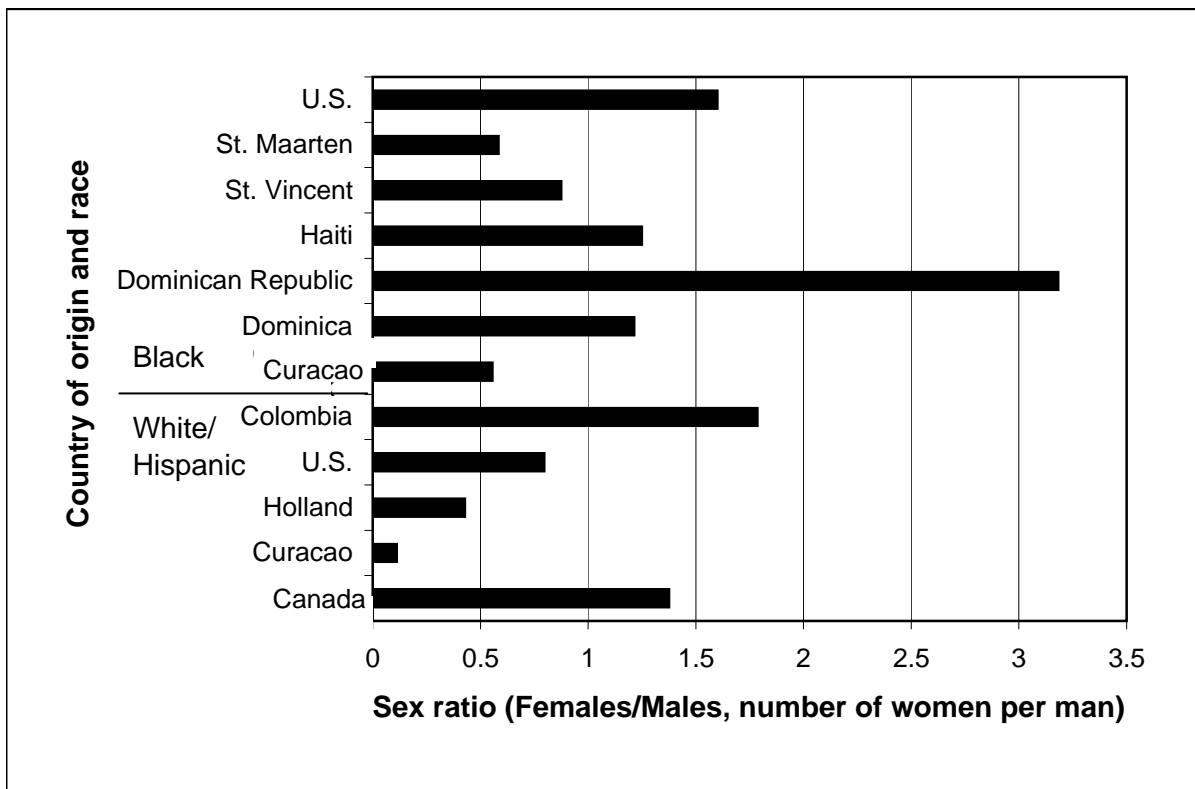
Figure 8.14: Sex ratios for select non-Saban populations, 2004
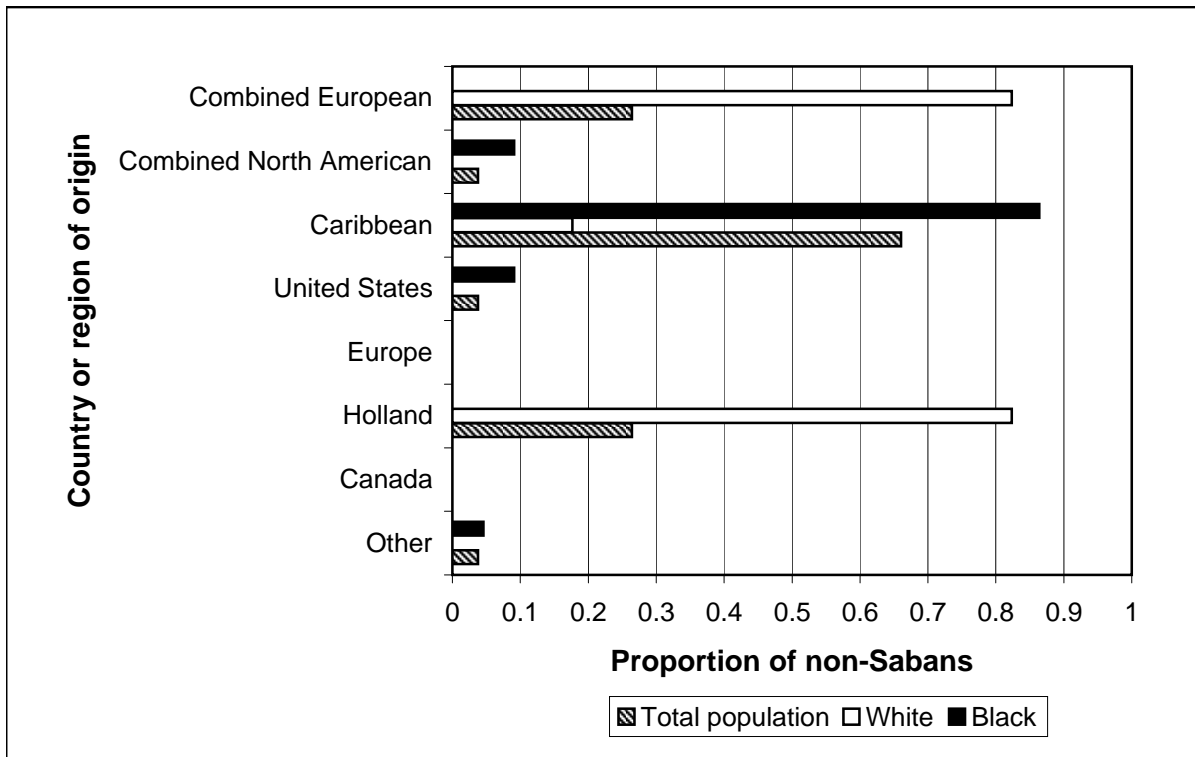
Figure 8.15: Non-Saban population by region and country of origin: 1964
(Total population=total foreign population, white= foreign whites, black= foreign blacks)
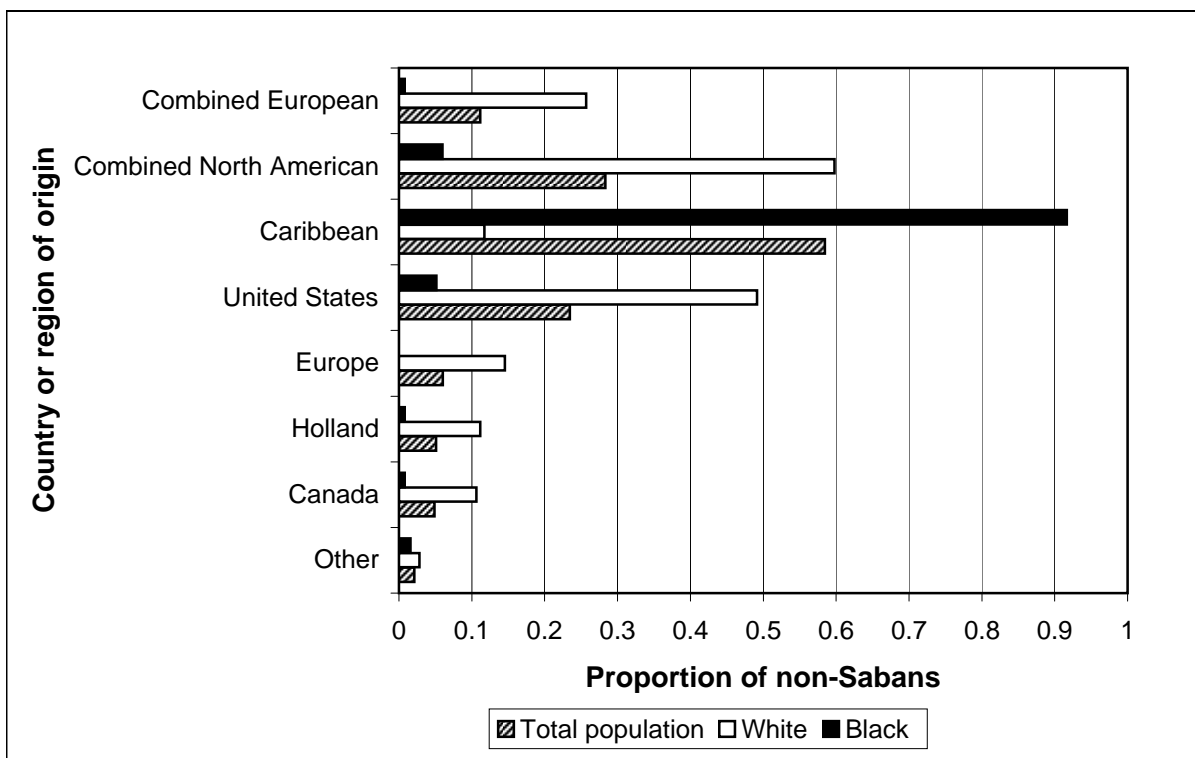
Figure 8.16: Non-Saban population by region and country of origin: 2004
(Total population=total foreign population, white= foreign whites, black= foreign blacks)
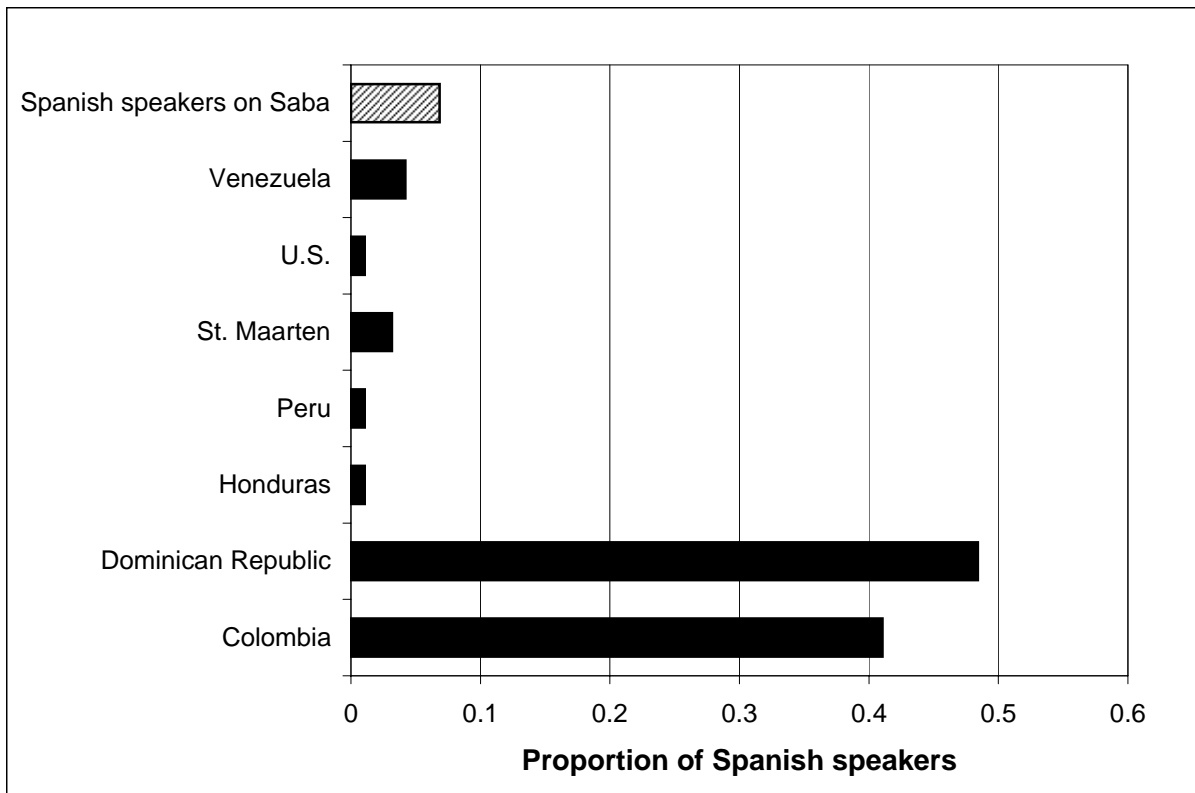
Figure 8.17: Countries of origin for Spanish-speakers, 2004
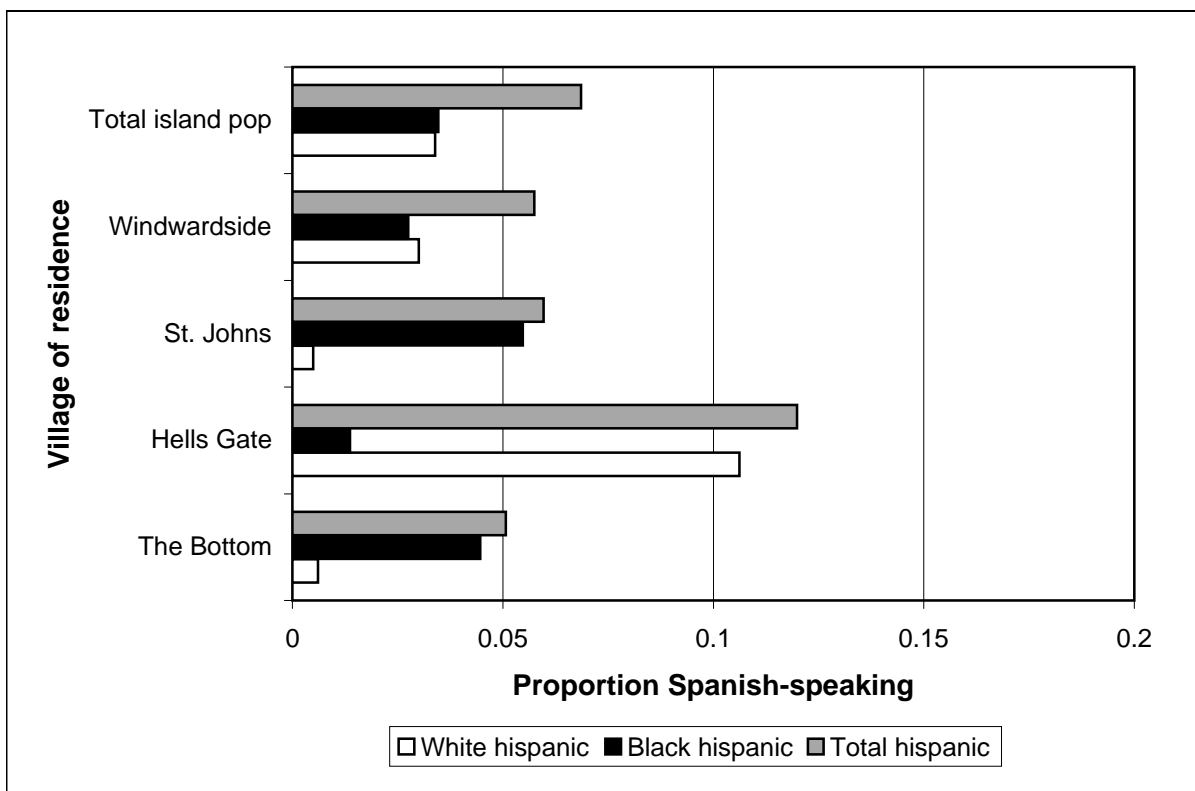
Figure 8.18: Distribution of Spanish-speakers by village and race, 2004
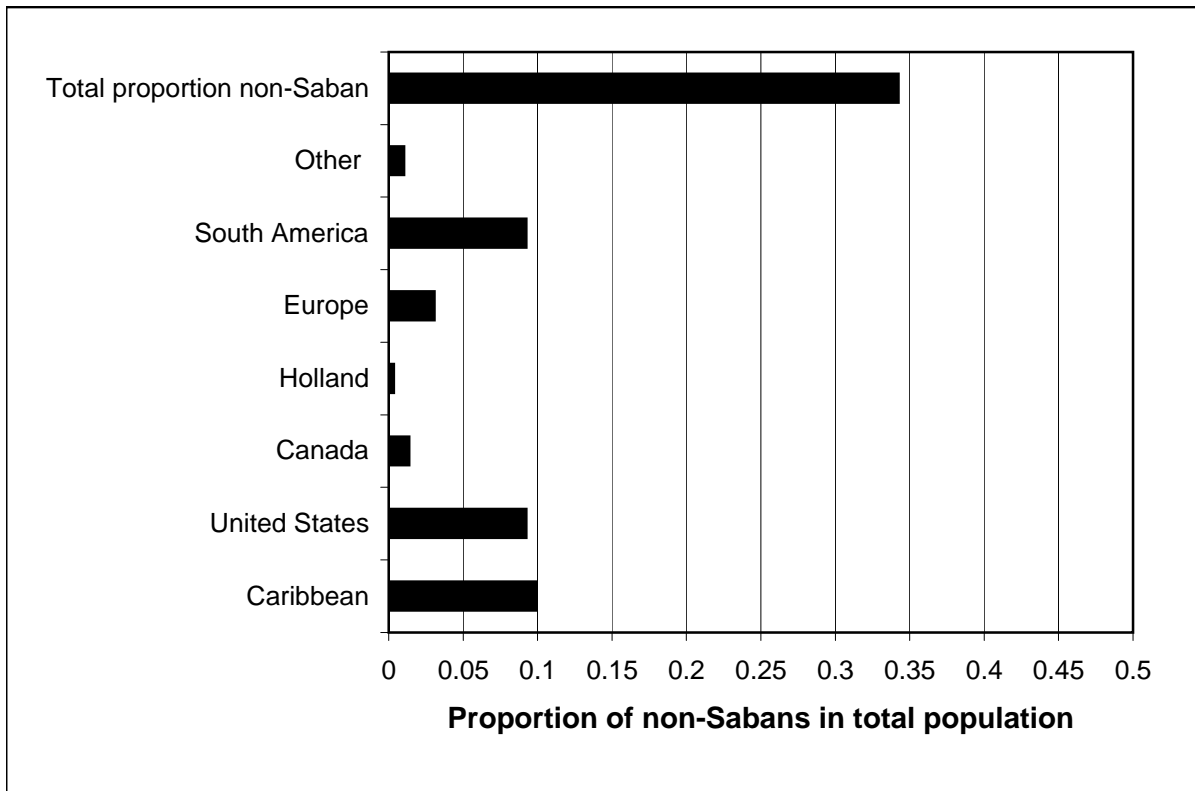
Figure 8.19: Proportion non-Saban by region and select countries: Hells Gate
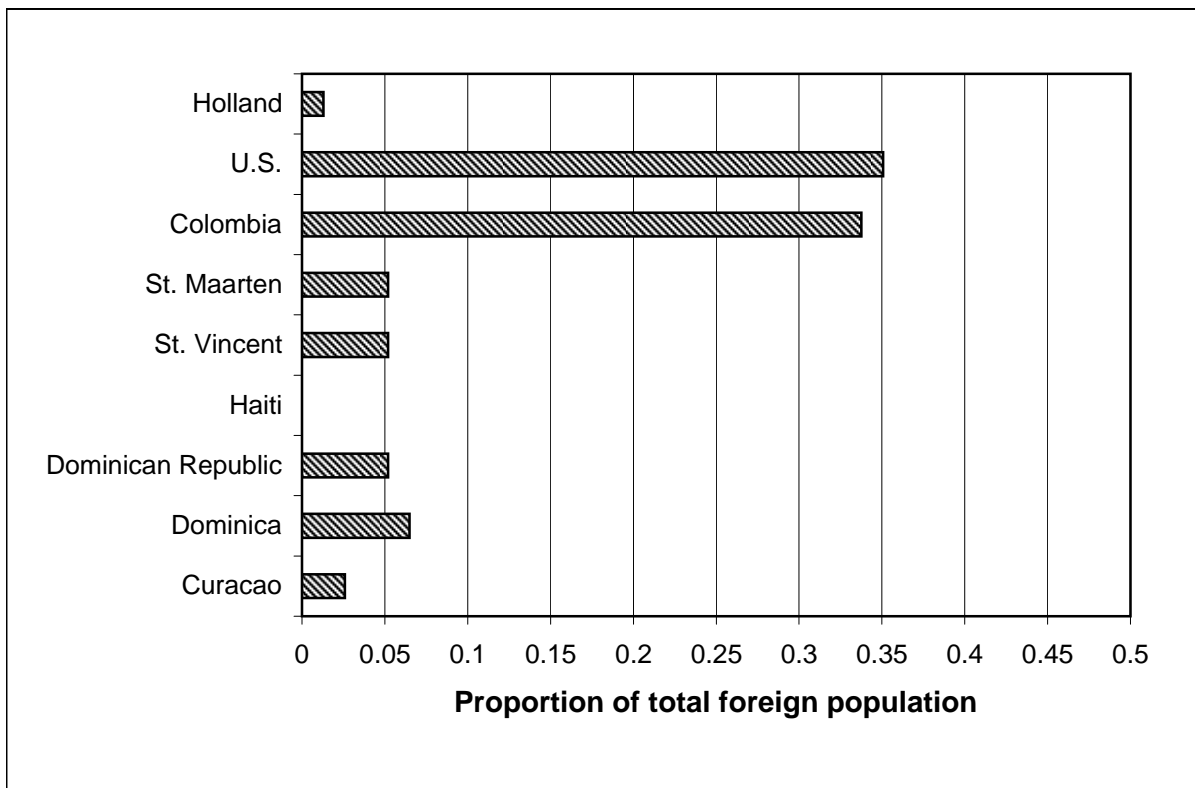
Figure 8.20: Distribution of non-Sabans by most prevalent countries of origin: Hells Gate

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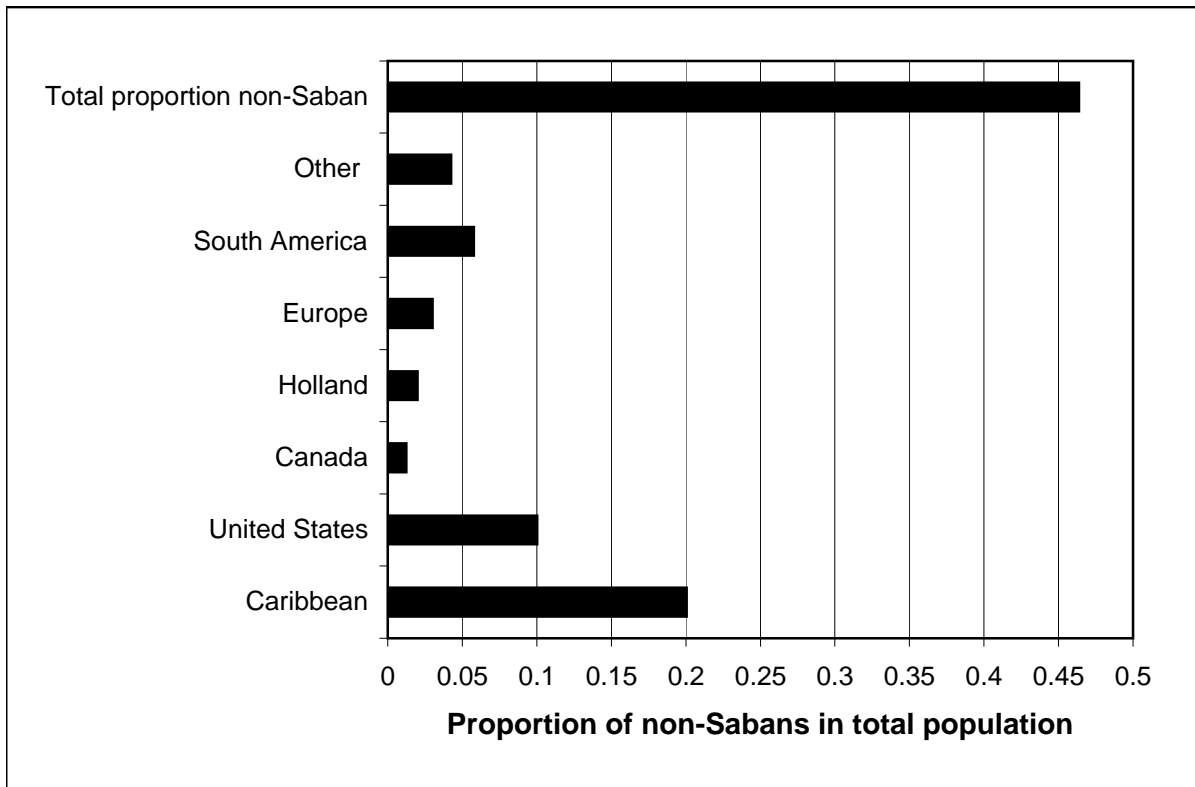
Figure 8.21: Proportion non-Saban by region and select countries: Windwardside
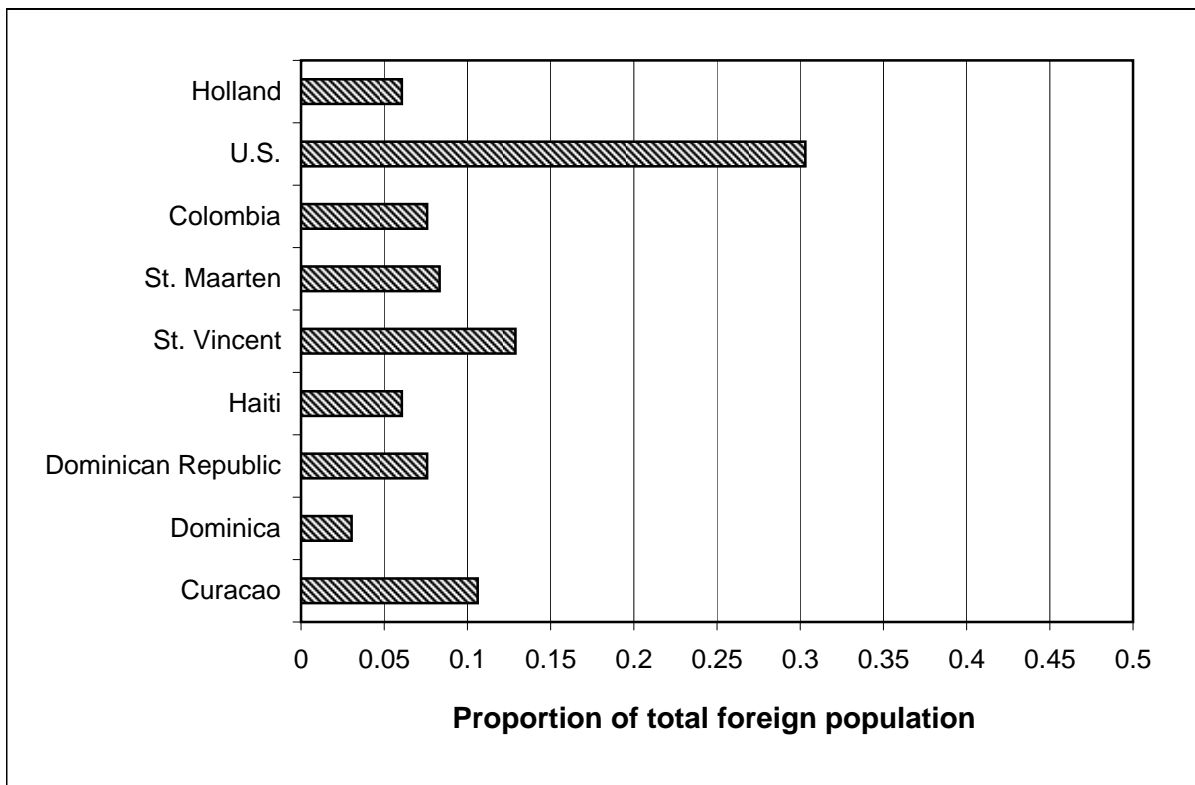
Figure 8.22: Distribution of non-Sabans by most prevalent countries of origin: Windwardside
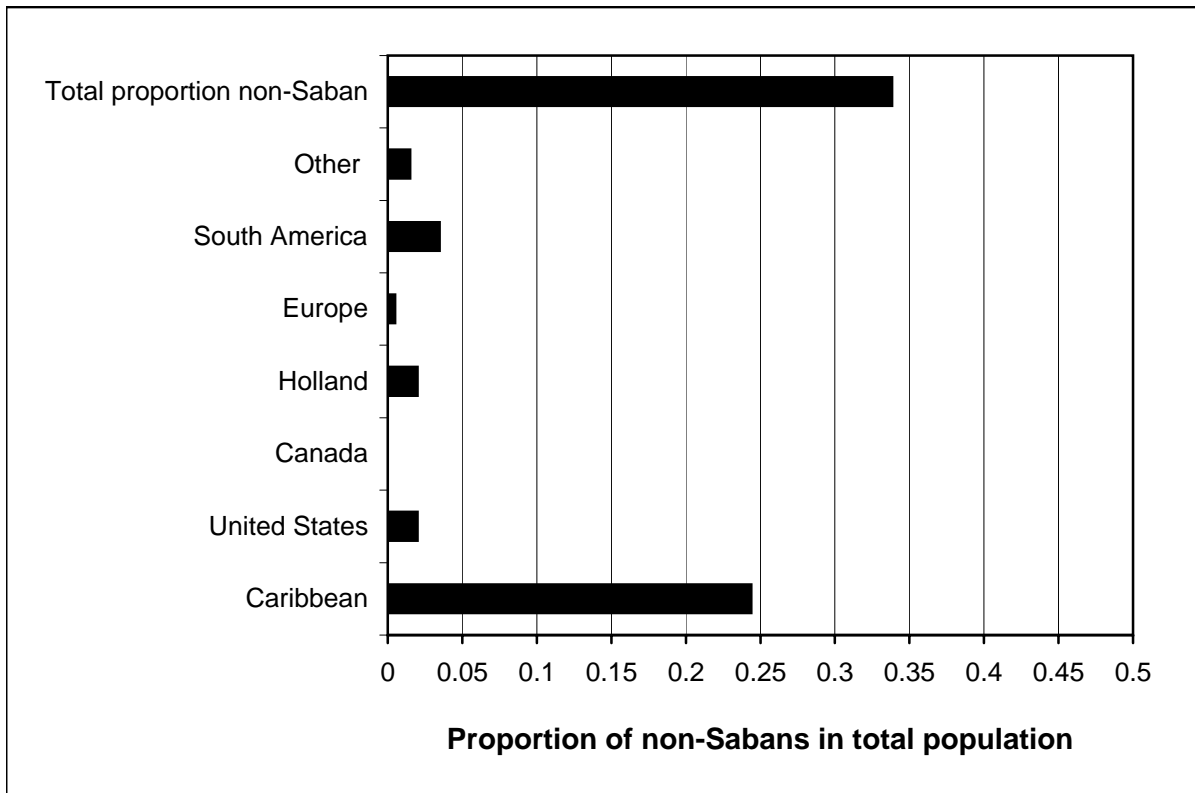
Figure 8.23: Proportion non-Saban by region and select countries: St. Johns
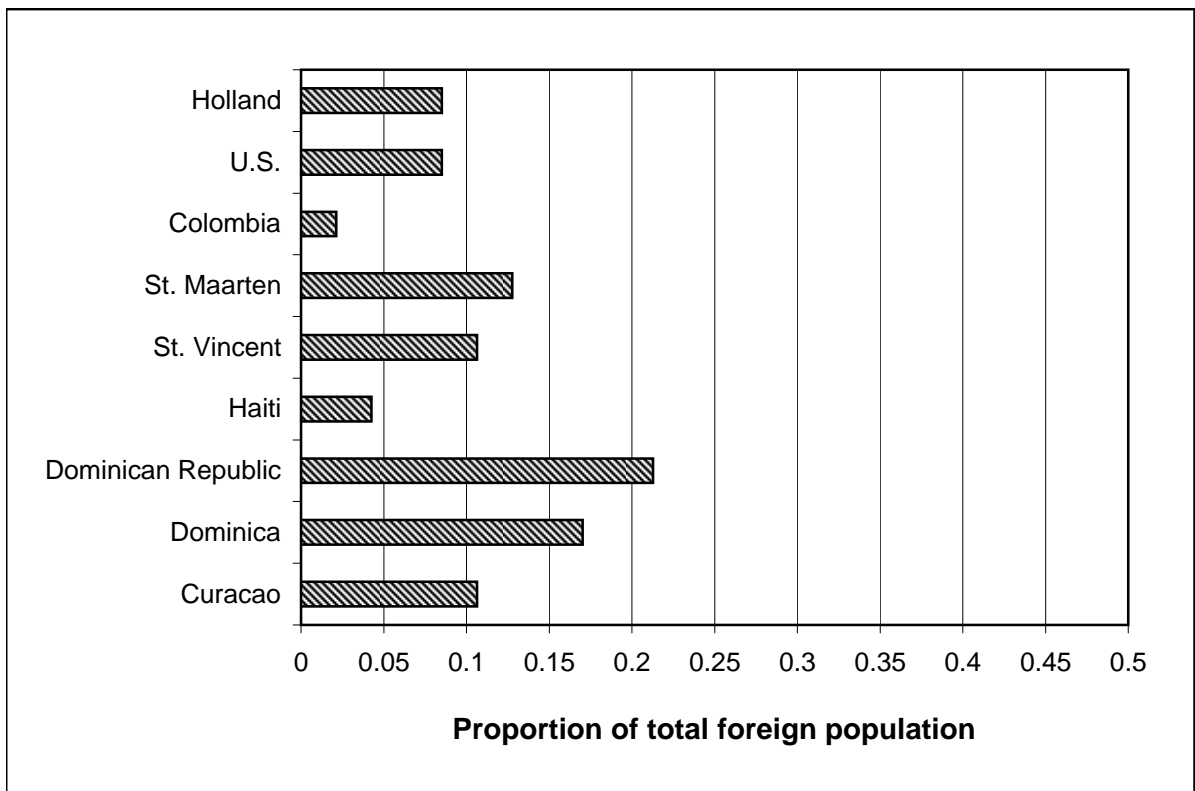
Figure 8.24: Distribution of non-Sabans by most prevalent countries of origin: St. Johns

499
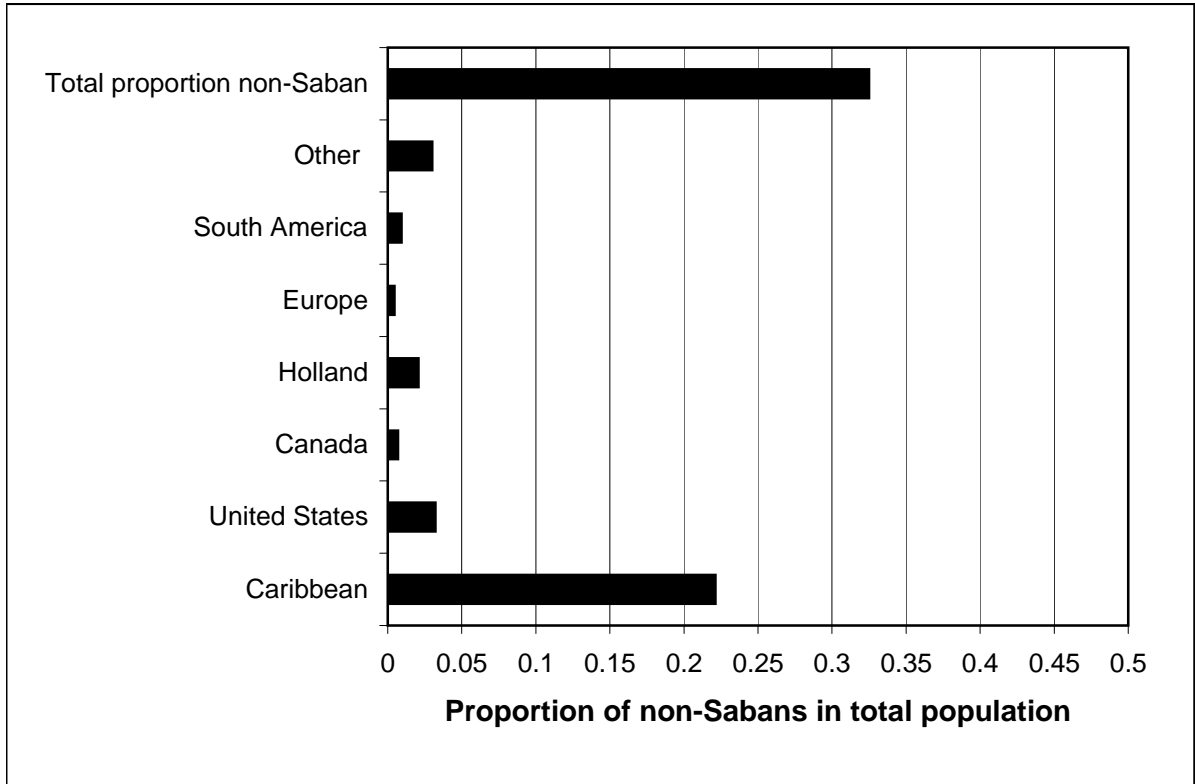
Figure 8.25: Proportion non-Saban by region and select countries: The Bottom
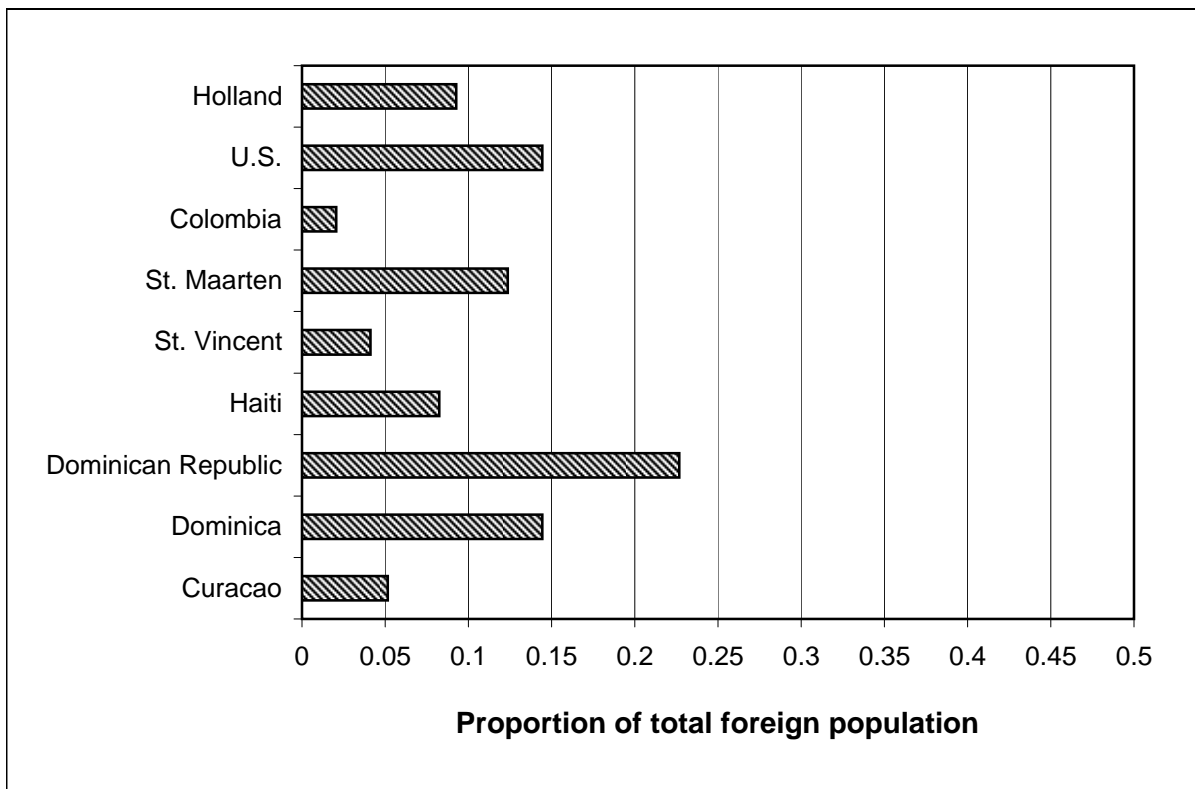
Figure 8.26: Distribution of non-Sabans by most prevalent countries of origin: The Bottom

500

CHAPTER 9

**CASTLES MADE OF SAND OR STONE?: STABILITIES AND INSTABILITIES IN
MODERN SABAN FAMILIES**

The lay of the land in modern Saban society is stitched together from the cultural history of

Saba, the historical experiences of Sabans both on and off their island, and the changing

socioeconomic conditions and diasporic interactions that characterize island life today. Past, present,

and imagined future inform the family building decisions that Sabans make and help contextualize

and make sense of family experiences over the course of individual lives. The constellation of gender

norms in modern Saban society continues to place a premium on women who adhere to the ideals of

female domesticity, sexual purity, and fidelity, while turning a partially blind eye to their men's

indiscretions, that developed during a time where men were migrants, primary economic providers,

and absentee husbands, and fathers. At the same time, an increasing number of women draw on these

images and expectations as relics of a past that are incongruous with the visions that educated

working women have for their own lives or the reality that many men are simply not willing or not

able to fulfill their economic roles despite the fact that many still insist on enjoying all the traditional

social and sexual privileges of being a man in Saban society. This pull between the traditional and

the modern, a continuing desire of men to assert their socioeconomic dominance and an increasing

chorus of women's voices that demand more power in their own lives and in their own families, is at

the core of many of the instabilities in Saban family life. These tensions will be examined by first

looking at the ways that Saban women view gender norms in their own communities and then by

looking at how these perspectives unfold in their experiences of and perspectives on marriage,

divorce, cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, and interracial and interethnic families.

Evolving gender norms in Saban society

During times when men were migrants sailing on schooners bound for America or guiding shallow-draft tankers into Aruban ports, gender norms on Saba took on certain rigidities for Saban women who were expected to hold down the fort at home while maintaining a high level of sexual propriety marked by social confinement to the home and limited, highly formalized, heavily supervised interactions outside the home. Men, however, bore the burdens of their provider roles with equivocal success even though most took these responsibilities very seriously, learned to negotiate difficult and often dangerous off-island lives, and, for some, secured a level of sexual freedom that only a roving man can enjoy. Although many women were responsible for keeping their families afloat economically, through on-island labor in the drawn-thread work trade or in a range of domestic services, and emotionally, during the long absences of much loved husbands and fathers, their role in island life always took a back seat to the more adventurous and worldly lives experienced by their men. Men were viewed as active participants in the extra-domestic social worlds on- and off-island and as the penultimate decision makers in their homes while hard-working women had equally complex social lives but tended to move behind the scenes in their families and in island life. Of course, the nature of these relationships fell along a spectrum ranging from complete male dominance of family life, either remotely from stations across the Caribbean or through continual presence in the home, to relationships that were formed on a more equal basis where fidelity was a requirement for both husband and wife.

Social experiences of race also came to be strong mediating forces in these relationships and came to divide the experiences of black and white women along the fault lines of the traditional roles of husbands and fathers, wives and mothers sketched above. During the period of oil refinery migration, more black women began to have children outside of marriage and, finding a general decline in the willingness or ability of their partners to take on the social or economic responsibilities of fatherhood, began to rely more on themselves as sole family providers through on-island labor or through labor migration to work as domestics and other service-industry employees on the oil-islands

of Aruba and Curacao. Work became an ambiguous influence in black women's lives as it both empowered them to become self-reliant but also remained a clear marker of their partner's failure to live up to their traditional roles as economic providers either within or outside of the context of marriage. Furthermore, an attitude of "I can do it on my own" both masked the daily struggles that black women faced working on the economic margins of Saban society and legitimated the brazen neglect perpetrated by many of their partners. White women, on the other hand, certainly endured and suffered through the economic inadequacies of their men but continued to form marital relationships that defined husbands as the primary economic providers. This, in combination with the continuing power and influence of traditional gender norms that required women to conform to an image of staid domesticity, kept many white women from working outside of their homes throughout the oil-refinery period and deep into in the post-oil period. It is only recently that these two trends have begun to converge as white women find themselves moving into the workforce as both a way to assert their economic independence from men and as a way to mitigate against the economic disasters that often follow in the wake of divorce and separation or long-term emotional or financial neglect by their spouses. Much like black women in the earlier periods, white women not work because they want to and because they have to and these transformations have reoriented the ways that men and women interact with one another in their families and in society at large.

As Saban men and women think about starting their own families, they come into the process with a set of underlying assumptions not only about what qualities they are looking for and can expect from a partner but also about the qualities that potential partners are looking for in them. These expectations derive from both from unquestioned cultural norms and expectations about the roles that men and women play in their families and from the ruptures that exist between traditional expectations and changing attitudes about gender, family, and work in Saban society. To get at how women perceived these social undercurrents, Saban women were asked the basic but complex questions "What makes a good woman?" and "What makes a good man?". Responses were varied but most focused on the ability of women to care for their children, the balance between women's

work outside their homes and their domestic duties as wife and mother, the continuing if equivocal importance of men as economic providers, and the ways that many men fall short of fulfilling their familial roles. Good women were described as women who demanded respect from men, their families and their community by maintaining certain codes of interpersonal conduct, particularly with men, by fulfilling their duties as wife and mother, and by finding a balance between working inside and outside the home. One young black woman recalled how her own mother maintained respectability through the way that she cared for her family through tough economic times:

> Well, I think when a woman is a really good woman, for anybody, I ain't disrespecting no mother, disrespecting no young lady. A woman is called a woman when she can stand her bounds or stand her responsibilities. I can respect anybody who can do that for themselves. I ain't saying I'm disrespecting anybody who can't do that for themselves. When you can do, when you can work and stand that foundation for yourself, for your family or for your future, or if you have children, that's a good mother. I can tell you. No matter where my mother went, because I'm thinking about my mother, no matter where my mother went, we were behind her. We all went to the bus in line behind, you would always see us marching by her side…marching together. And my mother always told us that no matter where she go, we go because she do not want to hear or see anything because if anything happen, it happen in front her face. And she has always been, no matter what money she made and made us do. Because years ago they used to give kids here, every two weeks they would give poor money from the government, twenty guilders and then sometimes up to thirty five, it bought the can of milk and what that can of milk did, it did for all of us. No matter what, because we was living in a small house first before they moved us into a government house and it was very rotten down and this, that, and the other. No matter what all she did and how she did it, we were always fed, we were always clean, that's one thing that everybody always said about my mother. No matter what she'd been through, the house could be rotten down, it could be this, or that, or the other but she always kept the house clean, making sure that everybody eat, nobody was without nothing. Everybody ate at the same time it's not that one would be getting fed before the next. And always people admire my mother on Saba for that. When she walking and her children walking, we was always clean on the road, no matter how small the house could have been, or they could call it rotten down, it was clean. We was always clean, our hair always combed, the grease a shining from the scalp. And a good woman who can stand her foundation, stand her bound and responsibilities is called a woman.

Dignity through motherhood and home-making, even in difficult economic situations, was a consistent theme in many Saban women's narratives and these general feelings are expanded on by another black woman who draws an on-going distinction between the roles of mothers and fathers in the lives of children:

> The responsibility lie more on the mother than on the father. The mother is the one that have to raise the children, give them that moral support. If the father wants to, they do it. If they don't want to, they don't do it. But the moral support, the value of life and all of that comes from the mother. That's why they always say here on Saba, the

women have to be the role model. The role model, you know, and don't reckon for the father figure. The father figure is more work because that is something I think has been instilled in them from the past. You know, that the father is there to go out and work and bring in the food but the mother is the one that have to take care of the home, take care of the children. So, you would not easy find that a father would go out and do shopping for the child. The mother's going to go out and do shopping for the child, do shopping for the household. That old time way we still have it…The mother is really the responsibility of children. That's why they always say it here, they always say, well, it's always better to lose your father than to lose your mother. Because losing your mother, you've lost everything.

Later she continues these thoughts by adding that:

I always feel that on Saba it is as though, well, you know, the mother has created a great sin by getting these children. So, by because you got these children, it could be either in marriage or not, it's you're responsibility. You have to make sure that these children are perfect children. That these children grow up to be good citizens. You never hear easy where because of the father the child failed. They will say, well, "if the mother didn't take care of it, why you upset?". You know, it's always, quite often you'll always hear well, "look at the mother, the mother ain't got no time for it, what you expect". But you will never hear, you know, "well look at the father, why didn't the father come forward" or something like that.

Irrespective of their work outside the home, women still are expected to maintain their roles as primary caretaker of their children and of their homes more generally while fathers continue to be emotionally distant and inactive within the context of home life. Women bear the burden of raising successful, well-adjusted, socially contributing children on their own and, in cases where children are not up to these standards of behavior, the mother rather than the absentee father is almost always seen to be at fault. This division of labor is echoed in the thoughts shared by a middle-aged white woman, although, interestingly, she does make the assumption that women are mainly housewives in the white community:

Well, most of the women here on Saba is very respectful to their husbands and they love them and they care very much for them. They don't have to have so much worry, especially the white race. It's very loving to their own race. Especially our mens here, the womens see that all their work is done. Their cooking is on time. Their washing and their everything is completed when their husband comes. Because it's very clean when they reach their home and their husbands can see that their work is done. They come home and is very loving to the woman and they help them if there's anything to be done.

Another younger white woman shares a slightly different perspective on what makes a good woman but concedes that all of the above sentiments are continuing community norms even if changes in these norms are emerging:

> For me the qualities in a woman I value are being educated and intelligent, open minded, positive. I'm not sure if everybody appreciates education. Maybe some people here still want a woman to stay home and cook and clean and wash and bake and take care of the kids. But I think that's really beginning to change now. There's more opportunities to leave the island and go away to school. Scholarships are available and now women are becoming more educated and are playing a bigger role in the community, I think…I think that's world wide, probably. Women are becoming more and more career-oriented, not staying so much at home, you know.

She articulates her minority view by making direct reference both to worldwide trends towards higher levels of women's participation in the labor force and as public figures in their communities and to an emerging consensus about the proper place of women in society that now circulates among younger educated Saban women who have been a part of that wider world and who have experienced what life was like for women living in other places. Combined, the perspectives offered by Saban women both point to an enduring sense that women should be primary caretakers for children and that they are also responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and smooth-functioning of their homes. Generational and educational influences are challenging these notions but, as of yet, most women still feel that they are responsible for the shape and experience of domestic life for their children and their partners.

When asked how men determine whether someone is a good woman and potential partner, most women insisted that men are looking for women who are willing and able to fill their traditional roles as wife and mother. One younger biracial woman acknowledged that these are qualities that men look for in women but highlighted a generational divide in this mentality:

> Some of them, they don't really like for the wife to work. They'd rather have the wife stay home a raise their children, you know, clean their house, cook their food and be there for the children and they come home and they give their paycheck to their wives and they run the house, pay the bills, and they run things, I think. It's kind of in the older generation. Because of the cost of living, a lot of the mothers have to work and that's why Saba has a daycare.

For younger people, two income families are needed to support a certain level of material comfort and this stands in direct conflict with older ideas that required a woman to stay at home with the children. Material desires and an increase in work opportunities for women combine to propel many mothers into the workplace. Experiences of work, however, are often equivocal for mothers who, under different circumstances, would rather be taking care of their home and their children and who felt

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little or no choice in their decision to do the double duties of working inside and outside the home. The stresses of working double shifts as workplace employee and domestic engineer are nudging some men to pick up some of the slack, although this is by far a minority position amongst Saban men. One black woman discussed the changes and, in some cases the lack of change, as follows:

> They just want you to be there, wash the clothes, make sure the food is taken care of, the house is clean but again you have the case where the women is telling them, well, this have to be half and half. If I cook today, you cook tomorrow. If I wash this week, you wash next week. You have where women have those demands. Slowly but surely you can see that coming but again in the past you did not have that. In the past the woman was the one to clean the house and be able to cook and that is what the man looked for. Today it's there too, you know, a girlfriend should be able to be someone who can cook, who can wash, who can sit down and hold a conversation with him, able to comfort him, things like that but it is not so much a demand as it was in the past.

Saban women also point to the continuing attraction of men to notions of purity, modesty, and domesticity when seeking out potential partners and wives. Although many women do diverge from these social expectations, most Saban women agree that they are not typically wife or girlfriend material because they fail to embody the qualities of sedate seen-but-not-heard womanhood so revered in traditional Saban society. One white woman put it like this:

> I think they look for women who haven't slept around too much. That's a real island quality in men. They like the virginal quality. They like good home-makers and housewives and they love women who can handle the cleaning, cooking, laundry. Their women must be domestic goddesses. They like their women to be, I don't know if the right word is humble, they don't like loud, outgoing women. They like for their women to stay by their side. Reserved, modest, modest but hardworking. The average island man likes to go home to a house that's organized and clean and the meals are cooked. When they go out with their girlfriends, they want them to behave according to the situation, that they are not loud and obnoxious. So, reserved, I think that would be the word…It depends on the man, of course. Sometimes a man just wants a wild woman. You know, very little clothing and very sexy and show off to the next guy. We have those guys, of course, too. They like to show off their girls. They'll tolerate that in their girlfriend and that girlfriend is normally not going to become their wife. These are the girlfriends to have fun with. There are very few men on this island that would tolerate that in a wife.

While another biracial woman put the situation a little more bluntly by saying:

> Men value women who are the "listen to me and don't answer me back type!" and the "if I hit you, you must not hit me back type". This may be the reason why most of them don't have girlfriends.

What all of these perspectives show is the persistence of an internalized male belief that wives and long-term partners should be able to care for children and the home and should project a conservative

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image of modest female domesticity that does not question the primacy of men in their families or in the community at large. This is not to say that all Saban men look for these qualities but that most do have these traits high on their list when thinking about building a future with a potential wife or girlfriend. Some women, though, make the assertion that men no longer value these qualities and that women striving to be good homemakers and mothers often find themselves taking a back seat to women who appear to have none of the traditional qualities that used to attract Saban men. When thinking about the divergence between what men say they want and what they actually want, one biracial woman shared her thoughts as follows:

> A normal scenario would be woman that can you can trust, who is decent. She's not sleeping around. She's faithful. Usually one who got a job, education, that you think has qualities to be a good mother. But then in a lot of relationships I see the worse a woman treats a man, the more she fools around, the more he loves her. So I'm not sure. I can see sometimes women treat their men very bad. They don't cook for them. They don't wash for them. They don't do anything for them and they'll sleep with other men and the man knows about it and he would give her the world and treat her like a queen. So I'm like, I don't know how that happens. And sometimes maybe you're the one who's trying to keep your house neat or cook, don't sleep around, and do everything you think as perfect as possible and sometimes they're still not satisfied. It's like your not doing enough, you know.

While a young black woman shares a similar perspective:

> If I look at it, nowadays, not much, actually. But in other words women who have good lifestyles, like, let's say, jobs, a good paying job. Let's say a degree and, in my opinion, a lot of experience maybe. But nowadays it don't really matter no more. I think in the old days they looked at those things more because now when you can have four, five children, be a hooker or in a disco, a strip teaser, they still marry them, you know. In my opinion it doesn't even matter no more if you're a woman, you know, a virgin.

Mixed messages sent by men make it hard for some Saban women both to figure out what men actually want in a relationship and, then, to deliver those traits without living a lifestyle that they feel demeans them as women and as partners. Women walk a fine line between adhering to traditional norms of domesticity and catering to diffuse male needs for "excitement" and "fun". The pull between being a "good woman" and being just wild enough to hold a man's attention is a continual theme in the narratives of Saban women and come up repeatedly in the context of rampant male infidelity on island.

Another element that may be at play here is the fact that women that level this charge also tend to be higher status women with well-paying high-responsibility jobs. What they may be identifying here is an emerging class difference where educated women from the black and white communities find it hard to reconcile the fact that their perspectives on the world have changed while the perspectives of other islanders, particularly men, have not. Although some men may be showing a real bias towards having relationships with women who violate traditional codes of behavior, the lack of highly educated men on Saba is a real and growing problem that limits an already limited pool of available men when educated women consciously or unconsciously negate the possibility of being with island men who are of a lower educational status. In criticizing women who are not up to snuff, educated women relegate these deviants into a "low-class" status and Saban men, in turn, are tainted by association. Some educated women may truly feel cast out and unwanted by these men but, they should also ask themselves the question: "Given the individual qualities of this particular man, would I want him if he were single?".

Before diving into the issue of male infidelity and the stresses that it places on Saban women and their families, it is important to figure out what Saban women mean when they say that someone is a "good man" and how a "good man" relates to his partner and his children. When asked the question "What makes a good man?" many women pointed to men who fulfilled their roles as family providers but they were quick to point out the many points of failure that riddle the relationships between men and women on island. One middle-aged white woman drew on her experiences with her own father to lay out the criteria for being a good man in Saban society and to contrast these experiences with modern Saban life:

> My Dad was always thinking we had to have a big home, you know. He always said he had to raise himself and raise his children to have a better life than they was having. When my dad was so, he was very poor. So they's always trying very hard to get something they want for the family, especially Saba man is so. They tries very hard to keep their family up. My father was a man, he was very quiet but he always made his children see what he said stand. We had to listen very carefully, he always saw that we done our homework. I always remembered my Dad so much, he used to read Bible. Every Sunday, like we went out and we was coming home we could hear him from the road reading his Bible. He said we had to grow up to know who was God and the creation and everything. He was very strict but he was a good father and there is many

fathers I can tell you, it's so. But today they is not so responsible as yesterday.

In this narrative of childhood experiences, her father not only strived to be a good economic provider who lifted his family out of poverty but also acted as a moral compass that exerted quiet, steady, and unquestioned pressure on his children to live an upright life and to he excel through education. After delivering this loving sketch of her father, she shares her belief that fewer and fewer Saban men are living up to these high standards of fatherhood today. An older black woman had a simple response to the question of "What males a good man" but ended with a very important epitaph:

> Respect, respect for people. You look at how they carry themselves, more or less. You look for discipline, a respectful disciplined person. If you sitting by and don't have no respect, you have no discipline, well, what you going to do with that person? You look in the woman or the man for if he a disciplined man, a respectable man or a woman. That a way I would look at it, but don't count nowadays. Half of a man is a man.

Much like the father from above, the cleavage between the past and the present is stark and, in her opinion, young men simply are not living up to the historical standards of manhood expected by the female community or by older generations of men. Another younger biracial woman shares a similar perspective and levels a similar charge by saying:

> Men are valued by the way they talk to women and the way they have respect for women. Like I noticed lately that very few younger men have any respect for women. But I think that's also the fault of the woman because the woman will let them talk to them like that. Like someone talks to me like that and I say, "You're not talking like that to me. I'm not one of your trashy friends on the street". Or, like, some girls come here and let guys talk to them so rough and sometimes they like it and they think they can do that with everyone. But because Saba is so small, sometimes they know who and how they can talk to certain women. And men also value a woman as you value yourself. You're kind of rated like that.

Although she places a bulk of the blame for the current degeneration of civility between men and women on the women themselves, the fact remains that she thinks many young men are not living up to high standards when it comes to the treatment of women and that they have no motivation to change because they are not really punished for their negative behavior. Respect also plays out not only in how young men interact with women but also in how they move through their communities. One black woman had this to say about the behavior of young boys in her village:

> The young boys, I don't expect much from them in the years to come. Because

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everything is a word that shouldn't be that's coming out of their mouths and not only that if you hear them, too, driving about in their vehicles many times, especially around the old home and the hospital, I get very upset when they do that. You driving around all those places, even the church on Sunday. This loud pounding music and you have to say to them hey, cut off that music and even when you tell them it takes a lot from them to do it.

She perceives a general decline in respect that young men show in her community and their poor treatment of women is but one manifestation of a bigger problem. These changing norms of young male behavior stand in contrast to the continuing belief in men as economic providers even if they often fall short of fulfilling this role in their families. A young black woman encapsulated the tension between expectations that women have of men and the reality of their experiences, particularly with young men, on Saba like this:

They are always there together, they live together, they eat together, if anything happens, you're together as one family. Eat, drink, laugh, have everything that a family should together. And once you can stand your responsibilities, you are called a man. If you can't stand your responsibilities, you can go your own way. Because everybody feels like today, "I'm a man", this, that, and the other, "I twenty three years, I twenty four years, I twenty, I'm a man". What you call a man? You live with your mother. You can't help her in the house. You want to eat and drink everything that comes in the house, prop up your legs, live a dirty lifestyle, and you're called a man? No. When you can stand your responsibilities you're called a man.

And another white woman also points to a break between the lingering economic expectations that women have of men and the failure of some men to contribute financially to the upkeep of their homes and their families:

Some men nowadays don't want to work at all. So, I mean now with hardworking that he's willing to look for a job and he's willing to work. Sometimes you meet a man and he's too lazy to tie his shoelaces. But then you meet another man and he's willing to work his whole life. He's always looking for a job, always trying to be employed. And then there's some men who don't really care if they have a job or not and, if the woman is working, they'll depend on the woman to bring home the money and do everything.

This last statement in her quotation marks a complete rupture in the traditional economic relationships between men and women and, in most cases, deferment of financial responsibilities does not come with an offer to cook, clean, or take care of the children. Instead, women are expected to meet the requirements of work and home with little or no help from their partners or husbands. As one black woman put it:

The men here on Saba need to step up a bit. Show that they are there and not only show but do. Like they say, actions speak louder than words. Not only that but you notice here on Saba, most of the women have a very stressful job so I feel a lot of them should cooperate more, assist more with the upbringing of the children. So, imagine you're having a stressful job already and you're coming home having to deal with the children also and doing your other chores around the house, how stressful it gets then. And they fail to see it. But sometimes I say, too, that maybe it's because some of us parents rear up some of our sons, too, that this is boy work and you don't touch that, but this is not correct. A few days ago I myself had a discussion with a gentleman from here, he telling me, I was talking to my brother over the phone and he happened to hear the conversation and my brother was telling me, "oh no, I'm just taking all the clothes and I'm going to fold them up and then she just have to iron them" and I said, "but I thought that you had someone ironing for you" and to leave them iron and fold and he said "no, she come to iron so I can just fold". When I say fold, they guy said "man, your brother's crazy. He have a wife, leave her do that". And I say, "no, I'm proud of my brother 'cause today or tomorrow the wife get sick, his household can continue to go on". And I tell him that "people like you are slaves, because you must remember that your mother is a woman also. Treat women as you would want to treat your mother".

As with the rudeness that some men show towards women on the island, the lack of domestic help offered by men is situated in a context where women themselves have trained sons to be unresponsive to their partner's requests for help at home. However, not only does she suggest that this situation is one of fragile male dependence that could leave men with no means of self-support at any given moment but also suggests that men should temper their negative attitudes towards women by reflecting on how they would want someone to treat their own generally much-loved mothers. Appealing to their better angels, though, is unlikely to work given that many men remain dependent on their mothers for domestic service well into adulthood and, not surprisingly, continue to insist on receiving these perks of manhood from their wives or long-term partners. Perhaps the real key to changing these attitudes lies with the mothers themselves who may not have the power to change the thinking of their own men but do have the power to try to shape how their sons view their roles within the household.

As in the case of women, men, too, have to deal with the mixed messages sent by women regarding the qualities that they value in potential spouses and long-term partners. One young black woman clearly centers responsibility for the deterioration of male-female relationships in the women's changing attitudes towards the traditionally valued qualities of respectability, hard work, and financial and emotional stability in their chosen partners:

> Most men are driving the garbage trucks or sweeping the roads. I guess most girls, ladies, from what I hear around me, look at them like, "I wouldn't marry a garbage man, no, I wouldn't go for that". To me, it's the inside that counts. It's how a man treats you. As long as he bring in the food, as long as he puts food on the plate, I just feel it's the inside that counts. Most of the young girls here, even the women, I notice go for the thug style, meaning urban style, guys who are in to that. They don't look for the decent men no more. They always more or less look for the guys who are laid back, let's say, thug style, ghetto style, let's say, guys who are drug dealers, or guys who are really nice car, flashy boys. I feel they go more for guys who beat them up and they go back to them. So, all these girls don't really respect a guy with a good paying job and his mind set to build a future with you or who have goals or potentials anymore.

That the terms "ghetto style" and "thug style" carry any social currency in a place like Saba is a testament to the American media machine that turns out a bevy of negative, if, in some ways honest and nuanced, images of black American culture for worldwide consumption. The synergy between an evolving drug culture on island and an MTV culture that projects generally misogynist gangsta lifestyles as "cool" has had undeniable effects in island life and manifests more openly in the black community on Saba. However, these issues can only be touched on tangentially here, and, for our purposes it is important to note that this synergy tends to elevate the status of fast money, fast cars, and fast living over a more modest, sedate, quiet life offered through consistent hard work in traditionally male-dominated island professions. A segment of women and girls from both the black and white communities gravitate towards flash over substance and leave "decent men" wondering why they are always treated like they are second-best. This situation echoes the disgust of "decent women" bemoaning the loss of island men to scantily clad foreign women who are said to populate the local watering holes or to women from their own communities who break from traditional gender roles of modest domesticity.

In this social environment it is perhaps not surprising that complaints about men and their lack of financial, emotional, and domestic support ran through almost all of the conversations held with Saban women and that child support, or lack thereof, was a main cause for concern and source of anger in many women's minds. In fact, the situation has deteriorated so much that, when asked "What makes a good father?" one biracial woman offered the following curt response:

> I don't really know what makes a good father. Honestly, I tell them don't tell me nothing about raising my kids.

Bitterness about the lack of male financial and emotional support in raising children cross-cut the social divides of race on island but black women, particularly poor black women, and divorced women of all racial groups expressed the most outrage at the current situation. One young black woman expressed her dismay not only with her own situation but also with the fact that a pattern of financial male absenteeism had become an intergenerational problem in her community:

> Here, amongst the black community it's very poor. And mostly all of my family, relationship wise, they are very poor. They have to go to the government to fight to get money for their kids or for this that or the other when you should know that you have a child, you have to send support, that's your responsibility, to take care of your child. And I have to tell you that? You have to pay for this, you have to pay for that or when a child needs something you go to him asking for it, you're asking for a curse because he'll curse you out, "oh, the child don't need this". No. That's your responsibility. And amongst my family, amongst my black community, it is very poor. It is very, very poor. I tell you, that one I can't understand. There are some things that you can't understand now and you'll never understand them because they keep repeating themselves. Like my grandfather left my grandmother, she went down, she broke herself down like no one else could come in her life, bam. My mother, my father left my mother, bam, nobody else could come in her life. See, it just keep repeating itself and repeating itself. Why it happens we still cannot understand why it would go on and we try to teach our children different but it is not going away.

Involvement of governmental authorities signals a real breakdown in the economic relationships that exist among men, women, and their families and, at the same time, assert a level of women's power in trying to coerce their wayward men into living up to their responsibilities as fathers. The bewilderment on the part of women and the shock that they feel when they are denied their traditional rights to economic and emotional support as partners, wives, and mothers is becoming a commonplace experience in contemporary Saban life. A feeling of being letdown and abandoned taints many interpersonal family relationships between men, women, and their children with women and children usually bearing most of the socioeconomic fallout of dissolved relationships. Divorced women and women who had children outside of marriage often find themselves living under very similar circumstances where their children's fathers fail to give substantial economic aid, or, in many cases, any aid at all. One biracial woman described this lack of male commitment to their children through child support as follows:

> No, they don't. Not usually. And if they do, they feel like they are doing a lot but the amount of money they give really isn't all that much. It doesn't really help. Not

compared to the input that a woman has to have. It's just enough to say, yeah, I'm supporting my child or something like that and usually they give it by force because it they has to be taken to the Court of Guardianship or something, you know, in order to get the money. And I don't feel that I should have to tell you, as a man, or force you to support your child. I feel that should come willingly and I feel even here with a set amount every month there are always extra expenses so you should pitch in somewhere along the way and say I'll do this or I'll do that or I'll help with something else. Usually they don't do it.

And two white women reiterate this point by asserting that:

> There's fathers, too, you know, that get divorced that never once, because they go to a different place to live, and they never once call to find if that child is alive or dead, if it needs anything. You have to rear it all by yourself. They are famous for that. They just disappear. It's very hard because you wonder, how can a man turn his back on a child?

and:

> Unfortunately, in these islands, men divorce their wives *and* their children and sometimes you never see them again. Or they may fail to give child support or any kind of support, emotional, moral, whatever support, and the wife is left alone which is not always a negative thing. She becomes very strong and she will find the strength and the courage to raise her children and can eventually make a happy life for herself.

Again, reference is made to official intervention and the ambiguous results that the courts provide women when men fail to meet their paternal commitments. In the last two quotations, the first woman can't understand how a man could turn his back on his own child and dwells more on the breach of a social contract that makes the assumption that men will be there not only financially but also emotionally for their children. The last woman is more circumspect about the situation and, as she criticizes men who abandon their children, she also sees it as an opportunity for women to create a safe and pleasant environment for their children through learning to rely on themselves. This sense of resignation to the fact that men will often shirk their responsibilities as parents combined with the sense that women can rise above these challenges through hard work and a commitment to advancing a career while balancing the responsibilities of motherhood comes through in the following black woman's perspective on child support and on the role of stepfathers in children's lives:

> I think, you know, a child may not, you may not be living with your husband. You may be separated. You might not be even on the island but you can't imagine what impact a phone call has on your child, just that one phone call letting them know you are still out there. Because a child may not hear from you and may live with the fact that my father is there while if you give them that call then that's reassurance, letting them know that you are there, you know. And I think we, as parents, have this feeling and this thing

that you have to be, emotionally you harass yourself, mentally, physically you harass yourself fighting and badgering for child support but I have come to learn over the years, not once have I asked him for child support…And I feel my children are raised great, they are raised. And when I hear the struggles and the harassment some people are going through just to have child support, I ask myself is it really worth it? Because you are upsetting yourself, you are upsetting your child and I don't know if it's really worth it. But then, financially, maybe everybody is not in the position to say well, you know, just forget about giving, just ignore it, you know.

When you are stable, more or less, like you are independent and on your own, you don't really know what to respond to a question like that [what responsibilities does a stepparent have for his partner's children?]. Because I would have to say just the support of knowing you are there. But I cannot say, okay, based on financial support or economic support I can't really relate to that. Financially I have been supporting myself and raising my kids on my own and doing what I had to do. But I guess knowing that you are there, I can speak to you, tell you what I decide, what my decision might be. Having that person to listen to you or converse with you. I think it's important just to have that general support.

The expectation that fathers will not provide economic support is coupled with the hope that they might provide some small measure of emotional support for their children. Although this woman clearly can support her family financially, she acknowledges that financial abandonment may not be as easily absorbed by women of lesser means. Her willingness to absolve men, particularly biological fathers, of almost any parental responsibility, though, is still quite shocking and indicates both a sense of empowerment for women who raise their children alone and an almost complete negation of men's socioeconomic roles within the context of family life.

These battles over the responsibilities that men have for their families exist within a social space that, traditionally, has posited men both as financial and authoritarian heads of their households and this is the same social landscape that gives rise to and supports overt patterns of male infidelity. Although more and more men are relinquishing economic responsibility for their partners and children, few are willing to relinquish their long-held right to exercise strict control over the social behaviors, particularly male-female interactions, of their women and to engage in various kinds of extra-curricular activities with women other than their wives and steady girlfriends. This pattern developed historically and came into full force during a time when men spent extended periods of time away from their wives and families. Male social and sexual freedoms off-island were combined with a rigid code of sexual-social conduct for Saban women that was both internalized by the women

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themselves and enforced by the wider community. These ideologies that place a premium on circumscribing female activities while supporting, openly or tacitly, men's affairs still circulate with some effect in island life and are still quite prominent, especially in the older white population. One white woman had this advice to offer others who were considering marriage:

> I think that its good on these islands, when she's in a serious relationship with a man, before it can get as far as marriage to really find a way to find out if she's with a control freak. Because I think that if you don't realize that before you get married and then you get married, your life as a woman becomes so confined. You have to answer to this man for everything that you're doing. Who you're on the phone with. If you buy a new dress you've got to give a big explanation. If you go to your mother's and you spend an extra ten minutes longer than necessary he wants to know why. So, I think it is wise if it's possible at all a woman can find out really is this man going to change drastic when we get married? So, maybe that's why it's not so wise to jump into a marriage too quick. Spend some time with this man because there are only so many months you can act. Sooner or later you're going to become your true self and then you can find out who that person is, you're going to let your guard down at some point.

The nature of the story suggests that not all men are like this, but issuing the warning, in and of itself, suggests that these kinds of behaviors are not unusual and that Saban women should try to protect themselves against men who exercise these types of power-plays. A black woman shared a similar perspective by saying:

> Before he get married, I think most men here on Saba, they look for that they just want you for theyself. Like, take for instance, it's so amusing with a man, they think it's okay for them to tell the girlfriend, well, you know, "I don't want you talking to the boys, I don't want you being around boys". Whereas it's okay for them to go and talk to the girls and skylark and have fun, anything like that. If a girl is able to do that a man would look up to her like she is it. You know, because you listening to them, I find. Again, you have that that's changing because women are demanding that, okay, you accept me as I am and if you want this, you have to expect that I want it too. Whereas if they get married, then they know that you belongs to them so then they don't have those demands no more.

While dating, many Saban men try to force a code of conduct on their girlfriends that they do not follow themselves and will tend to gravitate towards women who "listen to them" and do as they say. Interestingly, in her take, men relax more after marriage because they know that you "belong" to them but this sense of ownership of women remains problematic. In fact, many Saban women express no desire to be married exactly because they feel that they would lose any control that they had in their relationship and would become a captured but, ultimately neglected, prize for their men. Marriage, however, does not tend to terminate these anxieties in men or their efforts to keep women

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"acting the right way". One white woman recalled a situation where her husband became enraged after she gave an innocent compliment to one of his male friends at a party. The friend was sitting in a chair and the woman, who was standing next to him, bent over the chair and took his hand to get a better look at a shiny new watch he had been given for Christmas. When the couple got home, the husband flew into a rage and insisted that the wife must be having an affair with the other man because she had acted so provocatively towards him. The woman, on the other hand, really just wanted to look at the watch and had no ulterior motives whatsoever but her husband and his buddies read the situation as an act of her sexual defiance. The irony is that this pattern of male attempts to circumscribe female activities exists side by side with a blatant pattern of men engaging in extra-marital and extra-relationship affairs. In this case, the man's infidelities are famous on the island and his wife is thought to be a "saint" who tolerates his philandering and psychological abuse for the sake of the children. For macho men who demand female subservience, infidelity is one means to express both their dominance over and freedom from women.

This macho male attitude pervades many, but by no stretch of the imagination all, long-term male-female partnerships on Saba, whether inside or outside of marriage, and is consistently raised as a problem by both black and white women. Male infidelity is not only seen as a social prerogative and inevitability but is also seen as rooted in the problems of home life, which, in turn, tend to devolve responsibility away from men and towards their women. One white woman traces the development and decline of a typical Saban relationship like this:

> It's typical, especially on Saba, if they're in love and they're driving it looks like there is only one person in the front seat of the car. And then they get engaged and it's still like that. And as they get married all of the sudden you see when you're driving behind them, oh, there were two people in the car. And then like maybe a year later the wife is all the way by the door with her arm resting outside the door, so even when they're driving you see the division. And then you see when it comes to the going out part. In the beginning they were going out together after a year the wife can't be bothered anymore so if there's a good show on TV she chooses to stay home and allows her husband to go out. Well, when I say allow, you know what I mean, which is not always a good thing especially if you know in your heart that your husband is a flirt and he likes to drink and he's hanging out with the buddies and he's going to show off and maybe the first three times everything will go good. But I don't think that its wise to make that a habit when you're continually sending your husband out on his own because then you're asking for problems, eh? He's just human because I think that when it comes

to men and women, women will talk about other men like, oh look he has a cute butt or whatever you're going to say about the other guy, but with the men they will quicker put in practice what they're thinking about. They will take it much quicker further than the woman. And let's face it, nowhere in the world a man or a woman, if you're a healthy normal person, you're going to stop looking at the other sex. I think if I were with a man and he said to me, I would never look at another woman, I don't want him either because something is wrong with him. But I think that especially in the Caribbean, but also in Saba, men after a while actually take advantage of the situation of being out alone because you see it. So, I think the wife should make an effort to accompany your husband if you're not doing anything anyway and also if you get married to take care of yourself, you know, just because you're married I mean if you marry this guy and you look all nice and he fell in love with you for all kinds of reasons but ten years later it shouldn't be so that he kind of like feels embarrassed to go out with you.

This narrative reveals an important fact about the ways that women view male infidelity in Saban society in that it exposes the underlying belief that it is the women themselves who are responsible for the behaviors of their unfaithful men. Women are positioned as the partner who is responsible for seeing to her husbands needs and for keeping an eye on him to make sure he does not spiral out of control. The attitude clearly stems from the idea that women are the guardians of sexual propriety in Saban society and that men are just not able to exercise self-restraint. In a sense, male infidelity certainly sends a message that men are not to be controlled by their women but the way that many women view this issue is equally patronizing in that they feel like "Hey, what can you expect from a man?". Male philandering is a sign of male weakness, inadequacy, and immaturity that can be managed with proper female supervision. A black woman sends that signal loud and clear by sharing her perspectives on infidelity:

That's why I always tell women that I never, and a lot of women get upset with me for this, but I never blame the man. I never blame the man for failing. I always blame the women because I personally feel that if you meet a man, eventually you have to find out whether or not this man is involved with someone. Now on Saba, Saba is small, so you know. So if a man is sober, under drugs or drinking, you know this man and you know that, okay, he is with the next woman or he is married. Right, I mean if he comes on to you out of respect towards the woman, out of respect towards yourself, you should know leave that man alone. And even if you go in the States where the States is quite big, eventually you might find out. Sometimes you see it on TV, where a man might go from one state to a next state and maybe marry or live with the next woman and they do find out eventually. I find, out of respect for yourself and the next woman, leave the man alone. So that's why I say that I always blame the woman. I blame the woman because you should know to tell the man, well, you know, enough is enough. What's you problem, you know, you don't have a wife at home or something like that? We are not living like in Africa where the man can live with seven, you know, how many wives he want. We are living in a society where we should have respect for each other and if we the women would bring that message over to the men, automatically the men would change. They would see that there is a demand for respect towards women but we don't

respect ourselves so how can we expect a man to respect us. And that's especially for a small island. And that's not only for women, if a man come on to a woman, I find that the woman too, for herself, should say, you know, well, I am with someone else so back off. We just need to train ourselves to be that way. And like I always say we just have to wait and see who God sent for us, but if it is someone who is single and not with someone, that's the time when you know, well, yes, this is the person. But when you, as a woman, put yourself with someone you've pulled out of love with someone else, then you're disrespecting yourself as a woman.

The way that she views male philandering is very interesting because she asserts that the problem exists because women allow it to exist. Again, women are given some level of control in the situation even if it is through putting pressure on other women to "just say no". She articulates her argument within the framework of respect and insists that men would automatically change if more women took their roles as guardians of sexual fidelity more seriously. Another line of thought positions male infidelity as an outcome of unhappy home lives as seen in the following perspectives offered by a black woman and a biracial woman:

> I think that over the years I have come to learn that men don't want to be bombarded with do this, and do that, and do the other. They want to do everything at their own pace but they wants to know that you're going to support them. They don't want to get this long list of you have to do this today and you have to do that. And they wants to know that they can come home to a peaceful home. Going back, we are advancing but still also going back because years ago our parents would have guys come home, make sure everything was in order, the table was set and I think men still look for that. They go back now and they look for that because they don't want to be nagged on by a wife and children running and crying in the end. And I think maybe that's one thing that also that men do look for a girlfriend on the side, maybe the girl is conscious about this, maybe she would not even get pregnant because of knowing that he's coming there just for this peace and quietness. And you do have this thing where maybe he have a relationship maybe with a wife and a girlfriend. I think some girlfriends make the mistake of getting a child to compete with the wife and then you falls in the same category because now you also have children in the man's head.

and:

> Plenty men when they're looking for a wife, they want someone to get children, they want someone that's willing to stay home while they go out partying. That's usually where they find the girlfriend. And the girlfriend, I think they share more information with their girlfriend than they share with their wives. I think that if they have a problem, they'll quicker go to their girlfriend than to their wife. And I also think they treat their girlfriends better than they treat their wives in the sense of being romantic, gifts, any of those kinds of things. I think they treat their girlfriends better than their wives so, more or less the wife is just there to do what she has to do and that's it. If I have to be involved with somebody who fools around, I would prefer to be their girlfriend than their wife. You don't have to worry about the cooking, the laundry, the bills, nothing of that. You just, you know.

The "other woman" becomes a man's soft place to fall where the worries of daily life can be left behind for a while. The demands of being a husband and being a father can become too overwhelming for the man and, naturally, he seeks out comfort and quiet in the arms of another woman who does not ask for much, if anything, from him. A sense of male privilege is evident in the first narrative as the woman appears to empathize with the wayward husband rather than with the frazzled wife. In a social environment where little is expected of men, and sometimes even less is received, it is not particularly surprising that men are positioned as the victims of a hectic family life to which they are ill-suited. Women who let their homes become frantic are, after all, asking for a man to find peace somewhere else. In the second narrative, the woman empathizes with the stresses of the wife who has to deal with an unfaithful man but, ultimately, states that she would rather by the other woman who is showered with gifts than the wife who is left with the dirty laundry. What is key here is the expectation that men will look outside their relationships for emotional support, the no-win situation that many wives face in a climate of socially accepted if not sanctioned male infidelity, and the fact that many women express a desire to reap the benefits of being a girlfriend on the side rather than risk being abused by self-serving husbands.

Codes of conduct for men and women on Saba tend to vest the lion's share of responsibility for children and family in women while men have the option, but not always the duty, to be good husbands and good fathers. Many Saban men do take their responsibilities to their families very seriously and they continue to set good role models for their sons and daughters as they mature into adults and establish their own households. For many others, though, financial and emotional support of their children and spouses is optional and many simply choose not to exercise the option that would require any real commitment of time or money on their part. Whether it's paying child support in the wake of divorce or relationship dissolution or having enough self control to remain faithful and honest with their partners, Saban men often fall short of social ideals that value their roles as economic providers and as compassionate household heads. In talking to women about these issues, it is clear that women have come to expect their men to let them down economically and emotionally

although the impact of these let-downs still wreaks havoc in many women's lives. An "expect the best but plan for the worst" mentality is in evidence among Saban women who take steps to secure their own economic futures through work and who do their best to pick up the pieces of their own lives and the lives of their children after their relationships collapse. These fault lines between men and women emerged historically but continue to take on new meanings in modern Saban life. In particular, this environment of socioeconomic and relationship insecurity molds how women view marriage and its alternatives and this, then, impacts the ways that women both build and experiences their families through time.

The changing meanings of marriage in Saban society

The institution of marriage has always been a strong social value in Saban society and continues to be a definite bedrock for family formation in certain segments of modern Saban society. However, the importance of marriage as a prerequisite for starting a family declined precipitously in the black community since the period of high oil refinery migration and has shown signs of erosion in the white community over the past 50 years or so. Not only have fewer women been getting married, but also more marriages have been dissolved through divorce in the past few decades. The rise of divorce as an alternative to suffering silently through difficult or miserable marriages, the increasing acceptance of cohabitation as a flexible alternative to marriage, a continuing and perhaps deteriorating environment of male infidelity and economic unreliability, an increased ability of women to work outside the home and provide for their families, and a growing if ambiguous sense of women's empowerment on island have all reduced the attractiveness of marriage in the eyes of many Saban women and have increased the instability of marital relationships in general. Although many women are uncomfortable with the decline in the prevalence of marriage on-island, others see it as a positive step for women who don't want to be ruled by men who cling to anachronistic values that position women solely within the home at the mercy of her husbands economic, emotional, and extra-marital sexual whims. Others read the declining importance of marriage as a reduction in social

civility in general and express particular concern for the children who are brought into situations where the socioeconomic roles of mother and father are not clearly defined. By looking at the demographic trends of marital formation and dissolution and the challenge of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage and by listening closely to what women think and feel about these trends, we can better understand why the importance of marriage has declined in Saban society and what this tells us about life on Saba more generally.

Marriage and marital childbearing have been important elements of Saban families throughout the period of seafaring migration, oil-refinery migration, and post-oil periods and most Sabans experience being married at some point in their lives. However, looking at both trends in ever-married Sabans from the 1964 and 2004 household censuses and trends in the centrality of marriage as a foundation of family building, it is clear that the experience of marriage is very much structured by experiences of race in Saban society (Figures 9.1,9.2). In 1964, the adult population on Saba had experienced the effects of the height of the oil-boom and its slow but steady decline in the mid-1950s. Interestingly, the black and white population at this time showed very similar trends in total proportion ever married although white women under the age of 40 tended to marry at a higher rate than their young black peers and black men over 50 show higher rates of marriage based mainly on relationships they formed while living away from home. Overall, though, the proportion of white and black men and white women that married was roughly equivalent at around 60% and black women were not close behind at around 50%. It is important to keep in mind that being unmarried in the white population tended to mean that you also remained childless while being unmarried in the black population put fewer restrictions on childbearing. Remaining unmarried, then, had very different repercussions in the white and black communities and generally meant that unmarried white people never had the chance to form their own families. In 2004, a very different pattern emerges and shows a clear stratification between the proportions of ever-married people based on race. Both populations show an increased proportion of ever-married people in the older age categories but the proportion of ever-married people is always higher in the white than in the black communities. This pattern

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culminates in an overall ever-married proportion of 70% for white men and women and just 50% for black men and women. Marital patterns reflect the socioeconomic conditions of island life and the cultural norms that circulated in these communities during the post-oil period and suggest that most of the white community remained committed to the idea of marriage while marriage remained less forceful of a cultural norm in the black community.

Although marriage and childbearing remained tightly connected in the white community and less so in the black community, these differences are beginning to narrow as more white women adopt a pattern of non-marital childbearing that may or may not incorporate marriage at a later date. The growth of non-marital childbearing in the black and white communities show different historical trajectories that tell us about how Saban women viewed the role of marriage in family building. Family formation traditions in the black community have always been more loosely related to marriage than in the white community although trends towards having children without being married have accelerated through time (Figure 9.3). The trend towards non-marital childbearing peaked at the height of oil refinery migration and has remained the dominant form of starting families in the black Saban community in the post-oil period. Interestingly, there are both experiential effects where women born into non-marital households tend to have children non-maritally and period effects that show more and more women who were born into marital households opting to follow a non-marital path in adulthood. For black women coming of age at the height of the welfare state, only 30% were born into households where the mother and father were married before having their children and only 10% maintained this marital tradition when they started their own families. Conversely, 70% of women from this cohort who remained on-island and started their families were born outside of marriage and only 10% of these subsequently switched from a non-marital upbringing to a pattern of marital family formation in their adult lives. This means that in the next generation, if martial and non-marital fertility are equivalent, only 20% of black children will be born into households that are centered on marriage as a pillar of family formation and family life. In the white community, the movement towards a pattern of family formation outside the context of marriage has been much more

gradual (Figure 9.4). In fact, throughout the periods of seafaring and oil refinery migration, upwards of 90% of all white children were born into nuclear families where parents married before having children. However, in the post-oil period this enduring pattern began to shift slightly and movement from marital families into non-marital patterns of childbearing in adulthood became more common. For the cohort who came of age during the height of the welfare state, around 90% of women were born into marital families but only just over half maintained a marital tradition in their own childbearing practices. This marks an explosion of non-marital childbearing in the white community in the post-oil period and, for the first time, shows a real decline in the importance of marriage in starting families for the white community. However, this trend carries with it a strong sense of social disapproval from the older white community, including the parents of these women, and from more conservative young white Sabans especially since a significant proportion of these non-marital births result from interracial relationships between white women and black men. This phenomenon will be addressed in detail later on but it is important to note here that the growth of non-marital childbearing in the black community appears to be mounting a direct challenge to the primacy of marriage before childbearing in the white community, particularly amongst the younger generation.

For women who have children outside of marriage, marriage does often become part of their social experience later in life and this, alone, points to the continuing value that Sabans place on marital unions even if they are not seen as vital for starting families and having children. The proportion of never-married black women who had children outside of marriage steadily declined from over 80% during the early stages of seafaring migration to around 40% at the close of oil refinery migration, peaked to over 60% in the immediate post-oil period and then declined to around 45% at the height of the welfare state (Figure 9.5). This shows that about half of all black women who start their families without being married do, eventually, marry at some point in their lives. In these circumstances, only a few black women marry soon after the birth of their first child and most either wait until they have had several children or wait until they have finished having children altogether. Until recently, non-marital childbearing in the white community was virtually unknown

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but for those few white women who had children outside of marriage, most did eventually marry (Figure 9.6). White women show a slightly stronger tendency to marry after the birth of their first child but the majority chose to wait until they were finished having children. Overall, though, the fact that white and black women continued to marry after having non-marital children, even if they tended to wait until they had already had most or all of their children, signals a lingering desire to solidify a long-term relationship with a man, be it the father of their children or otherwise.

Changes in patterns of marriage and the relationships that exit between marriage and childbearing have left their mark on Saban society and Saban women are on the front line of these transformations. Women from the black and white communities expressed a complex range of opinions that overlapped with and diverged from perspectives shared by other Saban women both from within and outside their own racial group. However, it is not surprising that more white women tend to laud the benefits of marriage, as long as it's a good marriage, while more black women remain skeptical about the value of marriage and circumspect about the benefits it might bring to women and their children. When asked about her thoughts on non-marital childbearing, one white woman expressed her adamant belief that marriage was the only proper way to form a family like this:

> I don't agree with that at all. I agree with being married and then having kids. I grew up Roman Catholic and I'm a very strong believer in marriage. I think that you should be married and then have children. The foundation is there. The foundation where the couple isn't married is not strong at all. They haven't made that promise to God. I think being married helps couples to stay more together more than if your just living together. At any point in time you can just pick up and leave and there is nothing really driving you to stay together. That promise you made with God is not there. There's nothing that's actually there to motivate you to stay together, I mean. Probably I feel this strongly because my parents have set that example for me. They've been married almost thirty years. That's what I know. That's what I've been brought up in.

She continued her thoughts by drawing on the widely known and discussed problems that arose in a certain class during the school year:

> Well, I think that there's more of a foundation and more stability in the nuclear family. Well, the mother is there and the father is there constantly. There's no changes going on, no instability in the relationship. I think that's the best scenario, actually, in my opinion…maybe this is just a coincidence, but I don't think so, one of [the classes at the local school] was really, really difficult, and I looked into their families actually and the ones in the class that were not a problem, they were from a nuclear families with the mom and the dad and the siblings living under one household. And then the other ones

came from broken homes and those were the ones that had a lot of problems. Every one of those students that had problems when I looked at it, they were from broken homes. I mean, I'm not saying that children from a nuclear family don't have problems, but I don't think that was coincidence. I think that had a lot to do with them being disruptive in school. I think its better when there's a mother and a father both there. There's always that support. The child has the support of both parents at all times. It's not impossible for students to have a healthy lifestyle if there's only one parent but I think it's much more stressful and more difficult and maybe only a few can accomplish that. There's all kinds of stress. There's only one person supporting the family instead of two. I think kids from nuclear families have more support, there's a mom and a dad there to support them financially or emotionally or whatever way.

She doesn't negate the possibility of having a happy home that is not founded on the marital commitment between husband and wife but suggests that the difficulties encountered by single parents and their children throw more obstacles on their roads to success. A black woman also pointed to the stability offered by marriage versus other kinds of less-formal relationships:

Your wife is supposed to be respected as the first thing that comes, but if you have a girlfriend, it's official with the wife, it's not official with the girlfriend. With the girlfriend anything goes. You can just pick up your bags and just leave her in the house with everything falling all on top of her. But the wife you ain't going to leave that easy. You can't get away. You can't really just break up. You have to really think about it. I think, in other words, with the girlfriend you can leave and you don't even think about it. Most men just pick up, you know, and go on. The wife is kind of official. You made a commitment to that woman. It's good to be married sometimes.

In her mind the marital commitment affords the wife some measure of protection against the disintegration of her relationship and forces both husband and wife to seriously consider their problems and to work towards their resolution. In a less formal relationship, this kind of "relationship work" may fall by the wayside as men exit one relationship and enter the next without any sense of responsibility for the former girlfriend or the children that they shared. When other Saban women discussed the importance of marriage in Saban society, it was common for them to assert the primacy of marriage but then to temper these perspectives both by recognizing the fact that some marriages fall short of the marital ideal and the fact that other lifeways, like cohabitation, are becoming acceptable alternatives to the formalities of marriage. One black woman who still strongly believed in marriage herself had this to say:

Here on Saba, [marriage] is a must. Especially in the past. Now you might have a few that are not married but it is, like, marriage is a very important thing here on the island. You know, slowly but surely now you notice the change is coming. That they can live together and they don't have to be married. But in the past from the time you

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were pregnant the parents were there to say, okay, "well then, you need to get married". They came together and decided okay, what day would be the wedding, and things like that.

In the past, in both the black and the white communities, pregnancy accelerated the process of becoming married and this indicates a strong belief that marriage was the proper context for starting and raising a family. However, the fallout from these kinds of marriages often resulted in unhappy relationships that turned women away from the idea that you had to marry a man if you became pregnant by him. This same woman shared both the differences that existed in the black and white communities regarding the relationship of pregnancy to marriage and the impact that this practice had on the minds of young men and women:

> In the past, you can see the big difference. Because white people, if you look back at the families and so on, they were all married. Even if they had problems where maybe the children were not from the husband you would still see that they got married. Okay? Whereas black people didn't. They got children, maybe from different men, but they did not marry. Today's date you have the same thing but it's not that you have black people or white people would get married. Right now you have a lot of young girls, they get children but they don't get married. From both sides. It is happening from both sides that they say that they're not getting married because my parents want me to get married or because I got pregnant. They just say well, "why would I have to live like that"? And then it is based again on what they saw. Because many of them say well, "look, my mom and daddy got married and look what kind of life they living or look at what kind of life they has lived". Maybe their life has bettered but they know that it wasn't easy so they feel like "why should I get married"? "My mom got married because she was pregnant and look what a hard life she lived".

These attitudes have arisen during a time where non-marital childbearing is no longer as taboo as it was in the past and this also coincides with an increased ability for women to support themselves and their children in the absence of male economic aid. In the past, it was much more difficult for a woman, black or white, to make it on her own and non-marital childbearing was often associated with poverty. In today's social environment, though, this is not necessarily true and the economic value of marriage is significantly reduced although not entirely eliminated. Most women do recognize that either living off of two incomes under the same roof or splitting the economic and childbearing responsibilities evenly between mothers and father, particularly along traditional lines, can relieve the stresses felt by some single mothers. Although there is also a widespread belief that a reversion to a traditional division of labor that centers women in the home and men in the workplace, too, can come

at the cost of certain types of female socioeconomic liberty. One black woman's perspective on marriage completely negates its economic value and focuses, instead, on marriage as a cultural tradition that is worthy of preserving by sharing the following thoughts:

> The advantage of it is that children who are being raised in that, they get the opportunity to continue that tradition of also being able to grow up with that. That that is instilled in them and that that will be brought over in the sense that they also will bring that over to their children and their grandchildren and the hope that a little bit of that will still be a part of Saba's culture. Because it is deteriorating.

Although she does not specify why marriage is a worthy cultural tradition to preserve, she does imply not only that marriage tends to be an intergenerational family tradition but also that this is a dying way of life in her community. The question is: Why has marriage become an option that more and more Sabans do not exercise?

One of the reasons why marriage has lost appeal over time involves both the divergence between the expectations and realities of marriage as well as the divergence between emerging forms of women's empowerment and liberation and the contrasts of these ideologies with traditional gender norms that are embedded in Saban thoughts about marriage. Disappointment is a hallmark of many Saban relationships and when women thought about the influence of marriage on their own lives and in their communities, many reflected on the differences between what they thought their married lives would be like and what they actually became. One black woman dwells on the economic aspects of marriage and the declining ethic of familial support displayed by men in marital relationships:

> When typically, if you are married, usually the spouse sees that they live in a house. The house is usually theirs. In years gone by it used to be so that when you get married you have a house and I always thought that, when I was smaller, I always thought that, really, and I tell my children that all the time, that I thought that when I got married that my husband would take care of me and I would have a house, etc. But it turned out differently, but it's part of life. It's an experience, not good or bad. In life I always kept in the back of my mind somewhere that now I would have my own house. I, hopefully then, if I divorced or whatever, I would have a house but that never happened. Never, never.

The image of the home is a traditional marker of Saban manhood and movement from a juvenile life to one of adult responsibility. In the past, entry into marriage was often determined by when a man could build a home to show his economic prowess to his potential wife and her family. In the modern

world, many men, particularly in the black community but also in the white, do not feel this sense of responsibility towards their spouses and children. The expectations that black women bring about the meaning of marriage and the economic support and stability it should bring are dashed by the fact that their partners cannot or will not fulfill these traditional roles. In her case, this dream never materialized and the lack of a home becomes an emblem of her partner's failure to provide for his family. For other women, economic issues are also at play but the interpersonal dynamics between husband and wife are crucial to their thoughts about the benefits and disadvantages of marriage. One white woman shared her thoughts on the vagaries of marriage as follows:

> The good thing is that it's a kind of consistency. Well, I take it for granted that we're talking about a good marriage, you know. So, let's say it's a good marriage. You get your children, it's the ideal situation because both mom and dad are there raising the children, being positive, being the providers, and the role models. So it has all this positive. If you get married and you have children but your relationship together is not so ideal, unless you can solve that and maybe have counseling or come to terms with your relationship, as your children get older I'm not to sure that just staying married for the sake of the children is the right scenario to have because then your children are going to be looking to you "oh, so this is what a mom does and a dad" and without realizing it, maybe when they grow up, when they get married, they have children, they could fall in your footsteps, which can be negative footsteps because, after all, this is the only kind of examples they saw. So, unless you have a good relationship, and you are happily married and raising your children in a positive way, so that's the number one, the ideal. But if you don't have a good relationship, those are the negative parts because if you're constant quarreling with each other, you're not really 100% focused on your children. Say, for instance, if a man would beat his wife, and you have sons, well, if he has no other example, he's like, well, without realizing it when he gets married he's going to be tough on his wife and if he loses his temper, he'll probably hit her also. It depends on the situation, because, to me, just because you are married for 25 years, that doesn't say anything to me, unless you were happy. Okay, people cannot be happy all the time, but say that the situation is so that it's not damaging to your relationship. You know, everybody has differences of opinions but these you overcome. You talk them out and you move on. I'm talking about real damaging aspects in your relationship like cheating on each other or really being mean and not being helpful and a good provider, you know, not being there for your children. Because I know couples that, say, if the father never include himself with anything with the children can also be very stressful for the wife, for the mother, if she has to do everything, take care of herself, her husband and her children, and you do have men that think, you know, that it's the mother's duty and responsibility to take care of them by herself. And that can be very stressful.

And another biracial woman adds her perspective by sharing these thoughts:

> I don't know if there are any disadvantages because the advantages for kids are great if they if they live pleasant and happy together in such a household. But, if not, that could be a disadvantage as well. Especially if mother doesn't work, it's great because kids come home and they come home to a mother and a cooked meal and their homework is done. They're much better in school. They're well mannered. Their behavior is so much better and now if mother is working, sometimes it's harder. But they have

grandparents or they go to the daycare. And then you can see a little decline in the above mentioned, what I said. The disadvantage is when people stay married for their children. And they look like one big happy family but when the kids go to bed their door is closed and they've said goodnight, the parents are arguing and fighting with each other which the kids obviously can hear because it's not a sound proof room. They can hear. And that also has a negative effect on their child, believe it or not, or thinking that they don't hear what's happening outside in the living room. And even if there's no domestic violence. It can be also, it can also be the father who has verbal violence, not domestic, it's not really violence, it's just verbally abused. And that also can work on a child.

For these women, marriage is not universally good or universally bad but depends on the specifics of each marital situation. Overall, though, if parents can get along marriage is still seen as the ideal basis on which to form a family but the notion of staying together for the children despite irreconcilable differences is roundly rejected. People in bad marriages are cautioned that staying in a negative relationship for the sake of the children may actually perpetuate a cycle of verbal and physical abuse or neglect when these children create families for themselves. Without positive role models, how will they know how to create a happy and healthy home life in the future? While these thoughts focus on the instabilities that can arise in a marital situation, other women worried that marriage might disrupt the positive non-marital relationships that they already enjoyed with their men. This delicate balance between transitioning from a non-marital to a marital family arrangement was described by a black woman as follows:

> If you get a good man, he takes good care of you and sometimes you get married and everything change. I mean, like, if you are like that, and sometimes if you are single and you have children they tend to do more for you. Sometimes. It could be both ways, it could be marriage too, but they tend to take care of everything and you end up doing nothing. Maybe you working or something, you're working for yourself but they doing everything else. Because that's the way they see it or that's the way they think it should be done. Some it could be in a marriage situation, too, it could be marriage and they do everything, but sometimes people say they prefer to stay single because its been so good and they know how good it is. They don't want to change it because they don't know what will happen after. Cause everything could change…If you get married the man could be like, you're my wife and you're supposed to do this and you're supposed to do that. But when you're single you can say well, "I'm not married to you, you're not my boss". I don't have to do this or, you know, it's like before you get married its more like an equal partnership and then it becomes dominant like, you're my boss and you're my wife. It could be like the opposite way too because some women could dominate their men. Things could change.

Fears that marriage could interject instabilities into good consensual cohabiting or visiting relationships came up repeatedly in conversations with Saban women and the perspective shared

above is very similar to the thoughts shared by others. Women in these situations resist traditional gender norms that demand female subservience and use the lack of a marital commitment to leverage their men to do certain things for them. They feel that marriage could give a man a sense of security that would allow him to abuse certain forms of male privilege, like engaging in sexual affairs or failing to give proper economic support, that are still very much alive in Saban society. While fears about how men might change after marriage is a dominant theme, other women point out that women, too, often shift their perspectives not only on their own relationships but also on their place in Saban society. A white woman has this to say about moving from the status of girlfriend to the status of wife:

> Wives are women who change when the ring goes on their finger. You know, yesterday I did this but then I was not married. But now today I am Mrs. so and so and they take on a whole different attitude in life. You know, like, I am a married woman, I am Bob's wife, I am somebody's wife. All of a sudden it's like a political statement you are making. You know, as if you changed all of a sudden from yesterday. So, they have this behavior about them that's a little above other people sometimes. But that behavior towards the husband eventually can become something negative because you will see men starting to cheat on their wives because probably their wives feel that because they are wives they can't have so much fun with these men as they had before because a wife is not going to do certain things for the husband. So the husband is going to leave the wife to get all the fun at another place. So, some of them, I think, just misinterpret the meaning of the word wife, they think it's like a raise, a promotion.

A mental shift in the minds of women who become wives both makes them alter their behavior in a way that projects traditional values of quiet domesticity and allows them to feel superior, if staid, in their community and in their own relationships. This, alone, can cause marital problems if a wife feels like she has to abstain from certain activities that she thinks are unbecoming to her new status and if the husband comes to feel that his wife is just no fun anymore. Of course, the man, too, can shift the way that he sees his wife after the marriage and may not only try to curtail some of the activities that they once enjoyed together but may also continue to look for that fun and excitement outside their marriage. This, then, brings us back to the issue of infidelity and the instabilities that unfaithful partners bring into their marital relationships.

Although many men fool around with women who are not their wives, a few take this behavior to the next level by actually having children and starting families with their outside women.

This practice is by no means common but is prevalent enough to stir the ire of married and unmarried women alike and is the most extreme example of how male infidelity can disrupt family life. It is the ultimate act of betrayal and sets into motion an array of responses that run the gambit from divorce to acceptance of the outside child or children into the first wife's home. Historically, many of these kinds of relationships emerged between wealthy white men and poorer black women and, although this is still true today, men from all walks of life now feel as if it is their prerogative to engage in relationships outside of their marriages, some of which result in children being born. There is a difference, however, between men who literally set up house with a "second wife" and those who establish permanent, semi-permanent, and transitory relationships with other women who they never fully support either emotionally, or perhaps more importantly, economically. These kinds of outside relationships have changed over time and older people, including the black woman who shares her thoughts below, remember this traditional style of childbearing as a way for poor, mostly black, women to survive through difficult economic times.

> I feel that in the olden days that that woman, who had the man that comes by, that had the outside wife, even if she know she was wrong, she paid some kind of respect for the wife. The best that I know here, plenty people, never come to upbraid the wife and make problem with the wife. So, automatically that I know here, plenty of them, plenty people, that the children reared together and only afterward, "oh, well, you know, he's from this person and that one's from that person". But they lived because they know that that man had a wife and she holds that respect for them. But many times that happened through hard times. The woman had no way out and then this, maybe the man, he had money and he'd supply her with her needs so, automatically, you know. It isn't like nowadays, but in the olden times it happened with plenty people…I feel that in the olden days that the men was more respectful. The men, to me, was more respectful. The men I fancy in the olden times was more respectful even if he had that other woman outside he did it in a different manner than now. Now it's disrespectful in this open way. It was not like that and I think, too, that the women now is more open, don't careish, and the women is more rebellious. They fancy that maybe they don't have no humble path. They are bold.

She contrasts the relationships among outside women, husbands, and wives that, in former days, included a level of secrecy and respect for the wife to the current condition where everybody knows about the husband's infidelities and where the other woman feels as if she can bully and humiliate the wife who is already suffering through the fact that her husband has gone astray. Saban women tend to agree that this situation is most harmful, psychologically, emotionally, and economically for the

wife who has little in the way of protection from harm when a man places economic and emotional

priority on his other woman or his other family. Wives who play the traditional role of homemaker

and who have never really existed on their own are seen as the most vulnerable women in these

situations because they have never fostered a sense of independence that would allow them to stand

up to their men much less actually leave them. When asked about outside women and children, one

white woman describes the different responses to the situation like this:

> Well, then he can pack his suitcase and go, sorry whoever is listening to this.
> There are some other stupid women that respond differently. They still accept the
> husband back home and they even take the kids from the next person back home in their
> house. I've got family that has that problem that the husband went out and got kids with
> another woman and they even accept the kids in their house and help to feed them.
> Sometimes they do it out of fear. Fear of the way that they live with the man. Fear that
> maybe if they don't treat those kids good that he will probably come to threaten them
> with something, threaten their life. Or sometimes it's just out of love. They just simply
> love that person and they don't care what they do, what happens. And then they feel
> sorry for the kids. Some just put a blind eye to the problem, and, like I said, they love the
> man so much that they don't really worry what he does outside. They're just blind by
> their love for him.

And another white woman gives her perspective as follows:

> But when it's taken a step further that this man actually has outside children, to
> me, then it is truthfully up to the wife to say, well, I am going to accept this and this is
> why I'm accepting it. And the ironic thing about it is that they are all accepting it. On
> Saba, there are people who go out and have other children and the wife accepts the
> situation and not only accepts the situation but you see her take care of the child. The
> child is actually included with her own children after a while. Because some women
> think that they have to hold on to husbands no matter what. They got married and it's for
> better or worse, whatever the vows were, which should be rewritten I think, so they will
> struggle through it all and struggling they do. Very much so. Say for the outside child,
> of course, I think it's easier to all of a sudden have this extended family who's
> welcoming you in their situation. So, remember that this marriage situation is suppose to
> be the ideal situation so I think that it is much easier for this child to adopt this situation
> than it is for the children who are in the marriage setting to realize that their father left
> their mother to get the child with another woman. However, I think that young people
> today have complete different ideas, sets of values, they are not so everything is etched in
> stone as it used to be years ago. I think that young people today accept a lot more than
> years ago. They are a lot more flexible because they have been fed so many ideas, so
> many different lifestyles. Because a lot of times you hear the young people have this
> saying, "Hey, whatever makes you happy". They have come to accept a lot in their lives,
> I find. Whether they understand it, I don't know, but I see the acceptance a lot from a lot
> of young people and if wives can deal with the situation, well, more power to them. They
> struggle with it in the beginning but they never let the man actually go. They still hang in
> there. Because there's also women whose men cheat on them and they don't even have
> children and they just hanging there and hanging there and hanging there. And then they
> still stay with the men. I guess they have their reasons. Remember a lot of women hate
> to be alone. A lot of women who lack self confidence, who are not assertive enough to
> say, "Hey, out you go, I'm going to work, I'm going to take care of myself" because if

you've been married for X amount of years and you have never worked and you have always put out your hand and received your husband's paycheck and you have taken care of everything, or we have the other way around where the men do not give their wives the money but they take care of everything, they take care of the light bill, the cable, and whatever so these wives have no sense of responsibility, no sense of standing on their own two feet and making it and sometimes it's also these kind of women that would rather be in an unhappy situation than be alone.

In both of these narratives, wives who live within the traditional constraints of Saban womanhood are seen as very vulnerable to the excesses of their men. They are thought to lack the social and economic tools to strike out on their own and, due to this, they continue to bind their lives to men who have shown them no regard. For educated worldly women, like the two women quoted above, these situations stem from the fact that some segment of the female population has remained rooted in the old ways and has not changed their mindset from one of nearly complete socioeconomic dependence on men to one of independent womanhood. Although, of course, relationships are very complex and even some "liberated" women find themselves trying to salvage relationships by dealing with the fallout from their husband's or partner's outside relationships. Wives, however, are not the only ones to suffer in this situation. Psychological damage to children both inside and outside the marriage often results from these relationships and a general lack of paternal support present in Saban society at large often plays out in the lives of outside children. A biracial woman counters the "children are flexible" argument made above by saying this about outside women and children:

> It really upsets the whole marriage situation. Then you have families that if they stay together, they're married but they stay together for the kids, you know, and the father leaves every night to go sleep by another woman. And you kind of get married to set an example for your kids. It's not too good of an example so how do you correct your kids when your daughter or older kid is doing the same thing. They're going to turn around and say, "but you do it". You know, and also if you, for example, you have outside kids, that child can be teased at school. Like "oh, there's your", like they can be rude, like they can say slang words like "oh, there's your spic sister or there's your nigger brother". And it can all depend on what family you're from. If you're from a very wealthy family and you go to a school and you do something and you say, oh, and you make such and such a comment, that can haunt you because the kids at school can tease you. Maybe not the adults so much but your kids kind of suffer, I think in such situation. Or that other kid that you have outside of the family with somebody else doesn't get that recognition as the kids within your family. They get all the social security and all the help they need while the other child which is the father's or the mother's you know, is outside struggling. They're living in a hut and you're living in a two-story block house.

In her description of how people experience these situations, it is clear that many of these

relationships still evolve between white men who have money and poorer women who are of a different race or ethnicity and that issues of race and class permeate the experiences of children born inside and outside of their father's marriage. Since many fathers are already given a free pass to ignore the needs of their children, it is not surprising to hear that some outside children are not supported by their fathers and that the divide between children of different legal statuses plays out to the detriment of non-marital children. However, changes in the legal status of outside women and children have increased the likelihood of receiving some kind of support from these men and have, subsequently, reduced the social benefits and legal protections once enjoyed by wives. These changes in the law tend to favor the rights of outside women and their children by conferring rights to demand support and, in the case of children, rights to heir from their father's estate. In the past, wives were required to give consent when their husbands wished to formally and legally recognize their outside children but now husbands can go through this legal process without the wife's consent and, in some cases, without her knowledge. While changes in the law were designed to protect children, they have had a very negative effect on wives and have been the source of much concern amongst married women. When asked whether paternal recognition makes a difference in children's lives and about the benefits and disadvantages of cohabitation, one black woman assessed the situation like this:

> It depends on for the child. Children may pose questions of whose name are they carrying but it's also now the law has been created to protect the child where if you are living with a lady and you have children with her, the chances are maybe you are legally married to someone else but you are living with someone else, anyway, you have children with that first person. Well, now a law has been implemented if you have children, the children have rights to carry your name. So, at a certain point in time, the victim of this situation now becomes the wife whose husband has a second living agreement with someone else and he's getting children and these children have just as much rights as the children he's getting with his wife because these children have the opportunity based on the law that was passed. The children have the right now to carry the father's name which gives them the right to also claim. Women do not discuss the issue, but I think women need to start discussing the issue. Because if they don't, then that will be their downfall. But the child has nothing to lose in this situation because they didn't ask to come in. Parents, adults, choose to bring them in…If you as a couple are living together and are not married, under the Dutch law, after five years, as a woman you have legal rights. So, even if, take for instance, a gentleman after five years decided to leave you, you can carry him to court and you can claim to court and ask for alimony. Once you have proof that he have been living with you for the past five years. Because, I

mean, I can be living with a married man and after five years he decides to go back to his wife, I have a right as a single person to demand alimony from the man I've been living with for the past five years. While those five years he's been living with me he's legally married to someone else but I can carry him to court. If I have been married to a man and building up my life, we have three children together or four children together, and you're basically building your whole family around your children, your husband and your children, and he out of the blue starts a relationship over with someone else where that person gets pregnant, gets this child, who will automatically have rights to claim his name, who automatically then has rights to claim whatever he has. And what he has is also his wife's. So, when you're thinking what you have is going to be divided among your four children, you have to be dividing among four children plus one. And you ask yourself why did the law, why did this way happen?

And another black woman follows this up by sharing her own concerns:

In a way I feel it matters for the child because then the child feels accepted, you know, by us. They could be acknowledged when they are babies. Now you know or you don't know. Now the husband can acknowledge his children outside without his wife giving permission. Because the way how I was explained that when they passed this law they really didn't get the input of their wives. It was a man who deliberated on it because he was an outside child and he didn't have the input of what the women thought about it. Because you may see a father with something but you do not know how your father got it. Maybe his wife wanted to push and push for him to have a fortune and now you think that just like that you can come and inherit? I feel threatened, I don't how many more women feel threatened. So what needs to be done then is the wife, if she have anything, she put it in specifically her children name. She doesn't leave it open like that. She put it in her children name.

Married women are paying not only the emotional but also the economic price for the husband's infidelities and many feel that being a wife or being a legally born child no longer confers the economic stability that it once did. The law, in fact, reduces the attractiveness of marriage because it reduces the social and economic benefits of entering into marital unions. Wives must constantly look over their shoulders to see if their husbands have brought in more women and children to carve up what, in most cases, are already quite limited resources. Even those who are savvy enough to protect their own assets must endure the public humiliation and shame that their husbands subject them to through their callous philandering. After talking about these issues, one biracial woman summed up the situation succinctly by saying "If my partner had outside kids, I'd kill him dead!". Indeed.

Although most Saban women agree that marriage is the ideal situation for starting and raising a family, divergences between the expectations of marriage versus the realities of marriage, fears that marriage could change a good relationship by shifting the balance of power towards men, and the fact that many men bring trouble into their marriages by starting relationships with and, in some cases,

having children with other women combine to make marriage a risky proposition. Increasingly, women are choosing either to cut their losses by initiating divorce and exiting bad marriages or to not take that gamble at all and, instead, to live in cohabiting relationships of varying duration. These alternatives to marriage further destabilize marriage as the foundation of family life and have reshaped the relationships between men and women in myriad ways.

The challenge of divorce and cohabitation as alternatives to marriage

For older generations of Sabans, the word divorce remained taboo and very few people considered divorce to be a socially acceptable option to escape an unhappy marital situation. However, divorce has become almost commonplace in modern Saban society and many younger Saban men and women have had to negotiate the economic, social, and emotional challenges brought on by dissolving their own marriages. For some, divorce is seen as giving couples an "easy way out" and has meant that many marriages that could have been saved with a little hard work were, instead, quickly dismantled by taking a trip to the courthouse. To them, it is a sign of a general problem in Saban society where people want to have much in their lives but are unwilling to fight to secure it. For others, divorce is a means for women to escape from the confinement of life with an emotionally or physically abusive man and, in this way, divorce becomes an emblem of female empowerment on island. For some women, divorce is a constant threat that can be wielded with great effect by their men and can, in some cases, be used to control women who feel that they simply cannot make it on their own. Like any other social practice, divorce is viewed differently depending on one's position in Saban society and looking both at the demographic trends of divorce and the ways that Saban women experience and think about divorce will help us understand the complex ways that divorce has been integrated into the social fabric of Saban society.

Instabilities that exist within Saban marriages, a trend towards greater female economic power through education and employment, and a growing sense that women don't have to settle for less than ideal marital situations have all fostered a social environment where divorce is on the rise.

Divorce was virtually unknown on island until the period of oil-refinery migration came into full-swing but the rate of divorce of first marriages did not explode until the post-oil period. Although Saban marriages still do not dissolve at a clip that approximates the over 50% divorce rate in the United States, marital dissolution through divorce has become a fact of life for many Saban men and women. For women coming of age in the immediate post-oil period, ¼ of all white women and over 40% of black women terminated their first marriages through divorce and, although the rates dropped to 20% and 35% in the following period, this may be a function of time rather than any real movement away from divorce as a viable alternative to remaining married (Figure 9.7). When looking at these changes in the household censuses from 1964 and 2004, only around 6% of ever-married black Sabans and around 2% of ever-married white Sabans had experienced a divorce in the 1964 population (Figure 9.8). In 2004, these numbers elevated to around 15% of ever-married black men, 20% of ever-married white men, 27% of ever-married black women, and 20% of ever-married white women who were still in residence on Saba during that year (Figure 9.9). Native-born Saban men from the black community likely show a lower rate of marital dissolution not because their relationships are more stable, on the whole, but because they have less of a tendency to marry at all than their white male peers. Native-born black women, on the other hand, show a much higher tendency to both marry and divorce and the fact that a portion of these unsuccessful relationships were forged with foreign men makes sense of the divergence between the divorce experiences of black Saban men and women. Anecdotal evidence bears out this difference since many of the divorced women interviewed had met and married their ex-husbands while living away from home and only returned to the island after those relationships ended.

In sum, these demographic trends suggest that all marriages are now more likely to end in divorce and that black women are at the highest risk for experiencing a divorce at some point in their lives. It is not surprising, then, that many women have a lot of direct experience with and firm opinions about the impacts of divorce in their own lives and in the community at large. Generational divides clearly show that a cohort effect is in play in island life and many older women express deep

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concern and reservations about the increasing prevalence of divorce in their villages. One older black woman had this to say about the historical development of divorce on Saba:

> In the olden days you never hear nothing about divorce. You was married til you dead. There wasn't nothing about no divorce. It had to be something very, very grave and even if the man have outside children or the women get other children that would still be polished up and dressed up and you wouldn't hear nothing about divorce. Very, very seldom. You'd hear that a man has had outside children, he saw to the woman, saw to their children, but nowadays divorce is a common thing. I think maybe, I don't know what you would call it, maybe they don't know what divorce was all about. Or maybe they don't know what marriage was all about. Because six months after the wedding is the divorce here. Many weddings cannot make ten years in a good way and when you look from yourselves you would wonder what's going on and it's divorce. And it's getting to be now on Saba it's less and less years you know, yourself, people here on Saba makes fifty years married, forty five. And now even people can't make a year. So I don't know if they don't understand what marriage is all about or what divorce is all about.

Her feelings about the lack of longevity in current Saban marriages is widely held in the black and white communities and is clearly articulated by the thoughts on divorce shared by two other black women:

> I find that this is the thinking between a husband and wife today: We can't solve it, I'm going for a divorce. You know they go, one goes and signs up and well, then it's done. I find that they should have more faith in each other and try to keep talking and talking and talking it out. Especially if children is involved it is necessary that you try to stay together because of the children even if you have to separate from your bedrooms. But just don't give in to a divorce like that so easy.

and:

> People don't give themselves time to sit down and talk, learn to understand each other's ways, learn to communicate with each other. The least little problem they fly off the handle and no understanding. The next one don't want to understand. The other one don't want to understand. And there's where the man, then, he walks out and he will go and sit in the bar and he would drink and he would carry on and then he may find somebody else out there. A woman. Then, or vice versa, you know, the woman too. And there's where it all begins and before you know it you hear, well, the man has left the woman or the woman has gone home and then you hear that they're up for divorce instead of trying to work out the problem and seeing well, what can we do to save the marriage and especially if children are involved.

Saban women, like those quoted above, regularly expressed their concerns that a general lack of patience and willingness to work out problems now pervades modern Saban marriages. Many women who held these views also felt that dissolving marital households should only be a last resort because parents should do everything in their power to stay together for the sake of the children. Sometimes the process of divorce comes suddenly and almost unexpectedly for Saban women and many divorced

women from both communities feel as if they had little control over the terms or speed of their own divorces. One black woman remembers her experiences like this:

> It was kind of fast, it happened quickly. I didn't know you could divorce right away. I thought you had to think about it, but this ex-husband of mine was so mean and funny with me that I just start to get rid of it. I would say "I'll move down and we'll get a separation". We didn't even move out and to me he say "we should get divorced". It was so fast. Because things were going bad but I didn't expect him to break up like that. He joke about it. He said "I think you should pack up your things and go because it's not working out so, would you like to get a divorce with me? I think we should get a divorce" and I was like "uhmmm, like tomorrow?". "Nah", he said "no, I'll give you time but this ain't working out so we should get divorced". I was like, I looked at [my child] and I looked at myself, at the situation, and I was like all this work for nothing? It wasn't going good and I was just joking and thinking and I was trying to see we should try do something, but before I could get there he had his mind made up. I could see things ain't going well and he could see it wasn't there no more, the love gone. Then, on a small island people talk so much and does so much that your relationship breaks over stupidness, you know. And he picked up right away and went to [another country]. It was strange…If I didn't have a child, I wouldn't feel so bad about it. I would have gone on a little easier but up to now I cannot think but that it's very bad for the child. I regret I should have still fight the case instead of going to divorce quickly because he did ask me to come back to him and for the child's sake I was gonna but I was like I don't want no argument, I don't want to go back to the same thing over and over again. Because I think when you're stubborn, you're stubborn and you ain't gonna change and once you separate you do lots of things between the separation and you throw back in people's face when you get back with them. So in the long run you're always going to have a disagreement in the relationship about what went on when you were separated so, what's not meant to be is not meant to be.

For her, divorce was not necessarily a source of empowerment but more a source of bewilderment as she was left on her own to care for her young child and to pick up the pieces after her husband summarily walked out. She expresses a sense of sadness that is combined with inevitability but places the bulk of her regret on the loss of a constant in-home father for her child rather than the loss of spousal support. A rending apart of the nuclear family, signified by divorce, is very unsettling for many Sabans even if they either did not grow up in marital families themselves or did not establish marital families in adulthood. However, people who came from marital families and who entered marriage themselves tended to be more strongly in favor of working out problems rather than heading for divorce. On the whole, they seemed to feel that suffering and conflict are, in some ways, an inevitable part of the marital experience and not ones to be dealt with by vacating the marriage, even if it meant "sleeping in different beds". One white woman vividly describes the early tensions between divorced and married women at a time when divorce was first becoming part of life on Saba:

I think in the beginning, maybe formerly, I know that it was viewed very negative on the island if you had a divorce. You was almost considered like a fallen woman. Because years ago when people got married, they actually took these vows very serious. They took them literally. I mean, you got married and you stayed married until one of you died and there was no such thing as getting a divorce. So, whether you had a good marriage or a bad marriage you were expected to stay together. But, I think that with new influences and people coming to the island, introduction of television, and other people coming to the island who were divorced, you were still frowned upon, you know, like "oh my god, she's divorced, now she will be after my husband". So, you know when divorced women came here you actually felt the tension on the island by married women, like "oh, what if she wants my husband?". Of course, these women failed to realize that you just got rid of this guy, the last thing you wanted was another guy. And this is a woman who was not happy and knew there was an alternative. You see, it's difficult. Marriage is a responsibility but divorce is a difficult process to get through so if you're in a convenient happy zone marriage, even in cases where it's not happy, it's easier to stay in this comfort zone and ride it out and hope for the best than to actually face a divorce. A divorce is hard work. It's an emotional draining process. At many times, you feel alone in the process especially in a small community where people disapprove that you're getting a divorce, even the people who are extremely unhappy. And then you get the divorce and in some cases you realize that it was envy, "oh my goodness, she had the guts to get rid of this guy but I'm still stuck with mine but I don't have the guts to do this, I need to stay married because this is the way I was taught to be". Other women don't get a divorce because of "oh, what will the community say, will I be able to go to communion?", for all kind of different reasons, the women don't get the divorce. Or they tell you I cannot get a divorce because I'm staying together for the sake of the children. But, that, I am totally against because if you are constant fighting with your partner, what kind of example are you setting for your children?

Divorced women began to hold a mirror up to the unhappiness that many women were feeling in their marriages and, for some, gave them strength to leave and, for others created a source of bitterness, jealousy, and resentment that other women had the courage to walk away. There is a difference, though, in the reasons why people end their marriages and, in some ways, Sabans feel that it has become too easy to walk away without really trying to work things out. While cases of infidelity, domestic violence, psychological abuse, and incarceration are all deemed to be legitimate reasons for divorce in the minds of most Sabans, women are worried that simple "unhappiness" will become a new and lesser standard for walking away from marriage. A biracial woman shared her perspectives like this:

In Holland it's like the fifth reason you can get a divorce is that it's just not working out. Not so many years of this, so many years of this. It's no fault divorce. It's not that easy here. You have to prove infidelity. Usually you don't get a divorce here unless that's the reason but I've heard in Europe if it's just not working out, you just get a divorce. You're just not happy anymore with that person. That's what's made it so common. Usually here it's infidelity or someone's in jail, so many years in jail, or physical abuse is an automatic divorce. With no fault, there's no reason. It's just that it's not working out anymore. I think they don't work at it. They just get a divorce and no

one works hard at it anymore. They say marriage is work and you have to work at it but you know if the option is there you just don't work hard at it anymore. It's already messed up as it is on Saba so I wouldn't like that law to come into effect because then there would be more kids torn between different households.

In this narrative, she connects a growing trend towards divorce in Holland with the fact that the law allows marital dissolution based on the generic category of irreconcilable differences. In her mind, entry of this standard into Saban society would further deteriorate the stability of family life by sending the message that there is an out if you just aren't happy anymore. Given the fact that relationships are, in many cases inherently unstable already, adopting this low burden of proof for filing a divorce could only further unsettle family life.

When divorce occurs, both parties suffer through their grief in different ways but some Saban women insist that men are more damaged while others insist that the woman has a more difficult road. Opinions that express concern for men after divorce tend to come from a certain segment of the black community that are either too old to have experienced divorce first hand or who have no experience of marriage either in their birth families or in the families they build for themselves. An older black woman had this to say about who suffers most from the fallout of divorce:

In my opinion a woman survives. I think so. The woman, I feel, if it's a strong woman and according to how her life has been, she'll not so easily look for a man to sit down with again. Maybe she'll have a boyfriend but she'll say I've had enough of a man and I am on my own now and I'm going to carry my own life my way. But most of the time the men, before he get from one woman, he get with another woman. And if he lucky enough to get the good woman, okay, he survives but if he bad lucky to get the wrong woman, he goes down here. And most of the time you seldom see that those man worry with church and God and things anymore. He get discouraged, he ain't worrying with that.   And then he give up God, wherein plenty times the woman then she clings more to the church, asking god to help take her through.

While another younger woman offers a similar perspective:

Here on Saba when a woman leaves a man, I tell you the man could jump a bridge. It's harder for them. For the woman it is more easy because she know her life is set up already. She know what she going for but when the man don't expect it, he will kill himself. He going to be drinking. He going to do this, he going to do that.

And later follows up with both her explanation about why divorce has increased and the damaging economic effects that some men face when leaving their wives:

The older couples here on Saba been married since years ago, years ago. Cause they have children, they got married, they settled down. That was years, years. Love

was years. You don't find love on Saba. Years ago love, now this day and age died out. Everything is dying out because you know why? Some of them have been married too long, more people are coming into Saba, they're seeing more things on a different level. Look, they got more women out there. I seen my wife every day. I been married to her for thirty, forty years. I tired of this shit. Let me end it. And they end with one. Because I got a friend now, she got a divorce and he sees another girl, a girl that just came in and he's in love with her. My half on this is Saba, you living on Saba, you could live anywhere in the world you want but if you know how to do things on a way how you can stand it. If I'm going to get a divorce from you, I got to know well, if I go with this other lady, if I'm working, we living in a house together, I will stand my responsibilities, I will support my children etc. But now here on Saba, some guys run out of options because look, they live in houses the land is either the wife's house, land, it's her money in the house even though you put money in the house. You put thirty thousand guilders. You could say I could pay you up to that thirty thousand guilders but look, the sweat you put in it doesn't pay for what you done. Because they build quite a mansion here in the Bottom and if she pays you out, where's your sweat? She doesn't pay you for your sweat. That's only money but the hard work you did not put in. You run out of options because if you leave her now, you say, I got a house to leave, a this to leave, this, that and the other. But the way he did it, I found the way that he did it was in a wrong manner. He just pick up and go, sleep with this girl, you know. To me I find that anybody could deal with this, just sit down and say look, honey, I want a divorce now. I found somebody else. I'm moving on. So, the wife can know what to expect. Don't let her go out there, go into a fight or have somebody killed for her or throw herself down for nothing, for something she didn't even know about, for something she didn't even hear. She going to fight about what she didn't hear. I want to know what I hear. Tell her in a way that she know.

The influx of foreigners has not only opened up more sexual and relationship options for Saban men but has also placed them in a precarious economic position when their wives own their home, property, and other marital assets. A man takes a big risk in deciding to leave because he may, ultimately, lose everything that he and his wife worked to build during their time together. Although this woman does not seem to think that leaving a wife for another woman is necessarily wrong, she does lay down a moral code that requires a man to be upfront about his intentions before he establishes a relationship with the other woman. Again, the sense is that relationships are expected to fail and dissolve and that marriages, in this social environment, are not built to last as they were in the past. While both of these women focus on the detrimental effects on men, the consensus opinion, by far, was that women, especially women with children, had the most difficult time dealing with the aftermath of divorce. One biracial woman shared her thoughts about the differences like this:

The reason why divorce impacts women the most is because you have to find some place to live, make sure your children have everything. If the father gives or he doesn't give you still have to take care of them. It's harder for you to start a new relationship, you have less freedom than the man has. If you have a job, it's okay but if you don't have a job you have that added stress as well. Then you also have to deal with

the children and their stress and whatever and then usually you got fathers who promise to come pick up the kids or to visit or whatever and then they don't show up and then that's added stress again. And then they just take it for granted that they can show up when they want or don't show up, pay child support when they want and just don't do it and you just have to accept all of that. But they don't realize the impact that it makes on the lives of the children or on your life. Sometimes it makes people really bitter especially towards men because of their experience and although you shouldn't judge other people by past experiences it somehow pops up in your mind whenever somebody else is trying to get involved with you. You still keep thinking back on what you've been through already so sometimes it even hampers new relationships because you're still stressed out from the one before. And especially on Saba it's very difficult for the woman, well, if the man don't want to see her, it's difficult for he too because you meet one another constantly. You go to the same stores. You drive on the same roads, you know. And then especially when the man is in a new relationship and you don't have anyone new in your life, then it's difficult for you to constantly see him and his new family together. And maybe your family is there being neglected and he's paying more attention to another man's children than he's paying to your children. And the children will be attending the same schools and there can be friction especially if the father is buying stuff for them and he's not giving his own children anything. So the mother basically has all of that to deal with and try to find a way to keep everything normal.

For her, the difficulties that women face when trying to handle the disappointments of a failed marriage are exacerbated both by the fact that women are usually left as sole custodians and financial providers for their children and by the fact that many men seem to easily transition into their next relationship without remembering the responsibilities they left behind. This difference is again highlighted in the thoughts shared by another black woman when she shared the following:

I think on Saba women have a harder time dealing with a divorce in comparison to men. I think men has a tendency of getting that moral support from their brothers and the bars. They'll pick them up. While maybe because of having children the women are stuck at home with a child or children and then doesn't have the time to focus on herself or focus on what her next decision might be. So, I think, in that sense it usually leaves a negative impact on the woman while the man physically and mentally will be able to recuperate faster. And because of the lack of men on the island, I would think Saba has less men still, and because of the lack of men on the island you will find that I man will find himself, like, a woman is going to pick him up faster, no matter what the situation was, he will find a lady friend faster than a woman will.

This general perspective is reiterated by another black woman who also draws attention to the possibility that men don't take marriage as seriously as women from the outset:

It depends on the situation of it. I feel women, most women, they feel that when they get into marriage, they feel it's til death do you part. And even if you see that there is no way out but divorce, you prefer to not go through that divorce. You try to avoid it. You still work as a woman to find a solution to the problem. And the woman, they take it more serious and they get more stressful about it while the man, on the other side, he's like "I don't care, I'll go out and I'll find something else out there". He more lax about it. He even don't even try to say let's try to come to a solution in order to save our marriage, you know. So, I feel it always effects the woman more and especially here in the

Antilles. She have the pressure of also guiding the children through this divorce also and he don't care if they're guided or what you have to tell them. It's basically that he wants out and that's it.

A white woman shared her belief that wives and mothers are most affected by divorce but feels that women are also much more capable of absorbing the shock in the long-run:

To me, until she's really over all the legal battles and her own emotions and stuff, it takes quite a while. I don't think it's so for the man. You see them out a week later, they're already looking for any old partner or a drinking buddy. I think that they can shake it of easier. I think that women truly struggle a lot longer than men. More is asked of them. More demands are placed on the woman but rightfully so she's the strongest creature that was created, that's why they got the children and that's why they are the pillars of the society.

All of these narratives, rightly or wrongly, carry the sense that men are simply not as emotionally invested in the experience and commitment of marriage and that they tend to move on quickly because they are not burdened either by emotional baggage or by their fatherly responsibilities. Women, who are at the core of family life, are responsible not only for coping with their own pain but must find a way to provide a stable environment for their children even when divorce rocks the foundation of their families. Men are seen as somehow lesser when it comes to being partners and fathers and, as with other aspects of Saban life, women are positioned as the anchors in the lives of their children and are responsible for navigating their paths to adulthood irrespective of the input from their fathers.

This image of strong womanhood and commitment to family is forcefully reemerging at a time when many Sabans feel that the family, itself, is under a real threat of destruction by the increasing prevalence of divorce in all sectors of Saban society. An ethic of survival runs through almost all of women's personal experiences with divorce and, though they mourn for the loss of a future with their father's children, they somehow find the will to move on even in desperate circumstances. The tragedy of divorce and the ruptures it creates in family life are, ironically, often the source of women's empowerment as divorced women prove to themselves, their ex-husbands, and their communities that they have the ability to build a life without a man. When reflecting on how divorce has impacted Saban society, many women, both black and white, expressed the belief that

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wives should prepare themselves for the possibility of divorce and that divorce can be a source of strength for women who never thought they could survive on their own. One biracial woman offers this advice for married women:

> I think that anybody that gets married and who also has kids should always think of the possibility that no matter how good things seem today, divorce is always lurking somewhere in the back there and it could happen. And I think that, as a woman especially, you should be prepared to know that if you have to get divorced, most probably you going to be on your own with the kids. You got to know how to handle it and that's why I think that more women should try to get an education so if something happens that they don't have to feel they have to stay with a man for financial reasons or whatever. They'll just know that they'll be financially secure. They'll be able to still take care of the kids. Whatever the man gives her, he gives her but they'll be able to make it on their own. Because when you're in love everything is sweet and nice but we've all been in relationships and we know that the sweetness goes sometimes. When there's a break up in a marriage, especially when children are involved, it's a lot worse because when there's just two people involved it's your feelings to deal with but if there are children involved there are other issues.

The threat of divorce should, alone, encourage women to establish their own economic independence and, in her opinion, all women should approach marriage with an open heart but with a realistic understanding that the future is uncertain. In a time when divorce is on the rise, the old ways of women staying at home with the children are not only an anachronism but also an anachronism that puts women at a serious disadvantage either if their husbands choose to leave or, in some cases, if they choose to leave their husbands. Contingency planning is deemed necessary to protect women from the effects of marital instability and divorce. For many women that have gone through a divorce, the shock of being on their own was both frightening and, in the end, empowering. In describing her post-divorce struggles one white woman shared her experience of finding her own way like this:

> I took to crying and I was crying. So, she comes and I is standing there. She says "Come", she says, "come here. There's one thing that mommy got to tell you. You don't kill yourself for that man. You is not burdened with him. Live for that one that you have got. Your mommy and your daddy will stand to your side. Don't leave your heart just break". She says, "Remember this is yours". And I thought to tell him, "Yous leaving me, be happy with the next. But God give me ten fingers and two hands. I'll work for my child". And, to tell the truth, it was very hard. I was home five months before I thought about going to work. I felt I had done some kind of disgrace and one morning I got up and I says this has to stop, you know, I have a future to look for my child. I start looking for work.

And another white woman expresses her growing self-reliance as follows:

People think it's easy to get the divorce. It's difficult to get the divorce because then all of a sudden you are alone. You have to start a brand new life. The things that you never thought about before, you know, all of a sudden you are going to be doing. If you live alone you live so different than the average married woman because in an average marriage men and women share certain responsibilities. I'm going to be taking care of this while you're taking care of that. There's some aspects of daily life that women never think about. Their husbands are accustomed to do it, but all of a sudden when you are alone and the faucet starts to leak, you have to find a plumber. You have to pay all the utility bills. You have to find out where this is coming from and it's all about you, you and your children and the garden and the car. To me, single women and divorced women are almost mechanics because you've heard so much about this second hand car that keeps breaking down. You know all about plumbing and painting and puttying and you do so much and you give yourself so little credit sometimes for what you know. Because as a single woman myself and when I'm speaking to married women and I'm like, well, wait a minute I've been doing this for years and then you think about it like, well, yeah, I'm a single woman. You become so strong. You become so capable and you realize that, well, wait a minute I can do this. You know, it's because you were never exposed to do it before because you had a husband doing it for you so I think that more women if they had more self esteem and more confidence, they would be leaving a lot more men instead of staying in these situations.

And a black woman who reflected on the strength required of women after divorce shared this perspective:

You have to be strong, very strong. A woman has to be strong. I don't know how but they definitely do it. They all do it, boy. She have to well her tears back. She have to show her kids that she can go on and she can do it. You have to show the man that you can really go on with your life.

All of these women express the belief that divorce is both painful and, in some ways, liberating for women who are given the opportunity to show their own strength by finding the courage to move on. This is not to say that all women are able to meet the high expectations that society sets for them, but that, for the most part, women are able to recover from divorce and create a stable future for themselves and their children. As with most stories told by Saban women, a handful of men continue to take their parental responsibilities seriously after divorce but many either contribute insufficient amounts of money and time to their children or simply drop out of their children's lives completely. The few who do step up hold up a mirror that reflects not only the accomplishments that some women achieve in the absence of men but also the failures of fatherhood that are all too common in Saban society.

Many women cite the fear of divorce, the fear of disrupting a good non-marital relationship by marrying, and the general feeling of wanting more flexibility in their relationships as the key

reasons why they choose to live with rather than marry their partners. Because marriage now provides little additional legal protection for wives, especially in the case of having outside women and children, the threat of divorce looming over many marriages, and a because of a general growing sense that relationships just aren't meant to last has, many Saban women from both the black and white communities have adopted the practice of cohabitation with their partners in lieu of legal marriage. Although cohabitation is far more prevalent now than it was forty years ago, it would be incorrect to assert that cohabitation is a widely accepted social practice and feelings about living together are mixed in the Saban community. Growth in cohabitation rates, though, is undeniable. In 1964 just 3% of all households were shared by a cohabiting couple and in 2004 the proportion of cohabiting households had jumped to 12% (Figure 9.10). The highest rate of cohabitation is found in The Bottom, at 16%, and the lowest is in Hells Gate, at 8%. All-black couples are much more likely to be in cohabiting households than all-white couples but interracial households where one partner is black and the other is white or Hispanic show the highest rates of cohabitation (Table 9.1). For example, the most common interracial households are formed between one black partner and one white partner and 34% of these households are founded on cohabiting consensual unions rather than marriage. This is almost three times the rate of cohabitation found in the population as a whole. This same pattern holds true for the 1964 household census and suggests that qualities about interracial unions tend to lean towards cohabitation more often than other kinds of unions. Race, however, is not the only influential factor in cohabitation patterns. When breaking down cohabiting households by race and national origin, cohabiting couples tend to form between a Saban and a partner who is not local to the island (Figure 9.11). In interracial relationships, 60% of cohabiting unions contain a foreign partner, in all-black families that proportion jumps to 80%, and in all white families the proportions are equal between all-Saban and blended families. Looking at trends at the level of the village, in Hells Gate about half of all cohabiting couples have a foreign partner, in Windwardside 80% of cohabiting couples are blended, in St. Johns 65% are blended, and in The Bottom 60% of cohabiting couples are in blended relationships (Figure 9.12). Together, these trends show that

interracial couples and blended couples are far more likely to be in cohabiting relationships. This suggest that relationships that move across racial lines tend to take on a pattern of cohabitation that is more typical in the black than in the white Saban communities and that the increasing acceptance of cohabitation stems, at least partially, from attitudes brought in by Sabans and non-Sabans from places around the Caribbean, the United States, and Holland where cohabitation is much more common and, for the most part, more socially acceptable. Age effects may also be relevant here because of a recent increase in the number of young interracial, sometimes childbearing, couples who may see cohabitation as a mark of modernity and modern "freedoms" rather than as an extension of an historical family form in the black community into the lives of white partners.

When thinking about the pros and cons of establishing cohabiting relationships, most women focused on the impact that outside influences have had on Saban adoption of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage, the flexibility that cohabitation allows men and women, and the downside of staying in relationships that are not fully recognized by the church or, until recently, by law. One black woman used the increase in cohabitation as an example of how the outside world has come to roost on Saba by saying that:

> People who have never gone away thinks different to someone who have been away. Their thinking is different. They see things in a different perspective. In former days that I know, you never found young people living together. And you only saw it with black people. So I though it was only a black thing. But now you see young people, I think they saw it and they picked it up from off-island.

And another black woman continued these thoughts by adding that:

> You have where children go off to school and you have where they then stay there but then they come back and they are not married but they come back with their friend and their children. Or you have situations like where doctors came, we had two cases where a doctor came with a girlfriend and I remember good at that time when they said, what? That's against the law. Because in the past it was if you were a civil servant you had to be married. You had to be married to have that position. So, you know, it was very shocking for them to see that a doctor would come to the island, live on the island and was not married. And then gradually people see that and so, then, it didn't matter to them. You could see that a lot of young girls they got pregnant and parents did not force them to marry.

A third black woman identified off-island experience of students as a factor that has increased both the incidence and acceptance of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage:

But oftenly, Saba hasn't had that many marriages, maybe one every year, maybe two. I think the most is maybe two because people here also now are having the tendency of just living together, at least for a while and then I think maybe that once the idea of the two of them getting through might come into picture, into focus, the decision to get married might come up again. But our students then who have been abroad come back home, they live together.

In these narratives, the influence of interactions with other people on- and off--island are thought to have been instrumental in the slow but steady increase in cohabitation over time. Older people, though, remember that living together has always been a part of Saban culture, particularly in the black community, and often mimicked the conditions of marriage even if it lacked the legal benefits of being married through the state. One older black woman recalled cohabiting unions like this:

For Saba as I know, and I talk with old time people, the old time talking, like what we talked just now, is a much different talk to now. I talking old talk, you know? Saba people I know, for instance, they thought very much of themselves, who I talk with. No matter how poor they was, they looked to keep themselves up, to have a future. But now, see my opinion, now, everyone did not have the opportunity to get married and have children. Many of them got married and had a family no matter how small the house was, no matter how difficult it was they got married and had their children. But many of them also had a family and lived together without being married but you would think that they was married. The man lived with the woman, they had the children, it was like a family. A lot didn't get married but still lived in a house for years and years and got a family and lived like a decent family.

Family life proceeded with dignity and a certain level of respectability even if the mother and father were not legally married. This perspective on cohabitation is still very prominent on Saba and many women from both the black and white communities feel that living together is almost the same as being married. Fears over legal issues, though, continue to emerge when women think about cohabitation but changes in the law have conferred most of the rights once shared only by wives and marital children on cohabiting partners and the children produced by those unions. One biracial woman expresses this general sentiment by saying:

I think that that kind of situation is similar to marriage for the child, it's just that the paperwork is not there and maybe the name is not there. Maybe the child even has the father's name because he's acknowledged it so I think that it's a pretty normal situation. The disadvantage I think would be more towards the woman because if the child is acknowledged by the father and something happens to him the child will heir whatever from him but I think that the woman would end up kind of being the loser because she doesn't have any legal tie to him so she can't gain anything.

And another black woman echoed similar feelings but made sure to add important stipulations to her

consent:

> It's become so common nowadays, that basically, it depends. If the woman and the man have a good relationship, I feel it shouldn't be a problem. And also seeing the legal aspects that they have improved nowadays, I don't have a problem with it. But I feel the relationship between the parents should always be good and I would prefer, if it's a non-marital situation, that they should always be living together and not that you're a non-married woman living with someone else's boyfriend or someone else's husband. No. I feel it should be a situation where you are both single and living together with each other.

The specter of infidelity is raised, again, and cohabitation is seen as an acceptable alternative only if both parties are single. That this is even raised as an issue suggests that some cohabiting relationships stem from cheating spouses and partners who leave their established relationships to live with their other woman or other man. Demographic trends suggest that many of these women are from other countries and this has led to a feeling, on the part of some Saban women, that foreign women are out to get their men. Although this may be overstated, it appears to be a reality for at least some Saban women who lose their men to other households. While cohabitation provides most of the benefits of marriage, it also demands less in the way of commitment on the part of the woman and the man and, for some Saban women, becomes a flexible alternative to the rigidities of married life. As one black woman put it:

> Here on Saba we folks, I speak for mostly the colored people, how we live. Most of us, we don't really get married. So, we meet a guy here tomorrow, we have a child for him. Maybe if we are lucky, to say lucky, we will get married. If not to say, we really don't say, like, get married for this just cause we got a child this, we got a child that, family this or family that. No. And everybody, most of us, has the tendency to get a child when we are young…And, you know, after a while you feel that okay, you're being a little wild, a little too wild with a guy, this that or the other. We colored people think that, like, I be with you. I'd rather live with you than say, like, I'm going to marry you because after a while you know that things ain't going to work out and say he'll see somebody else. He would want to go one way, I would want to go one way. I would say that most of us when we tend to have children, we tend to have them young. So, like you're 14, 15 years old, and you had a child for a guy and maybe you've been living with a him maybe 5 or six years, you know. You're nineteen now. Bam, I see people say, "well I don't like him no more" and then there's a problem because you know why? I'm younger and he's older than me and I don't think, like, I don't want to be with him no more. I don't want nobody to see him by my side on the road. So like Bam he's gone until you meet somebody else… But you won't find much colored people to say like, marrying one another just because you have children, just because you have this, that, and the other. You won't find that thing. If they get married sometimes, and even if they had been in a marriage too long, for example, for five years maybe six years they been in love, we grew up ten years together, but after a while the guy is maybe thirty five and you're thirty six or thirty seven years old, Bam, "Hey, I see someone maybe looking nicer than you, younger than you", but that's because I been seeing you every day. You still

look the same, you know. Everything starts to change and starts to change and the worst comes. Everybody mostly afraid of that part. You get married and then, yeah, "oh, were going to get divorced".

A white woman offered similar thoughts on the upside of cohabitation and the flexibility that it provides men and women who are uncertain about whether their relationships will survive:

> I think it's mostly in black families, you know, marriage is a big responsibility and if you live together for a certain period of time and then children come I think that they just continue in this happy relationship. I think that because it is going well, they don't really see the need to get married at that point in time. They just continue to live together. However, there are people here who live together for a very, very long time and then all of a sudden they will get married because I think that the older you get that more legal issues start playing a part. Like, what if something happened to my partner and I am not married? Legally I am not entitled to anything. I think also there is a group of people who live together for a very long time who are afraid to get married because marriage is a psychological aspect of people's lives if they have been living together for a long time. If you live together for a long time, to me, you will go that extra mile to make that person happy because, technically and legally, they are not exactly yours. But when you get married, because you see it, you actually see it in real life, that when a person gets married they will quicker walk around with rollers on their head or do all kinds of stupidity that they wouldn't have done if they lived together. Because marriage is, I don't want to say the beginning of the end, that's wrong, that's horrible, but marriage is like the ending of a courtship and you are into this real serious stuff. And "you cannot tell me anything more now because I am your wife or I am your husband" attitude because you're not going to easy get a divorce unless something is really wrong. When you live together it also has its advantages. Because if something goes wrong you can pack your suitcase and leave, no red tape involved. It has a lot of advantages. You know, I think years ago people viewed marriage different than modern people, marriage was this holy sacred, I think for Sabans, marriage was a legal way to sleep with each other. Because it just meant that legally you could sleep with each other. Well, we know in modern society that's not necessary now. That isn't necessary anymore, so, in today's society when you decide to marry you have really made that decision. This is what I want. I want to get married. I want to have my relationship legal and go through the things like my parents did. Maybe have it legal, get children, you know, blah blah blah. But in a lot of societies people don't see that need anymore. So formerly, that was the only way to go. Actually, if you lived together they would say things like, "you are living in sin". But today people have got, even the older people, they know that it's a different way of life. It's also brought in through other people, other cultures. They see it on TV, you know. All these outside influences come to your island. But, like I said, that is part of progress, you realize that there are other ways of life, there's not just one narrow road that you can walk. Men and women are offered different opportunities, you know, and living together, I think, is a more flexible arrangement and you don't feel like a piece of owed property in many ways like island people sometimes view marriage.

In the first narrative, early childbearing often results in living with the fathers of your children but, after a while, a woman grows and feels like she wants something new in her life that her partner can't give her. Men, too, can find this to be the case and cohabiting relationships are thought to be much easier to leave than marital relationships. She feels that marriage is too confining in a social

environment where young relationships may lose their luster and where love between a man and a woman is all too easily lost. Cohabitation encapsulates a live for the moment mentality that assumes storm clouds are lurking on the horizon. In the second narrative, cohabitation is seen as a flexible arrangement that doesn't carry the psychological weight of marriage and provides a way for couples to extend the courtship phase of their relationships indefinitely. Avoidance of slipping into patterns that typify some marriages is also a concern as neither man nor woman wants to feel like a "piece of owned property". General societal changes in attitudes about cohabitation have been influences both by contact with people who live in different ways and through the projection of media images through television. Shifts in community attitudes have helped to lift the burdens of social stigma off the backs of cohabiting couples and have increased the prevalence of cohabitation in society at large. However, a reserved acceptance does not indicate full social approval and many women had by and large negative perspectives on the practice of cohabitation. Overall, some women don't understand why couples are hesitant to commit to one another especially when they have brought one or more children into the world. One biracial woman shared her feelings on the matter by saying:

> I know somebody who lived together seventeen years and then they got married and they had like seven children. I really don't now what the reason would be. I think if I'm living with somebody and I've gone as far as to get children with him I don't think I should have any funny feelings about getting married. Not if we're actually living together and have children and are in a relationship. So, I don't think I would have to think twice about marrying the person because I think once you decide to have children and you're living together, that's what comes next.

And black woman held a similar view:

> In Saba a lot of women feel they can live together without being married and they don't value that husband wife relationship. I think, too, it's a bit that they have already grown up because I don't see where I am a single lady, have a child with someone, living together and the man ask me to get married to him I don't see why I have to say no, I am not ready yet. If you're ready for a child, you are ready for a marital relationship. Because a lot of times, too, especially in my work, I have people who don't even think about making a living together contract. They don't think on what if that or that would happen to my boyfriend or that or that happen to me. And there is where you get a lot of family confusion when anything happens. So I always tell them that it's better to have that no matter what. Because they have to cover themselves. Because tomorrow if something happen to he, he run off with all the money, there you is with nothing.

While another biracial woman also chimed in on the legal aspects of cohabitation and the example

that it sets for children:

> It's kind of setting, religiously, a very good example for your kids. Legally it's just, I guess, signing a paper. I have different views on that, actually, and legally you're just carrying the same name, same passport. I mean those kids that are born they belong, you now, that's your mother, that's your father, and then the father is legally responsible for taking care of that family. If they were just living together he could leave just as well as the mother can leave the family and then nothing happens, you know. It's easier legally, you know, because if you spend all this money building a house together, I would think that you would want to get married and live together as a married couple. But, that's kind of a tough question, actually.

All of these women are perplexed by the idea that someone can be ready for parenthood but not ready for marriage. In the second and third narratives, the women also express dismay that some women living with their men outside the context of marriage have not even taken steps to prepare for either his death or his untimely departure from the relationship. The feeling is that, at a moments notice, these men could exit their relationships and leave their women in the house with, as one woman said earlier, "everything falling on top of her". Maybe some of the women in these relationships feel that this is a sort of inevitability and that getting the law on their side would be of little benefit anyway. Given the high level of relationship instability on Saba and the overall lack of freely given or court mandated child and spousal support received either by married or unmarried women, these expectations may not be far from lived realities for a large number of Saban women. While the women above are largely interested in the negative effects that cohabitation can have on naïve women, others remain concerned about the morality of cohabitation and the message that it sends to children who are raised in these kind of homes. One white woman suggested that the successes and failures of cohabitation in the lives of children depended very much on the general stability of home life by offering this point of view:

> What I think that some, although they live that kind of life, although theys living together and they have their children, I find that some is very loving together. They bringing up their children very loving together and some is very respectable. You know, let me say, fifty percent they live so together, but then on the other hand those that they are living together, they have the children and they bringing this man and they bring in the next man and so on. Those children have an impact in their lives. It's real that they feel that something is missing. And they feel hurt and they always have you know, a bad attitude. Theys not really happy children, you can sees it on them.

She reiterates the point that many cohabiting relationships are very much like marriage but is less

certain about the value of cohabitation when it consists of an ever revolving door of new partners.

Although not explicitly stated in this excerpt, the underlying feeling is that some women in cohabiting

relationships place the emphasis on establishing a relationships with and keeping men rather than on

the welfare of their children. This is a claim made by many Saban women who believe that some

married and unmarried women do place a higher priority on their relationship with their partners than

on providing a solid and healthy home life for their children. As one woman put it, "children will

eventually leave, and then what are you left with if you have no man?". Fear of being alone can lead

some women to make these kinds of choices in their lives and some children do pay a heavy price.

Other women are less than pleased with the example that cohabiting sets for children who grow up in

these situations. One black woman was adamant in her objections to cohabitation and offered this

take on the image that cohabitation projects to children:

> We see it happening, we know it happens but in the long run it still isn't right.
> It's still not right for the couple neither for the children because what example are you
> setting for these children? Because then they feel that when we grow up we won't need
> to, we can do this too. We don't need to marry. We can live this way where it's not a
> good example we are setting for the children. Sometimes you get into relationships when
> we think we are doing the best, oh, I living with this person, but no, it's not right. It's
> isn't right at all.

In her opinion, role modeling a cohabiting lifestyle sets in motion an intergenerational trend where

marriage and the value of marital relationships are swept aide. Another black woman is more

practical in her reservations about cohabitation as she says that:

> My daughter is living in that kind of relationship. She's living with a man and
> they have [a child together]. I would like for them to get married, but that is me. They
> feel differently. But I have told my daughter that before she gets another child she has to
> make sure she is married to the man first. Because, remember, you already have two
> children and they have different fathers, so at least if you get another child you have to
> make sure you are married. The children will know we belongs together, we don't
> belong you from this father, I from another father, and you from this father. Children
> wants, because sometimes there's a spark of jealousy between children when they are
> from different fathers, a kind of jealousy, not jealousy exact, but maybe one father might
> be in an economical position better than the other father and in that way jealousy comes
> in.

Paternity is at the center of her concerns and she feels that the lack of a marital commitment may

ultimately lead her daughter not only to have more children in a potentially unstable relationship but

also, if this relationship ends, to continue a cycle of having children with different men as she moves

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from this relationship to the next. Morality is not the issue here as much as fairness because she worries that having children with fathers of varying means might create sibling rivalries that marginalize children whose fathers are less wealthy. Another real concern is whether another man would accept the children from a previous relationship and treat them as his own or whether he would either favor his own children, ignore the woman's other children altogether, or create an environment where a woman would be forced to choose between her partner and her children. As suggested above, some women make their men a priority and this, too, is a situation that the woman above hopes to avoid by making sure her daughter marries her cohabiting partner and solidifies that relationship for the long-term.

The positive and negative feelings that swirl around marriage, divorce, and cohabitation reflect greater tensions in Saban family life and show different ways that women deal with relationship instability and the real possibility of being financially and emotionally abandoned by their spouses and partners. Marriage is still seen as the best foundation for building families but some of the traditional gender norms embedded in marriage make life difficult for women both within their marriages and in cases where those marriages dissolve. On the upside, a good marriage entails mutual emotional support among mothers, fathers, and children and includes a father that takes his traditional role of provider seriously even though many mothers are now entering the workforce and contributing substantially to their family's economic health. However, many times the reality of marriage falls far short of the ideal of marriage and some women who take on their traditional roles of mother and homemaker find themselves trapped in relationships with economically, emotionally, and sexually irresponsible men. Divorce is one, increasingly popular, way out but women who have never been on their own or functioned as economically independent adults sometimes lack the confidence to leave despite their miserable conditions. Going through a divorce and dealing with the economic and emotional fall out is a daunting process but one that allows many women to find their own inner strength as they realize that they can, in fact, make it on their own. However, most Sabans agree that some in the younger generation move towards a divorce far too quickly and fail to take the

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time to do the hard work of maintaining a marital relationship over time. In a social climate where marriage falls short of expectations and divorce looms around the corner, many women and their partners are opting to live together rather than marry.

While the specific reasons why couples opt to cohabitate are varied, common themes include a desire to maintain relationship flexibility in a climate where relationship instability is relatively high, a fear that marriage might change a good non-marital relationship by injecting traditional gender norms and terminating the courtship phase of the union, and an underlying sense that relationships are just not meant to last and that couples should simply enjoy the time they have together rather than making set-in-stone commitments to one another. Many Sabans have come to view cohabiting relationships as a family formation pattern that mimics the traditional marital nuclear family. Changes in the law now confer many of the benefits of that traditional arrangement without requiring the full range of legal commitments of marriage. Although living together is becoming a social norm through increasing social contact with people from other cultures both on- and off-island and adoption of lifeways that were present but not prevalent on Saba in the past, most Saban women still express a level of disapproval and worry about the moral and economic ramifications of cohabitation in the lives of women and children and openly wonder why men and women are ready to take on the responsibilities of parenthood but not ready to make a life-long commitment to their children's mother or father. All of these factors play into the slow but steady erosion of marriage as the foundation of family life in favor of flexibility in a time where relationships can be fleeting and where a high proportion of fathers continue to be absentee. Women have come to expect that they will bear most of the financial and emotional responsibility of their children either completely or partially alone and, with varying success, have learned to juggle the responsibilities of home and work without much help from their men.

The changing meanings of non-marital childbearing in Saban society

When asked whether she would cave to her mother's pressure to find a husband to support her and her child, one black woman asked the rhetorical question "Why would I want a man around, telling me what to do all the time?". This woman, and many like her, have developed a keen sense of independence over time that is rooted in the growing economic power of women in Saban society and the sad realization that many men are failing to meet the challenges of being loyal, caring partners and involved parents. Women still long to find a stable partner to share their lives but have also become realists who hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Under these conditions, many women become single mothers either through divorce, the dissolution of cohabiting relationships, or the disappearance of their boyfriends after pregnancy occurs. The focus here will be on what Saban women think about having children outside of marriage, their experiences of non-marital childbearing, and changes in the meaning of non-marital childbearing over time.

Demographically, it is clear that non-marital childbearing has been a fact of life in the black community throughout the history of the island and that non-marital childbearing in the white community has been rare until quite recently (Figure 9.13). However, proportions of black children born outside of marriage have fluctuated over time. Non-marital births comprised about 40% of all births in the earliest period of seafaring migration and this proportion steadily increased to 55% during the transition to an oil-based economy, dropped to around 45% at the height of oil refinery migration, and then elevated again to and over 60% in the post-oil period. Between 1996-2004, the proportion of black children born outside marriage dropped relative to black children born inside marriage and non-marital births now comprise just 40% of births in the black community. It is unclear if this trend will sustain itself over time but, if it does, it may signal a movement back towards marriage as a building-block of family life and/or the adoption of effective birth control practices to delay or terminate childbearing for women who already have one or more non-marital children. The proportion of marital and non-marital births of biracial children has mirrored the general trends found in the black community but has always been slightly lower until the most recent period. Non-marital

childbearing in the white community has historically been very low and most Sabans acknowledge that this is true not because the white population abstained form pre-marital sex but because most of the time pregnancies resulted in the quick marriage of the parents-to-be. However, the proportion of white children born outside of marriage remained constant, at around 5%, across the period of seafaring migration and through the height of the oil boom, elevated to 10% in the immediate post-oil period and then dropped to nil over the past few years. In the black community, the proportion of women having children outside of marriage began at around 45% during the period of seafaring migration, elevated to almost 80% at the height of oil refinery migration, declined to 60% in immediate post-oil period, elevated again to 76% at the height of the welfare state, and declined again to 55% for black women now under the age of 30 (Figure 9.14). For white women, less than 10% had children outside of marriage during seafaring migration but this proportion rose to 20% during the height of the oil boom and in the immediate post-oil period before rising dramatically to around 40% of women aged 30-50 and 75% of women under the age of 30 (Figure 9.14). Interestingly, while both the proportion of children being born outside of marriage and the proportion of women having non-marital children has declined slightly in the black community in the past few years, likely because of the increasing awareness and acceptance of modern contraception, more white women, especially young white women engaged in interracial relationships, are shifting away from the traditional pattern of marriage before childbearing that dominated the white community over most of Saban history and towards non-marital family formation practices that once existed almost exclusively in the black Saban community.

Non-marital childbearing has always been a topic of discussion amongst Saban women and, depending on who you were and where you lived, non-marital childbearing was either accepted but never truly approved of or outright rejected as a valid way to start a family. This spectrum of opinions has varied over time but the general direction is towards acceptance of childbearing outside of marriage either as an alternative way of life or, for some sections of the community, as the dominant form of starting a family. Older women talk about the poor economic conditions that

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surrounded the increase in non-marital childbearing over the course of the 20th century and point to both the struggle for these women to maintain a sense of dignity in the face of community disapproval and the on-going struggles that these women faced after having a child or children out of wedlock. One older black woman shared her thoughts about how, why, and to what effect non-marital childbearing took hold in her community:

> On Saba, that was old time and now, to me a great difference. I know and I hear people talk. Saba has always had where you get children without a husband. It's nothing new but it was looked at in a different sense. You know, they had different ways of that thing. People who had their children lawful or non lawful carried them as pride, to me, that I look at it in the olden days. So, it happened. You make a mistake, you know. You made a mistake and you got pregnant and you wasn't married. But it played a lot on the family. It was a great difference from now. In the family if you get pregnant plenty times the parents would try their utmost best to get you married. If there was no hopes of getting married many of them left this place before people know and they go and some of them come back and some never come back. Because it was like a kind of disgrace in the olden times. It happened but it was not cherished like now. It was something that, well, you destroyed the family.

And she continues as follows:

> Now the present days, everybody to me wants the best for their children and we can't want our children and our children barely have to want for themselves. But I have a feeling if a child of yours goes out and it happens to them you have treat them, you don't have to treat them rough, you speak to them nice and explain them, but don't have it to me that they have done a great deed. You know, that we gotta have this and we gotta have that. No. Show them that it is a wrong. In my opinion, it is something against you for your future. Maybe I am wrong, but I look at it, it's happened, we can't help it but don't have it that it's a great job you did because in my opinion you gotta go though your whole life with that and I have been with so many people that have had that and it has been a stumbling block along the way. Not everybody. Some has had luck, but a lot of people I know has had so much, through that child, bad luck, you know. You go and get married or it's always sometimes a lot of problems you have to carry here. And then you have other children. It's like a burden, not only that you have other children in the house, but now they feel, well, my big sister made that mistake and she was cherished. But it's nothing. It's nothing grand. But the other ones will see how it was handled, in a respectable way but in a good way, the rest would learn. They wouldn't do it, but when they see "oh, well, she had this and the other". It's an example. And that's what's happening here on Saba. It's like, it's nothing against the person, it's nothing against the child but it was no good example for the others.

For this woman, history has shown that having children outside of marriage has made a very difficult road for many unmarried women and she expresses dismay that more parents are not taking a hard line and making a compassionate but firm example out of their children who follow this path. The movement from being shameful to cherished is particularly disturbing and, in her mind, has created a social environment that does not generate enough social disapproval that could, ultimately, prevent

more young women from heading down what she knows to be a difficult road. Positive role modeling, or lack thereof, came up repeatedly in discussions with Saban women and focused both on peer pressure and on the history of non-marital childbearing within families. One white woman offered these thoughts on the effects of peer pressure and the lack of solid female role models in Saban society:

> I think that in a small place things go down hill faster. When there are role models, maybe friends are getting pregnant or something, it seems like the thing to do and all of a sudden there's a rush of teenage pregnancies. Why? Is it keeping up with the Joneses or is it that there were no really worthwhile role models or not enough? I can't say no, I can never say that there are none, but I think that there are not enough in a small place. Especially for women I think. Because with all the research you read about teenage self-esteem for girls and how easy it is to knock that down and how difficult it is to build that back up then I think that they, more than the boys, probably need really good role models. To see successful women around them who are in careers and doing well and having fruitful relationships and making money and are more or less successful women, I don't think they really see that so much or maybe they need to see that more.

Perspectives on non-marital childbearing do depend on the age of the mother and teen pregnancy, in particular, is the cause for much concern. As in the previous narrative, this woman, too, feels that peer-group role models and the responses from parents and the community have fostered an environment that promotes non-marital childbearing by removing social sanctions and by not making young women either aware of the pitfalls of having children in this way or aware of the things they could achieve if childbearing were delayed. If there are no clear costs or consequences articulated to young women, it is too late to have that discussion after the dye is already cast. Other women feel that the older generation is to blame for not setting an example through their own behavior. When asked if non-marital childbearing had always been a way of life on Saba, one black woman shared this view by saying that:

> It was always here because my grandmother have kids with all different men. They was doing all kind of them things back in the days. They weren't doing this. I don't think that they should tell us to do it if they did not set an example. Years back, years ago everybody was just having kids about like nothing, popping up anywhere and so they can't tell us no better. They can't set an example for us because they weren't doing it then. They didn't have the protection then, you see, now we does. I guess that's a good thing. A good excuse.

She points to the intergenerational effects of the high rates of non-marital childbearing during the oil

refinery and immediate post-oil periods and suggests that it is too late for older women to moralize

about the situation when they, too, indulged. The introduction of birth control is identified as a

relevant factor that both explains why pregnancy was so common in the past and why the women of

today have less of an excuse to become pregnant accidentally. However, this woman, by and large,

shuts down the conversation with the older generation by rejecting the do as a say, not as I do

message that comes from her grandmother and other older community members. It is surprising,

though, that discussions of how difficult life was raising children out of wedlock don't impact

younger women who can then learn from the mistakes rather than follow the examples of their elders.

Having children without being married happens in a range of circumstances that can be both

empowering and disempowering for Saban women. Although most examples in the past tell of hard

times for single mothers, the changed economic conditions on island have vastly improved potential

for women to enter the workforce and to become economically self-sufficient. This has transformed

the experience of non-marital childbearing in some ways but the absence or outright hostility and

disdain showed by of some of fathers continues to recycle a pattern of socioeconomic difficulties for

single unwed mothers. Black women tend to be forceful in their claims that they can take care of

their children on their own while white women are not so quick to negate the social and economic

importance of fatherhood in Saban society. When asked if non-marital childbearing happens more in

the white or in the black community, one black outlines the race-based differences like this:

> I think black because the white women you always see them, they have the children, but after a while they gets married. And a black woman, they don't think about marriage because they can raise their children. They can make ends meet. Now the women, they are moving up in the world. They're getting better jobs so they can support their child and they don't need a father to help support them. If they want to, they can, but they are not dependent on the father no more to support the child.

A wide range of black women expressed similar views about the increasing irrelevance of fathers in their lives and the lives of their children and focused, instead, on the many ways that women have become empowered through single motherhood. When asked why women were choosing to have children without being married, one black woman shared the following:

> Maybe they want to have more a say over decisions. They don't have to ask another one's opinion if they doing correct or not. They just want to have all the say. You will mostly find that professional women have children. What I mean with professional woman, professional women have children and have no intentions of getting married. They think they can do it on their own. It has been around for a while, since the emancipation of the women's rights. Since that, it became more powerful. Because as women, we always felt that we can't do nothing without a man, that we always need a man there. But it has been proven that we can do things on our own and sometimes much better.

This "I can do it on my own" attitude can reach a fever pitch as seen in one biracial woman's take on how men treat their pregnant girlfriends and the mothers of their children and how marriage plays into this equation:

> If it is theirs, they tend to try to better themselves for their families and notice the woman's feelings more and try to baby her a lot more than before. I hate that because it makes me feel useless! Others don't treat their women any differently…Actually, I think I'll wait to get married until after my kids leave home. The kids are already grown up, so my worries will be over. The kids will be out of school and working. Because a man won't help with worries and, no matter what, he needs to know that the kids are MINE, not his, even if he is the father.

This theme of exercising complete control over the raising of children is echoed in the sentiments of many other black women on island as they try to negotiate the relationships with their children's fathers. A black woman shared these thoughts on the topic:

> And many women also feel that they have more control, you know, more control when they are not married and they have their children and their children carry they title. They feel, well, you know, that the men cannot knock them about as they want. Okay, this is my child and if you want to go, you go. But I have my child and visiting goes according to when the woman wants. I find that it is not as much, although now slowly you have where the Court of Guardianship comes into place, but is not still as strong. Whereas in maybe even there in St. Maarten where you have women go to the Court of Guardianship and then the man, well, you know, the men then have visitation rights and things like that. You don't have that so much here on Saba, you know, because although they have visitation rights, you will still see that women tell them "Look, you took the door, I set the time". You can hear it and see it among the women. Money or no money. They tells them "What you think, the child can live only off money? Children can't live off money, you choose to go, so"?

While women can rarely exercise control over their men when it comes to a range of relationship issues, child visitation and child support are common battlegrounds where women try not only to do what is best for their child but also to maintain a level of control over an often out-of-control situation. In some cases, too, women use the issue of child support and visitation to try to get back at their men for past abuses and vice versa. However, although it happens, this is generally frowned upon by most Saban women because they feel that it is harmful to children who are caught in the middle of their parents' on-going feuds.

Relationship instability and the lingering desire to establish a long-term partnership with a man also play into if, why, and when women decide to have children outside of marriage. For young women who have grown up with very little if any contact with their biological fathers, the necessity of binding your life to an inconstant man seems foolish and outdated. An exchange between a black woman and her daughter illustrates this point but also shows the limits that parents try to place on the fertility activities of their daughters:

> Like my daughter told me already that she will get a child but she won't get married. And its something that I don't have a problem with but I tell her, I tell her "I don't have a problem with you getting a child, you know, but once economically and financially, you can raise it because it's no use to get a child on my budget". Because then it doesn't make sense. If you're going to get a child on my budget, then just, let's discuss this. If you, financially and economically can raise the child, go ahead, be my guest. It's your child. But not that now you're going to get a child and go to school. You can't plan on my budget.

In the mind of this mother, having a child without having a husband is an acceptable reproductive strategy but one that should not be executed until the mother-to-be is able to support herself and her family. For other women, though, getting pregnant is still a gamble that they hope will pay off in an increased commitment from their men. Although some recognized this to be an obvious hand that some women played, for the most part, they viewed this gambit as being very naïve. Two black women offered their opinions as follows:

> Some people's mentality here on Saba is that, some young girls, I guess, you get the children, I guess, you hold the man. You put him to stay home. But, you see, that has not been working so far because as the years gone by, things have changing and their minds are changing, you know. You get these children and you still going to mind them yourself. Because first, yeah, everybody get the child and put the man home to baby-sit

but now you're home babysitting. He's out. So sometimes mostly what you ask for I think you get sometimes.

and:

> Some women here, I know that black Caribbean women thinks that if they get a child with a man, he will stay here on the island. They feel that they is going to keep him here. That they will feel like they have big responsibilities. But trust me, men these days don't care about that. They just go on.

In the past, this strategy may have worked when social pressure to marry often followed unexpected pregnancy but the changing times no longer demand male socioeconomic responsibility for their partners and children and many men simply opt to "go on". Women, though, do not, for the most part, have the luxury of abandoning their responsibilities and end up being the sole caretakers of children that they hoped would have brought them a happy and stable life with their former partners.

Race differences also enter the picture and shape the ways that women react to the experience of non-marital childbearing in their own lives and in the lives of close family and friends. Because there is a long history of non-marital childbearing in the black community, some people felt that becoming pregnant without being married was not as shocking to black families and was a common part of the black experience on island. One white woman described the differences like this:

> Black families take it different than the white families. If a white girl here finds herself pregnant before marriage, and especially if she finds herself pregnant for a black person, it becomes a real depressing situation within that family. Everybody's depressed. The parents are crying. They're to the doctor. It's a whole different ballgame. But if a black girl gets pregnant, people just shrug this off as if "oh, so she's pregnant". You don't hear people making a big deal about it because probably her mother was in the same situation, her grandmother also. You have lots of these families here on the island and they deal the best they can with these children and they get their families to help them, but it's a bigger deal in the white families.
> Because [white teenage mothers] are so young and irresponsible, you know, say the grandparents and the aunts and everybody then all of a sudden is involved. But all of these people that you've involved, they also have their own lives. It's not like you went out and you got married and you made your own life. No. One day you were my innocent daughter and one day you're pregnant and now I have a grandchild to raise. But I have my own agenda, you know. I love you very much but this is how the situation is. And to me it becomes frustrating. Of course, you love your grandchild, your daughter, everybody you love but in the practical sense of life it has burdened the extended family to a certain degree because, of course, this girl maybe she hasn't finished school, maybe she has to go back to school or go out and work to support this child. And maybe as a grandparent you don't want to send this child to the day care center. You feel obligated to take care of this child. So, it's a lot of stressful events surrounded by these circumstances. It's not an ideal situation, especially when you're very young.

A biracial woman expands on these points by saying that:

> Some people now, you know, if you get pregnant if your of a certain last name or of a certain class, your family, you know, your family doesn't want a family embarrassment so, if you're pregnant, you have to get married because that's the way it's supposed to be. And it's usually in the white. Their son or daughter gets someone pregnant and they have to marry. A larger percentage is that in the white, or it's just less in the black, maybe not even at all.

For white families, the experience of non-marital childbearing is still quite new and many are having a difficult time dealing with the fact that some of their daughters are becoming unwed mothers at very young ages. While it is unfair to assert that black families just don't care if their sons and daughters have children outside of marriage at early ages, non-marital childbearing is something that the black community has been coming to terms with for a much longer period of time. The fact that more young black single mothers can have learned to support themselves in the absence of a man has reduced the worry of financial ruin often resulted from non-marital childbearing in the past, however, to say that having children outside of marriage is unremarkable in the minds of black families is to mistake acceptance and understanding for approval. While more black families may expect and, eventually accept that this pattern will repeat itself in the younger generation, this does not mean that the majority of the black population on Saba fully approves of women having children without being married although they do tend to be a little more pragmatic about these situations as they arise.

Whether non-marital childbearing throws the family into confusion or whether it is accepted as an expected outcome of modern life, almost all women agree that fathers and fathers-to-be are seldom able or willing to live up to the social and economic responsibilities of parenthood. In reflecting on the continuing and perhaps accelerating pattern of absent fathers, one black woman details a pattern of paternity denial in young men and cautions young girls to really think about the responsibilities they would carry as single mothers:

> The way I chose my future when I was young, I always told myself when I grow older there wouldn't be a young man in my life. I like men older than myself because I find the reason why I like men older is because they think differently and they are more responsible because I always told myself that I couldn't see myself getting pregnant at 18, my boyfriend is 18, where am I going to go for pampers? He is not working. I am not working. So, where am I going? I always chose an older man because he could work. He could work for me, have a future for me. I don't want to say, bam, I get pregnant and he don't have no future for me, no future for my child. He, I would just leave on the spot. He go his way, I go my way. I don't want that kind of future for

myself. At that moment it's pleasure, but at that moment it's a different story. When it comes to buying this and buying that, most of them say "oh, I am not the child's father". I am not this. I am not that. You start with her, you put the child there, and yet when it comes to responsibilities you don't want to stand. And when I was speaking to some young guys, some around my age, I think that one was 18 or 19 and one was 23, and I told him I like an older guy, they laugh. I tell them let me tell you something. You may laugh for whatever you want to laugh about, but my boyfriend know and what he teaches me you will never ever know in your lifetime growing up because if you are serious about your life and you take on responsibilities you will know. Just because you don't have responsibilities, you don't know. Even if you have responsibilities it's how you choose to go about your responsibilities. If you have a girl pregnant, this or that or the other, and you want to leave her, bam you leave her. You don't want to stand. You don't say nothing. Here in the Caribbean, on Saba, parents have a few faults and you could say, not all, have a tendency when a child grows up to say yeah, that's my child. But when a child was brought forth in the world, it was not yours. But as the child grow older, yeah, that's my child. That's my son, my daughter. Why now is it your son or daughter but when the child was there in the mother's stomach, "oh, it's not mine"? But that's why I tell anybody, any young girls my age, anybody could tell anybody, that if you're going for anything and make sure you're happy with it. Make sure you know what you're doing and make sure he's responsible and just look to yourself because you can't go through something here, I want do this I want do that, just because you want to do it and you get it done, what happens then when you get it done? Bam, if it don't work out, you are left there by yourself. Think about your future.

She firmly reminds young women just how fickle young men can be and suggests that if you decide to have a child outside of marriage to be sure that you'll be able to make it on your own. After all, this is the most likely scenario given the propensity of some young men to deny paternity altogether or to disappear even if they admit to fathering the child. Older men are seen as more stable and more inclined to step up to their responsibilities as partners and fathers while the immaturity of young men holds them back from assuming what they see as the undue burdens of fatherhood. Many women also complained that fathers are invisible early in the lives of children but then reappear to claim ownership after the child is grown, especially if that child is particularly successful in their academic lives or in their careers. One biracial woman described this phenomenon as follows:

> The fathers are just not around when the child is growing up and the mother struggles to get that child through their education with the help of family and she is a very hard and strong working person. She gets that child to go away. He does great in school. He wins awards, etc. etc. Right away the father is ready to say "that's my daughter "or "that's my son", you know. And then the mother goes ballistic. She's like, I never got a red cent from you, you know. Once their child does well, they're ready to boast but they're not there to help when they're needed.

The disconnect between what mothers and children need from men during childhood and the tendency for men to feel that they can brag about their paternity irrespective of their actual financial

or emotional contributions to the success of their children is stark and suggests that many men simply don't understand how hard it is to raise children, much less to raise them alone. Saban society expects women to perform their motherly duties seamlessly and since many men have little or no experience raising children and no feeling of responsibility when it comes to their care, this is where a minefield develops between men who look at women's anger in bemused disbelief and women who can't comprehend what they feel is a complete lack of compassion and understanding from their father's children. Of course, some men deliberately ignore their children's needs to hurt the mother but there is an equal proportion of men who just don't see children as their responsibility. The unsung heroes are the fathers, married or not, who do take their economic and emotional roles seriously. They should be given more credit by their families and their communities and, furthermore, should be held up as role models for young men to emulate. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending how you look at it, fathers who are doing their jobs do not get as much airtime as those who are not, nor do they contribute to the growing swell of social problems that arise when fathers are allowed to neglect their children with impunity.

The issues and tensions embedded in the experience of non-marital childbearing percolate through the process of formal paternal recognition through the aegis of the State and negotiating the terms of recognition can be a difficult if not impossible prospect. However, recognition of children born outside of marriage still operates mostly through willing consent of the father rather than through being compelled to recognize children through court ordered paternity testing. Historically, recognition of non-marital children has been quite low in both the black and the white communities (Figure 9.15). During seafaring times, the proportion of black children that remained unrecognized started out at 75%, elevated to a high of 85% by the close of seafaring migration, declined slightly to around 70% by the end of the oil boom and then fell from 60% in the immediate post-oil period to just 30% over the course of the past fifty years. The proportion of white children that remained unrecognized increased from 40% in the period just prior to seafaring times to 70% during early and middle seafaring days, dropped to around 50% during the period of oil refinery migration, and then

fell from 55% in the immediate post-oil period to 0% over the past fifty years. For biracial children, the proportion unrecognized followed a curve similar to that found in the black population but, until recently, biracial children were always recognized in slightly higher proportions than their black peers. Over the past 8 years, though, biracial children are most at risk for not being recognized which indicates a reticence of young black men to recognize the children that they have fathered by young white women in recent years and/or a decision made by the mother to block recognition for a range of social and legal reasons. In looking at the timing of recognitions, it is clear that most fathers who are going to recognize their children do so before the age of 20 with most occurring before the age of 10 (Table 9.2). There may be a slight shift towards earlier recognition over the past 30 years but it is too early to tell if this pattern will hold up over time. Gender also appears to play a role in whether or not fathers recognize their children. In the black population, male and female children have, historically, been recognized in similar proportions but, over the last 8 years, black fathers have shown a tendency to recognize their boys quicker than they recognize their girls (Figure 9.16). With the exception of the late seafaring to early oil period, the fathers of white children showed a tendency to recognize their boys in slightly higher proportions in the past and this may be connected to issues of inheritance that tended to run along male lines (Figure 9.17). In recent years, there have been very few racially homogenous non-marital births in the white population and all of the handful of white children who were born outside of marriage were recognized by their fathers with most being recognized before the age of 5. Historically, biracial children were more likely to be recognized if they were boys, but, over the last 8 years, biracial boys have been recognized at a much higher rate than biracial girls (Figure 9.18). This pattern is similar to the one found in the black community and suggests either than black men are resistant to the idea of recognizing their girl children, that they simply see boys as being more suitable for recognition, or that the mothers are blocking recognition of their female children. Whether or not the trend holds up over time is yet to be seen but the general tensions that exist between women, both black and white, and the black fathers of their children may be playing out in the process of formal paternal recognition.

Saban women share a diversity of perspectives when it comes to the cultural practice of formal paternal recognition and identified the age of the parents, the nature of their relationship, and the ways that women and men treat each other as the primary determining factors of whether a child will be given the name of their father. When thinking about a recent cluster of young girls having children outside of marriage and whether or not their children were recognized, one white woman shared the following perspective:

> Mostly fathers that put their children as theirs is that really he loves those children and those that does not put their name to the children it's just simply that he got pleasure because mostly when that happens, he do not support the children. The man has just has had sex with the woman for pleasure, not that he really loved her. Because some of the youth today, when they get pregnant, the boy says "I don't love you so you carry the present I gave you". That's the way how they tell them. It's because they're just having pleasure. And too, the girls ask the boys to have sex. So, whatever happens they have to receive it. Because years gone back you never saw so much things like that because girls was taught you had to keep your, that you couldn't give up your body, your virginity till the day you was married. But today they are not taught so. Now the mothers are telling them so, "you can break it whenever you want". It's not no more important. But there's where women took better care of themselves but today they don't care. They fall on anybody. Like cats and dogs. You know, I see it that way but, maybe I'm wrong, but I don't really appreciate the way how I see the youth doing. I find that it's going too far. When you always look at the youth, you want the best for them, you know, at least get up in the way you can have a good education, have a good job, see something of the world before you got three or four children in your arm carrying them around. You don't know what you're still doing till you've got nothing to support it. I find it horrible. You has no future. Theys never had a happy life. That's why they look so sad.

And another white woman adds this to the story of early non-marital childbearing and paternal involvement as follows:

> I find that when a very young boy who's, say 18, 19, 20, becomes a father to a girl that he maybe met in a night club, that wasn't a real valid reason to have a child. You know, you got this girl pregnant because you didn't take precautions and now there's a baby. But maybe along the line he falls in love with somebody else so this woman is left with this child. Not that he wasn't going to support this child but now his real love comes. He was too young to really determine that, too young to be a father. To me, you need to grow up. You need to become an adult, you need to take on responsibilities and then become a parent yourself. There's been examples lately on Saba were you can see the children are having children and to me that got to be very stressful for these young girls because they are not adults yet. They are being deprived of all kinds of youthful fun and carefree days and lots of times they bring home the babies from the hospital and the first couple of weeks everything is fine but there isn't a 19, 20, or 21 year old boy who's going to sit around forever listening to the crying baby, which I think is normal, you know.

For some young men, fatherhood is optional even if paternity is not in question. Young girls are cast

aside and told to have fun with "the present I gave you" or eventually abandoned because no boy would "sit around forever listening to the crying baby". Love is also instrumental in determining whether or not the fathers of non-marital children will formally recognize and later support their children and the circumstances of the pregnancy and the pre-existing relationship between the woman and the man are also relevant factors. The more casual the relationship, the less likely the man is to take on the mantle of fatherhood. When thinking about why some men recognize their children and some do not, many women suggested that the behavior of the mother and her social status had a lot to do with the decision of the father. One black woman states the case like this:

> My opinion, too, a lot depends on the mother. It depends on the woman. Sometimes the man make a baby and he don't want to be involved according to what qualities the woman have. So he don't worry. He don't say "that's my child" and that's not right. But sometimes he ain't married to the woman, he make a baby with her, but she's no problem to him. Automatically he give it a name. But sometimes because of the woman, maybe he don't want to have no problem with her, he leave her to herself. But not that he don't say in his mind that it is not his child, but maybe he even give the child, but to carry the name, he is afraid. Plenty times they say I don't worry with that because it might make a problem. Whereas the other one he know that it won't be a problem. He give it a name and that's it. It's according to the woman.

And another black woman adds to the discussion by offering her take as follows:

> I think that it's based on status. You have where maybe, I notice if a family is high rank, a father will quicker recognize the one on top and forget the one below, maybe from a more poor, you know. Then again, based on the way the woman is carrying herself, let me put it that way, because you see that a father will quicker recognize those children. Then you have also race. If the child is maybe a beautiful looking child or something like that, "this is my daughter", "this is my son", you see them driving around with them. But then they forgets the other little child that's there longing to be loved also. And then again, maybe the woman, based on the attitude of the woman towards the man. If the woman is friendly and meeting the needs of the man you will get that that child is more recognized where you'll get if the woman is very dominant and pushy you will quicker get that the man will put her away and have nothing to do with the child. Of course then, if they don't want to accept that the child is theirs, they know that the child is theirs but they don't want to say it's theirs, maybe they're in a relationship with a woman or again, because of marriage, they just ignore the child.

While a third biracial woman gives a slightly different perspective on recognition of non-marital children that places the woman in the driver's seat:

> Sometimes the mother doesn't want to give the child the father's name out of fear that someday the father will just take the child away from her because he has the rights to it. And maybe the father does not even want anything to do with the child also and just "no", not give it a name. And some mothers if they are a single parent, they feel, well, if I am feeding this child, why should it carry your name if I'm just taking care of the child. You're not doing anything so why should it carry your name if you're not even

buying milk and pampers? I think maybe it's the women that are doing it because
normally after they're pregnant the men just drop them and leave them or during the
pregnancy it was such a rough time that they've been fooling around with other women
or it hasn't been so stable and they just don't give the child the father's last name.

In the first two narratives, pushy women who aren't catering to their men's needs are more likely to

have their children rejected than women who are less abrasive and more accommodating. Women

who fail to follow traditional gender norms that place the comfort and happiness of men as a primary

concern of women are at a higher risk of being abandoned by their children's fathers. It is interesting

that many Saban women made the case that men relate to their children depending on the

relationships that they have with their children's mothers and that relationship dissolution between

man and woman often signaled the end of any meaningful relationship between the father and his

children. When men move on to the next relationship, that woman becomes his focus rather than the

responsibilities that he accrued in his now defunct former family. The lack of direct emotional

connection between father and child probably stems from the fact that many men still see child

raising as women's work and, as such, many men don't form strong independent bonds with their

children from an early age. Because the relationship between children and fathers runs through

mothers, ex-wives and ex-girlfriends who behave and play nice are more likely to get some

concessions out of their children's fathers while those who cause trouble are much more likely to be

cast out entirely. Status also plays a role in whether or not men recognize their children which means

that poorer women with less means are at a higher risk of not receiving support than women who are

better equipped to handle single motherhood without the financial aid of their children's fathers. In

the last narrative, the balance of power is somewhat restored as women claim the power to block

recognition when fathers are not making any real contributions towards the care of their children.

Some women who are doing all of the heavy lifting of parenthood don't feel that they should give

their men any opportunity to save face in the community by giving the child "a name" as a token

effort of fatherhood. In this way, the blocking recognition is a way to publicly shame fathers for their

lackluster efforts even if this attempt to shame men is thwarted by general societal attitudes that

accept, if not support, his rejection of nuts and bolts fatherhood.

The meanings surrounding non-marital childbearing have changed some over time as more economically self-sufficient women have turned an historical pattern of male rejection into an opportunity to project an image of strong womanhood and motherhood in their communities. However, the struggles of single parenthood and fights over recognition show that male absenteeism is a continuing problem in Saban families, especially in the black community, and that women's lives are irrevocably, and in most cases negatively, altered when men abandon their families with little or no social opprobrium. Since women have, historically, been the social symbols of sexual propriety, having children outside of marriage continues to open women up to various forms of gossip and social scorn not experienced by men and can also shape the kinds of relationships that women form after having non-marital children. When asked how men view women who have had children outside of marriage, women tended to focus on deeply hurtful social criticisms that these women still often bear and the difficulties that they face in establishing new relationships with other men. One white woman laid out the image problem of non-marital childbearing like this:

> They will not respect a woman too much when she has kids because she is always called a terrible name. You know, you are not respected when you have children here, there, and for everywhere. They will not be really respected. Even by the family. They will hold that they's disgraced. The mother always feel hurt. The family always feel hurt. That's human nature.

And a black woman shared similar sentiments by saying that:

> I definitely think so because of the fact that some men, I have friends that basically tell me of that, some women they have children before they are married, with another person for instance, and the man will constantly, when there is a problem, insult them about that. "Oh, you had a child before we were married". You know, even though he wasn't even in the relationship at that time, he's bringing it up. That's the way they go about it.

But another black woman thinks that these attitudes are changing:

> In the past you always hear that men viewed women differently. That they were nothing. That you have a child out of wedlock they were considered a woman quote unquote a whore because they give their body away. But today's date, no. Today's date as long as you keep your appearance well, as long as you are educated, you take care of yourself, they are willing to give you a second chance. And that's for both sides.

For the first two women, non-marital childbearing is thought to still carry an element of disgrace for

women and, in some cases, becomes fodder for men to continue insulting the honor of their girlfriends and wives. Shame is not confined just to the woman, though, and family members often carry marks of dishonor and wounded pride along side their deviant female kin. However, these attitudes may be changing slightly and community views depend on whether the woman in this situation dusts herself off and continues to lead an upright and honorable life after making a social blunder. Second chances are in the offering but women must learn to conform to expectations of hard-work and sexual restraint in order to receive them. Beyond the general attitudes of society at large, women who have children outside of marriage often find that it is difficult to establish new relationships with men who are not their children's fathers. Since many Saban men are not even willing to care for their own children, the likelihood of them stepping in to bear the economic burdens of another man's children are very low. When asked if men view women with non-marital children differently, one black woman identifies the problem as follows:

> In the olden times, yes, because they feel that those children was not their children and they would be a burden on them. That's the way I feel. So that's why many colored people when you get children you seldom get married because nobody wants that responsibility of another man's children, they would say. And that was the downfall of many people. I don't know about the whites, how they looked at it, but the colored people that's the way, in my opinion, they looked at it.

And another black woman discusses this as an on-going problem, particularly in the black Saban community, by saying that:

> And what happens here, too, you won't find much men here I can tell you would pick up us because most of us maybe have one too many children. Yeah, cause like some of us have two or three children. Some say it's a lot and they say they don't want to pick up that responsibility. "Oh yeah, and you have this, you have one too many for me to support". Yeah, "I can have you on the side, I can give you this, that, or the other but to take you and your five children is too much". Because he, maybe, he wants to work and earn a salary for himself to save for himself. Maybe to say that I work and earn a salary of 2000 guilders. Bam, I live in a house with her. I have to pay the light. I have to pay the cable. I have to pay this. I have to pay that. Bam, she has five, four, three children. How am I going to support myself? They always think of themselves, never of their burden.

And still another black woman adds that:

> I think that basically speaking that a man accepts a woman if she has children but he needs to know that she is financially stable and on her own, not if, financially, she'll be looking for his support. I think if she has two, three children and he meet her after having two, three children, I don't think he really wants to be in a relationship

knowing he has to financially carry the burden. I think he will want to, need to know that financially she can make it on her own and not that he has to completely take all the stress on him.

The common thread to all of these perspectives is that men do not want to pick up the economic slack left by irresponsible fathers. The irony is that many of the men with these attitudes likely have their own children that they similarly fail to support which indicates a cyclical collective failure on the part of many men to either live up to their own responsibilities as fathers or to step in as surrogate fathers for abandoned children. As the middle woman keenly states "they always think of themselves, not of their burden". In a social environment gives men tacit consent to leave not only their women but also their own children when relationships don't work out, it is not surprising that there is little or no pressure on men to become meaningful role models and sources of financial support for other men's children. Unfortunately, this leaves women in a double bind because they still want companionship from a long-term partner but never have the power to ask new men to become fully integrated either in their lives or the lives of her children. In these kinds of situations, in the past it was not uncommon for women to have many children with different men both in the hopes that one would remain a faithful long-term companion and in the hopes that, if nothing else, the small contributions from an array of fathers could help make ends meet through difficult times. Although this pattern is waning with the increasing availability of contraception, it is clear that having children outside of marriage still throws up a serious roadblock for establishing a meaningful, stable, mutually supportive long-term relationship with another man. Constant interference from prior boyfriends is also problematic and one black woman detailed these kinds of experiences like this:

> Some of them have the tendency, the dark skinned guys, the colored people, to say that yeah, "don't leave no other man go in the house with you cause he ain't gonna rule my children". Now, how come you didn't want to come in the house and live with me? Rule the same children that you have with me? And yet now tell me that I can't have a other man in my house ruling your children. So, if you pick up somebody else they always have something to say, about this. They have so much to say about that. They have so much to say, you know? They threaten one another's life.

It is likely that the intervening of absentee fathers has more to do with wanting to exercise control over their ex-partners than over any genuine concern that other men will negatively influence their

children. Even if the man was the one who walked away, these kind of power plays suggest an underlying sense of male sexual and social privilege that gives men the perceived right to continue exercising dominance over their families even in their otherwise nearly complete absence from family life. Risking social sanction through sexual deviance, hindering the development of new relationships because of men's economic concerns, and suffering relationship disruption through the intervention of jealous ex-boyfriends are just some of the many obstacles that Saban women face when they step onto the path of non-marital childbearing.

While most of the above discussion focused on women's experiences of non-marital childbearing, many women also expressed deep concern for children who found themselves in situations where mothers were absent because they had to go out and work and where fathers failed to care for their children after their relationships or marriages broke up. It is important to make clear that women work out of desire to be economically independent and out of necessity because they are often the sole providers for their children and that these tensions are difficult to navigate not only for the women themselves but also for their children. Many Saban women were quick to point out that women whose partners left them after having children outside of marriage and women who dissolved their marriages through divorce often found themselves in similar situations that were defined by their shared experience of financially irresponsible men. The high rate of relationship instability has meant that many children do not grow up with their mothers and fathers living under one roof, either in marital or non-marital situations, and data from the household censuses of 1964 and 2004 show that trends in living arrangements have remained fairly consistent over the past 40 years (Figures 9.19, 9.20). In the white population, the proportion of children living with their biological mothers and fathers has remained high and has only declined slightly from 90% to 85% in the intervening years (Figure 9.21). The minimal amount of ground lost by the traditional nuclear family has shifted to children living only with their mothers or to cohabitation with a biological mother and her partner. In the black population, the proportion of children living with both biological parents declined from around 45% to under 40%, with most children shifting from the traditional nuclear arrangement,

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married or cohabiting, to either single mother homes or to homes that contained their biological mothers and their mother's partner (Figure 9.22). Biracial children are the only group to have experienced a net rise in having both biological parents in the home as the proportion living in traditional family arrangements that include both their mothers and fathers in a single household moved from about 45 % to 55% over the past forty years (Figure 9.23).

The proportions of adult children living at home also shed light on the formation and dissolution of Saban families (Figures 9.24,9.25). For black men, most stay in their natal homes through their early 20s and about 20% of black men seem to put down permanent roots in their childhood homes. Black women show high rates of living at home throughout their 20s and early 30s which then declines significantly in the older age categories. White men also have a tendency to also live at home when they are young but living at home is almost unknown in their 30s but then increases again in their 40s. For white women, the proportion of women living at home fluctuates between 10-20% but drops to less than 10% after the age of 45. Although reasons for living at home are complex and situational, it is obvious that there are very different patterns of residence in the natal home based on both gender and race in Saban society. In the black community, the proportion of young black men living at home is high which suggests continuing economic dependence on mothers, and, in some cases, on fathers and the low but steady proportion of black men who never leave the home suggests that some don't go on to form their own households as they age. This pattern of dependence has been pointed out and heavily criticized by many Saban women who chafe at the lackadaisical attitudes that some men have about their responsibilities either in their native homes or in the families that they have created outside the comforts of their parent's home. Black women live in their childhood homes for many reasons, but it is likely that the very high rates of living at home in the late 20s and throughout the 30s occurs when black women have children with men who do not sufficiently support them. In these situations, black families continue to render aid to unwed or divorced mothers who struggle to get back on their feet. In the white community, some women do reenter their parents homes after divorce or other kinds of relationship dissolution, but they never

represent a high proportion of all women. This suggests both that marriages still tend to be enduring, if unhappy, and that white women who are simply single or who are single mothers find a way to establish households outside of their parent's homes. The generally higher level of economic power enjoyed by many white families likely intervenes here and family or even spousal support may help white women establish neolocal homes where costs would be prohibitive for many black families. Lastly, white men also tend to live at home in their young adult years, but living with parents declines sharply in their 30s and then peaks again in their forties. As white men marry, they tend to already have established homes for their families and this would explain the rapid decline of living at home during white men's most economically active years. A spike in the proportion of 40-something white men living in their childhood homes may have resulted from the effects of divorce and movement out of a marital home or may be a demographic quirk that resulted from men this age marrying at a lower rate than older or younger men.

Together, these data indicate a continuing pattern of relationship instability in the black community that contrasts sharply with the demographic stability evidenced in the formation and dissolution of white families. In the black community, relationship instability has resulted in the fact that under 40% of all black children are currently living in homes that contain both their biological mothers and fathers and that high proportions of adult men and women continue to reside in their natal homes after reaching adulthood. While white families are more cohesive structurally, the perspectives shared by many white women suggest that a good portion of marriages in the white community are strained by fathers who are not good providers, who abuse their wives emotionally through extra-marital affairs and, in some cases, through domestic violence, who don't help significantly with raising children, and who try to exercise control in their families by controlling the social and economic behaviors of their wives. The benefits that accrue to children in these kinds of situations are equivocal at best and awareness of the problems that exist for women and children in less than ideal nuclear family arrangements is of equal importance to understanding their experiences either living on their own or with a mother's partner in the home. However, because problems for

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children who live in nuclear families tend to be more secretive and covered-up they are generally less discussed in public conversations about child welfare in Saban society. Because the problems in marital families are opaque and largely unknown quantities in childhood experiences, most women focused on the effects that unstable home lives and single motherhood had on children. The pull between work and motherhood became a central theme as shown in the thoughts about single motherhood shared by one biracial woman:

> It's harder because that woman has to work to support her three kids, or two kids. And they should just try to practice more safe sex and try not to have kids before they're mentally, physically, economically ready for one because then if you have money you're just making yourself a step poorer and if you don't, it's just making it worse. And then you can become a menace to society. Not you, but your kids can. They're left home with grandmother or great grandmother because the mother has to work and there's no father around and they can barely pay their bills because they've got to pay daycare and buy pampers.

And similar comments shared by a white woman:

> That situation is not easy on the mother to be. Because the mother has to be the father and she also has to support her child. Because some men even don't give you a cent to help with their child. So, the mother has to go out to work and leave it either with the grandparents or a auntie or somebody or put it to the daycare. Now, sometimes the child is small, it's not so bad. But the child, at the same time, no matter how small the child is, it know that it missing the mother because it wants the mother. Immediately that child comes to the top going "mommy, I don't want you to go to work, you stay home with me because I need you mommy". So what other choice does the mother have but to say, "honey, I have to go out to work for you". So that child grows up with a sad heart and is always asking "mom, do you really love me" because they has the feeling that really does she love me because she do not have time for me?

Children suffer when mothers are required to provide for their material needs to the detriment of meeting their emotional needs. Mothers, too, suffer from the constant feeling that they are somehow failing their children because they need to work to support the family. The hurt feelings of children and their sense of total abandonment by their fathers and partial abandonment by their mothers eventually wreaks havoc in society more generally as angry and ill-adjusted children become angry and ill-adjusted adults. Of course, many single mothers are able to navigate these tensions with grace and dignity and manage to raise children who are contributing upstanding members of society. One black woman offers single mothers the following advice about childrearing under conditions of male absenteeism:

You can see it has a big impact, but, then again it's based on the mother. If the mother is supportive to that child, you wouldn't recognize a difference because the mother must brings up the child, you know, "Don't worry. You don't have to worry with that". But if the mother is constantly telling the child, "well, look at your father, your father don't do nothing for you", it has an impact. A negative impact and that's why I always tell mothers, you know, if god give you the strength to work and feed your children, do not worry with what the father is doing. Don't say nothing to the child about the father because eventually that child has to grow up and recognize the father or the father has to recognize him, the important thing is to make sure that you give the child the love and support that it need. From the time you have to be constantly quarreling about "you don't have it and go to your father", it has a negative impact on the child and eventually you sees the negativeness in the child growing as it becomes, especially as it becomes a teenager. It becomes a big problem, you can see it on the island.

Single mothers are advised to rid themselves of the anger of having to raise children alone and to do everything they can to focus on the emotional and material needs of their children. Saban women are encouraged to bury their hurt and to set aside their righteous indignation for the sake of their children's future and, given the low probability that their men will ever truly step up as fathers, this may not be bad advice in the long run.

The situation between many mothers and fathers has degenerated to this state where women must choose between fighting for what they believe is right and trying to force men into the responsibilities of fatherhood or doing what might ultimately be best for the children by setting these grievances aside and focusing, instead, on being stellar mothers under difficult circumstances. That these are the limited options available to women shows a real and potentially growing disjunction between women's expectations of partnership and fatherhood and the current widespread cultural reality that men, in general, are allowed to assume paternal responsibilities at their convenience and to abandon those responsibilities without paying any real social price. Women, in effect, are being asked to be silent and to endure just as they have throughout most of Saban history. These historical continuities not only make life hard for many Saban women but also make it difficult to voice their own painful family experiences. The above discussions of gender norms, marriage, divorce, cohabitation, and non-marital childbearing show the complexity of family life on Saba and highlight the fact that issues surrounding the ways men and women relate to each other and the roles that men and women play in their children's lives emerge as a result of different relationship scenarios in the

black and white communities and fluctuate in intensity depending on your position in Saban society. However, the views and concerns expressed by a range of Saban women make it clear that resulting social problems and tensions are impacting the island as a whole and, as such, demand the attention of all Sabans irrespective of their individual culpability in the deterioration of family life.

Transgressing social divides: Interracial and interethnic childbearing in Saban society

For much of Saban history, Saban families have remained racially, ethnically, and nationally homogenous but these traditional divisions in Saban families have been breaking down slowly over time. While most families are still comprised of all black or all white members, the younger generation is actively challenging formerly strict mandates against interracial dating, marriage, and childbearing and this has raised much concern in both the black and white communities on island. These relationships, and the children that are born into them, are the focus of much community gossip and reveal both traditional views on race and racism in Saban society and the ways that younger Sabans are changing their perspectives on the color question both in their social interactions with members of the black and white communities and the families that they form outside older more restrictive doctrines of racial separation. For those who still believe in racial hierarchies or who believe that cultural differences make interracial relationships unworkable, there are other options for starting families that bend but do not break the color line. Specifically, a substantial group of white men in Hells Gate have been bringing in Colombian wives who are considered to be socially white by many Sabans. A continuing desire to avoid interracial relationships and the lack of white women who are available, willing, and not too closely related combine to make importing Colombian women an attractive option for white men who do not want to live the bachelor life indefinitely. A final component to the diversification of Saban families comes in the form of increased interactions with potential partners both on- and off-island and a growing trend towards forming blended families where one partner is Saban and the other is from a different country. Although most partners come from the Caribbean, they bring with them different ideas about family life and the ways that men and

women should interact with one another in their homes and in the community. Although many Sabans still venture out into the wider world, the fact is that, now, the world comes to them and this has influenced who Sabans choose as partners and how they build and experience their families over time.

In discussions of family change over time and the socioeconomic conditions that surround and gave form to an array of Saban family types, race has always been an important and, in some ways, constitutive element of how people built and experienced their families in the past. Although race and racism are complex and well-discussed topics in Saban society, Sabans are generally fairly matter of fact about how race operates in their lives and optimistic that the lingering effects of racial discrimination are diminishing over time. Families, though, continue to be a site where race, racism, and racially divided opinions on the proper ways to have children and the expectations of motherhood and fatherhood explode in public dramas, especially when young white women become pregnant by older black men. To understand what people are fighting about and how they come to very different conclusions about the same situations, it is necessary to take a look first at the demographic history of interracial relationships on Saba and then to listen closely to what Sabans have to say about recent trends in interracial relationships and how they relate to the intersections of race and family in Saban society.

Demographically, interracial marriages, informal unions, and the children that result have always been an important component of Saban society and Saban family life. Interracial marriages were very uncommon during the seafaring period on Saba and comprised less than 10% of all marriages (Figure 9.26). In the late oil refinery and the immediate post-oil period interracial marriages were more likely to occur when one spouse was of mixed descent and the other was white. These general prohibitions against marrying interracially have changed radically over the past 30 years and now one in five marriages are between a black and a white person on Saba. Biracial people have always been a significant minority population on Saba and, particularly if born outside of marriage, tended to be more fully integrated into the racial community of their mother rather than

their father. If your mother was white, you tended to be treated as socially white and if your mother was black, you tended to be treated as socially black. Until very recently, most Sabans did not recognize being of mixed descent as a category unto itself although intermarriage within the biracial community does suggest that some biracial people saw themselves as different and strived to maintain this difference over time. When asked about biracial people, one woman told Crane (1971: 55) that black women who had children with white men in the past "would keep to themselves. The men would provide well for the children; but the women would never let you see them having chit-chat with the white men or anything. Nowadays it is more the colored and the white that mix—in years gone by the real black and white mixed up. The colored mixed with the colored". The numerical evidence not only supports this anecdotal take on interracial unions and biracial children but also indicates a new trend towards a modern period where "the real black and white" are again mixing up.

Overall, trends in the parentage of biracial children show the growth of the biracial population throughout the 20th century, the establishment of a biracial community that frequently formed relationships and had children with one another in during late seafaring through immediate post-oil times, a slight movement towards childbearing unions between biracial and white people during the height of oil-refinery migration, and a marked increase in publicly acknowledged childbearing unions between black women and white men over the past 30 years and in childbearing unions between white women and black men over the last decade. In the 19th century, fewer than 10% of children were identified as being of mixed heritage but it is likely that the traditional relationships formed between black women and white men did produce children whose lineage is now lost to time and that this creates an underestimation of the biracial population in these early periods (Figure 9.27). During the late seafaring period and throughout the oil refinery period, biracial people comprised about 15% of the total population and this proportion has now increased to 20% for people under the age of 30 and 25% of the population under the age of 10. The proportion of people that come from primary interracial unions between one white and one black parent has also changed over time (Figure 9.28). Children produced through unions between white women and black men

increased slightly during the period of seafaring migration to around 20% of all biracial births, declined during oil refinery times, remained low in the post oil period, and then exploded to about 40% of all biracial births over the last decade. Over that same period of time, the number of biracial children who were identified as being fathered by white men remained low but rose to 45% of all biracial births during the height of the welfare state and then declined slightly to 35% over the past decade. Trends in secondary interracial unions where one or both partners is of biracial descent indicate a movement towards childbearing unions between biracial people throughout the late seafaring, oil refinery, and immediate post-oil periods and an increased tendency for biracial people to have relationships with white Sabans at the height of oil refinery migration (Figure 9.29). Secondary interracial unions, however, have declined over the past 30 years at a time when primary interracial unions have grown substantially. Interracial childbearing unions have tended to be informal and, historically, about half of biracial children have been born outside the context of marriage (Figure 9.30). Recently, almost all white women who have had children with black men have done so outside of marriage but, over the same period of time, biracial children born to black women and white men have declined from 60% non-marital to just 10% non-marital over the last decade. These opposite trends suggest that the relationships between marriage and childbearing in these interracial unions are very much controlled by the perspectives and desires of men with white man/black woman relationships occurring more and more within the marital tradition that historically characterized most family experiences the white community and black man/white woman relationships following the non-marital path that came to characterize life for most black Sabans in the post-oil period. The combined effects of all of these sociodemographic trends have produced a biracial population that has slowly increased over time and that now comprises about 18% of the total Saban population and 27% of the population under the age of 10 (Figures 9.31, 9.32).

The structure of Saban households reflects not only this movement towards interracial and interethnic childbearing but also the growth in blended families that contain one Saban partner and one partner from another country. Data from the household censuses from 1964 to 2004 indicate that

the proportion of racially homogenous households has decreased over time and that the most radical changes have happened in the white majority populations of Hells Gate and Windwardside (Figures 9.33,9.34). In Hells Gate, the proportion of interracial or interethnic households jumped from just 10% in 1964 to 45% in 2004 and Windwardside moved from 10% to 30% over the same period of time (Figure 9.35, 9.36). Most of these households are formed either between a white and black partner, with black woman/white man arrangements more common in Hells Gate and black man/white woman arrangements more common in Windwardside, or between a white man and a Colombian woman (Figures 9.37, 9.38). However, a substantial proportion of these households are also comprised of a biracial partner and either a black or a white partner although it is unclear whether these choices are related to whether the biracial partner's mother was white, black, or biracial herself. The proportion of interracial households has stayed fairly constant in St. Johns at around 40% but The Bottom has the lowest proportion of interracial households at just 20% (Figures 9.35, 9.36). However, although there are a substantial number of black/white relationships in St. Johns and a handful in The Bottom, most interracial households are comprised of a black man or woman and a biracial partner rather than a primary interracial couple (Figures 9.39, 9.40). Together, these trends in interracial households show the greatest amount of change happening in the white majority communities of Windwardside and Hells Gate and these shifts are likely due to the increased interactions among the youth across the four villages and the fact that many people in the white population are quite limited in their selection of partners due to dense family connections in the white community and fears over the potential effects of continued inbreeding through first-cousin or other within-family marriages. These limitations suggest that it is not only the size but the relatedness of the white population that has reduced both the possibility and desirability of marrying within the white population on Saba. These problems were already well known during Crane's time as she relays the following story (Crane, 1971: 134):

> In 1964, two young sisters enumerated their eighty first cousins for the writer. The elder girl then sat back and surveyed the list, saying 'You see, if you don't marry a first cousin you don't marry anybody in Saba hardly'

MacQueen (1989: 259) also looked at the problem from a sociodemographic perspective by noting that:

> The total living descendants and spouses of this one couple [a farming family from Hells Gate] number some 140—14% of the total island population, the most distantly related of which are second cousins…Most of the younger generation in Windwardside and virtually all in Hells Gate are members of this one family, and…descendants also reside in St. Johns and The Bottom.

Desires to "scatter the blood" may be one reason why the younger generation has crossed the racial divide and has certainly played into why white men have been importing Colombian brides and why many Sabans from the black and the white communities have looked outside their own island population and settled down with partners who come from abroad. Because recent economic shifts have brought more foreigners to the island, Sabans have availed themselves of the opportunity to strike up relationships with this new blood and Sabans also continue an older pattern of finding their partners when they are studying, working, or living abroad. In 1964, blended households were very rare and 90% of the handful of blended families had a foreign woman that was brought back to the island after their Saban husbands left the oil refineries in Curacao and Aruba (Figure 9.41). In 2004, about 30% of Saban households were blended and, although most contained a Saban man and a foreign woman, Saban women were also beginning to get in on the action themselves (Figure 9.41). The proportions of foreign female to foreign male households were 80/20 in Hells Gate, 55/45 in Windwardside, 55/45 in St. Johns, and 60/40 in The Bottom. The geographical distribution of non-Saban partners is focused in the Caribbean as 60% of non-local women and 70% of non-local men came from somewhere in the region (Figure 9.42). Colombian women made up 20% of the non-local partners and 10% of non-local male and female partners came from the United States. Approximately 20% of all-white families were blended while about half of all-black and mixed race couples were living in blended households (Figure 9.43). This indicates that all-white families are still the most insular household groups on island while more and more interracial couples and all-black couples are currently formed between a local and a non-local partner. Considering that all-white households also include a substantial proportion of Colombian marriages, because Colombians are considered to be

socially "almost" white, the proportion of non-Hispanic all-white blended households is very low. This reflects the on-going difficulties that white Sabans have in finding a same-race partner in a Caribbean space that is mostly black and in a world where you are unlikely to convince a white foreign partner to forgo comforts of an American or European life.

In conjunction with high levels of relatedness in the white community and the difficulties trying to convince a white non-local to stay on-island for the long-term, the local and non-local population dynamics on Saba are skewing the racial composition of available partners more and more towards African-descended people. When looking at these trends within the Saban population, an increase in the numbers of available local black partners came about not because fertility is significantly higher in black Saban families but because more all-black Saban families are being formed than all-white Saban families precisely because more black Sabans are choosing to marry or live with people from other places. In essence, this increases the fertility of the black Saban population almost two-fold as black Saban men and women are having children with women and men from other places, thereby establishing two "Saban" families with two sets of Saban children rather than just one (ex. 4 black Saban children found in 2 separate families rather than 2 Saban children in only 1 family), while white Sabans continue to marry each other and produce an average of only 2 Saban children per couple. This effect is clearly seen in the Saban-only under 20 population now residing on-island as the total black population of Sabans numbers 124 and the total white population of Sabans numbers just 48 (Figure 7.48). Random fluctuations in sex ratios have also produced a situation where the black population has a surplus of males under the age of 20 (75 males and just 52 females) while the white population has a surplus of females (29 females and just 19 males) in this same age group. If many of the potential partners in the white community are not viable due to relatedness, this situation becomes even more acute and white Sabans, particularly white women, will have to begin looking into the local or foreign black population for potential partners, to migrate off-island to find their spouses, to find ways to attract non-local whites to a life on Saba, or to remain celibate if they do not wish to marry outside of their own race. As the effects of in-migration take

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hold, the number of potential partners increases substantially but remains heavily weighted towards people of African descent who come from all over the Caribbean. This creates a situation where most young people, black and white, have more daily social interactions with people from the local and non-local black populations and have a higher likelihood of starting up relationships with the people they encounter in their workplaces, bars, nightclubs, schools, grocery stores, and churches (Figure 9.49). The population dynamics of the younger generation will continue to pose social dilemmas for the historically insular white population on Saba, particularly women, who will come of age at a time when same-race partners are exceptionally scarce and the social environment creates many more social opportunities to meet, fall in love with, have children with, and perhaps marry men and women from the local and non-local black population. Under similar conditions about 20 years ago, a surplus of white male Sabans who are now in their 40s and 50s responded to a similar challenge by marrying Colombians which helped maintain demarcation of the color line in Saban society at a time when remaining white Saban women were not available or attractive potential spouses and when relationships with members of the black community were still fraught with social disapproval.

Intermarriage and childbearing with Colombian women has become an attractive option for white Saban men who can't find a suitable white partner and who are not willing to look for a partner in the black or biracial community. Interestingly, 65% of marriages between white Saban men and Colombian women are second marriages for the man while just 35% are first marriages (Figure 9.44). Most Saban men who marry Colombian women were in their 30s and 40s at the time of their marriages and about 60% live in Hells Gate, 30% in Windwardside, and 10% are from St. Johns or The Bottom (Figures 9.45,9.46). The fact that most of these are second marriages and that most of the Saban men are white and from the white majority villages on the eastern half of the island suggest that the difficulties of securing a white partner after a failed first marriage to a white Saban woman are nearly insurmountable and that those men who crave the companionship of a wife have to turn outside of their own native population. While most Sabans assert that Colombians are "not really white" but closer in color to white Sabans than black people, it is clear that a significant proportion of

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the white community in the future will be of mixed white and Hispanic descent rather than "pure white". Right now, only 5% of the total white population is of white Saban and Colombian parentage but about 20% of the population under 30, 25% of the population under 20 and nearly 30% of the population under 10 are of mixed Saban white/ Colombian Hispanic heritage (Figure 9.47). As the white population ages and the older people die out, upwards of 1/3 of the shrinking "white" population will claim mixed descent from a white Saban father and a Colombian mother. In total, all of these demographic transformations point to a diminishment of racial, ethnic, and national isolationism in Saban family building practices and in the Saban population as a whole. However, the changes have been most widespread, and in some cases, most unsettling in the white majority populations of Hells Gate and Windwardside.

While the demographic trends make it clear that Saban families are diversifying, listening to community perspectives on and reactions to these transformations gives us a better idea of how race and ethnicity structures the relationships that Sabans form with each other and with people from outside their communities. In talking to a broad range of Saban women, most brought up community talk about interracial couples independently and shared views that ran the gambit from unwavering acceptance founded on a strong belief that interracial couples and biracial children could build much-needed bridges between the black and white communities to complete rejection of the idea of interracial unions based on claims about the incongruity of black and white cultures, concerns over how cultural difference emerges in the context of family life, and fears over the loss of white culture on island. Although it is not possible to explore the social constructions of race in Saban society fully, this limited discussion will outline basic understandings of race in Saban society from an historical perspective and will then use this context to understand the experiences of interracial couples and biracial children on island and the range of views that Sabans have about crossing over or blurring the racial divide that has been such a large component of island life.

Sabans are very matter of fact about race even if they express strong views about the presence of racial discrimination on island and effects of racism in their lives or the converse belief that race is

not a particularly relevant factor in Saban experiences. Historically, the relationships between black

and white Sabans arose within the context of slavery and continued to be defined by an economic

hierarchy that positioned white people as employers and black people as laborers well into the 20th

century. After the wealthy white families vacated the island, the nature of the relationships between

white and black people changed as both were living largely agrarian lives defined by hard work and,

in most cases, a certain degree of poverty. This leveling of the economic playing field became even

more apparent when black men and women began returning to the island after working in the oil

refineries or in related industries on Aruba and Curacao. Many retired people from the black

community had, at last, been able to amass a certain amount of wealth that allowed them to buy

property, invest in local businesses, and live comfortably on island. Of course, everyone was not able

to live in relative luxury but an increasing proportion of the black community lived lives much like

the better off white families on island who had similarly benefited from labor migration or who had a

certain amount of intergenerational wealth accrued from previous migration periods. For the first

time, black people began to demand equal treatment and respect from the white population who had,

until this time, enjoyed a level of white privilege irrespective of their actual financial status. Early

ethnography on the island captured some of these rising racial tensions as seen in the following

assessments made by Keur and Keur (1960: 200-201, 203-204, 206-207):

> At any rate, present-day attitudes of whites towards mixture are full of abhorrence and repugnance. "Almost-white" family groups generally make an attempt to hide their offending dark-skinned relatives "under a bushel", with one or two exceptions. Only a single expression of approbation was encountered, given by a St. Maarten mulatto woman who was discussing Saba. "The whites there keep apart; lots of them are sick and not good in the head. If they married some of the colored people, and came nice and brown, this would be better for them"

> On Saba, white superiority is openly and aggressively claimed by native whites. This is reflected especially in all activities of a social nature, and frequently tinges other aspects of life. There is nothing covert or subtle about this situation, and it is recognized by all segments of the population…In the area of social life, the great majority of whites still stand firmly for complete segregation…In Saba, whites are adamant and unanimous in this. At the "public" New Year's reception in 1957, at the home of the Administrator, only twenty-two were present, and of these only one man of color--a light-skinned radio telegraphist from Bonaire. One Negro deputy explained that he had to carry the mail on his sloop to St. Maarten. All other absences went unexplained. In the afternoon of New Year's Day, a group of gay, masked dancers (white except for the boy who played the

maracas) went about from house to house in Windwardside, but did not venture to The Bottom. In the Government Guest House at Windwardside where they came to greet and entertain the Administrator and the authors, the room was full of native whites. Outside, the porch was overflowing with Negroes, not one of whom ever set foot over the threshold. On two other occasions, when the Administrator held receptions for visiting colored men of high status, whites refused to come. There are Social Clubs for Negroes only in two chief settlements and one for whites at Windwardside.

A young Saban noted physical avoidance "Whites don't want to touch a colored man. If they has to shake you hand, they pulls away quick"…Bravado was apparent, too, in the vociferous assertion of a Negro Saban woman "We don't want to mix any more than they. I tell you I don't like to dance with a white."

And later, by Crane (1971: 125-126, 174)

It must be mentioned, however, that on the part of some white people there is felt to be one class difference: that on the basis of race. Such people would, for instance, tell with pride stories of how well slaves had been treated in the more remote past, how well race relations had proceeded to the present, and yet conclude with 'but now they think they are our equals'.

In each village there are several strong friendships between children of different races. Racially mixed groups of children can sometimes be seen playing together along the streets. Some white adults remarked 'Twenty five years ago we would never play with colored children--things have changed a lot'. There are, however, families who have participated little in the change

Although vigorous assertions of racial superiority are no longer expressed publicly on Saba, a practice of social segregation and physical avoidance is still quite strong in some segments of the white population and is used as a way to draw clear social boundaries between people from the black and white communities. When asked about race and racism on Saba, one older black woman laid out the historical emergence of the current relationships between the black and white communities as follows:

Saba's a joke with this whole racial business. How to explain it, you know? When you start in the olden days religion was a racial thing. You have two churches fighting each other, fighting each other, automatically fighting, that was racial. Religion. Now today we want to say we has get out of that, just on the surface but when it's boiled down it remained the same. But I know in Saba we talking about we had racial, catholic racial question, three different, Zion's Hill is one kind of Catholic, Windwardside another kind of Catholic and the Bottom another kind of Catholic. Each one doing it their way, how they think the best way and don't understand that we are one and we have to get together. Nowadays we are trying to do that and still we can't do it. We have been born and raised in that Catholic racial way, that's number one. Number two, we have here black people, you would call it, against each other, has always been. Certain people think themselves more good than others. Why? Because they was able to go away and get jobs, be able to build houses and they who remained on Saba wasn't able to do anything like that. And then, I say, education, the colored man who was able to be a good professional carpenter, painter, mason, he think himself much more against the black

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person who couldn't do anything. That was racial on Saba. White people theyself was against each other, the different villages on Saba. The Bottom was the elite whites and the others was nobody. The elites was in the Bottom and a few in the other villages who thought themselves elites. The Bottom, all those people, watch me, [that house], he was a big shot white man. He even had people, he had a second wife on St. Johns, he had two men carry him because he couldn't walk good up the steps. These big houses, what you see here was the people with the money, the captains. And then, I could tell you, when the school became Dutch school, they moved their families away. And never come back and after a while they sold all these houses but all these houses in the Bottom was the people with the money, the rich people with the money. And they was the big shots, they was the Governors, you name them, and the judges and everything was the people here. All the Leverocks, them was the people with the money. One or two people in Windwardside, but they would take discrimination. People on Mary's Point, Hell's Gate, all about, they discriminate, the white people with money discriminate against them. And that, I could tell you was white discrimination. And then it come to, with all the, you would say, because automatically the people in the Bottom they had the money so then the black people never looked for them discriminating. At that time, they know that they were the big people, the black people was the poor man, no matter. So, you didn't hide, you didn't worry about discriminating because the white man, he was everything. But afterwards when they all left the Bottom and they went away, then they start, the few that was left. Then they want to think themselves so high and they want to start the black was this and the black was that. They didn't want the company with this, they didn't want the company with that. But when these people in the Bottom was here and they had the money, they was discriminating against the white people, the people in the Bottom was discriminating against their own color, so then they didn't have to study on no black people. Black people were not discriminated on at that time but after all they left, then the blacks was left back, then they start about it was more about the black people and they didn't want them but still they expected the black people would go to the funerals and the weddings. But when, in the olden times, when a black man would get himself a white woman, you know what that was, oh boy, war declared because that was against. If a white man get a black woman, god save the king, that was the same thing. But you didn't hurt about not going to the white man's parties because you knew that you wasn't invited. But don't say that we wasn't friends. They would come to your house. You would go to they house, but you know that when they had their party you was not invited automatically. And little by little it changed and now theys trying to have discrimination but that is washed out because the young people ain't giving them a chance. There's some older people is still talking about discrimination and trying to discriminate but the younger people ain't worried about that no more. They doing their thing with people they feel like. But more up in the 70s and the 60s they still trying to talk about discrimination but that don't bear nothing nowadays…[For example] in the former days you had the club in the Windwardside that was only for white people. Black people couldn't go there but then it changes and because of that change, black people had access. Cause black people was not allowed in the club. The Lido Club. They started that in a wooden house up there and certain men started that, you know, carrying on and then it came down only white people was allowed and then they build the big thing right there by the Eugenius Center and they said only white people was allowed. It was only white allowed and maybe if I had a little color and one had a friend or something, but it was no thing. But it wasn't nothing to talk about, that it was such a great thing. Who is they? Half was uneducated. Who is they? I mean they didn't say okay, yous discriminating and you say you want only white people. But they never said white people with a certain standard but anything could go there after you was white. So when you reach there, you ain't reaching no place. Huh? You just getting no place with it and after a while people sort of rebelled and automatically then they give in. But I have never been there. I didn't have an argument with them, what I going for?

As the majority white population gave way to a majority black population in The Bottom, St. Johns,

and across the island as a whole, white people from poorer backgrounds found themselves struggling

to cling to some sense of difference and superiority to their black neighbors and fellow islanders.

Whereas economic inequalities largely defined the racial hierarchy in the past and, at the same time,

stratified social relationships based on class difference within the black and white communities, the

significant narrowing of economic divisions in the oil and post-oil periods left skin color as the most

obvious way to claim superiority in the white community, particularly for poor whites who may have

been far less economically privileged than some highly successful black families. This desire to stand

apart and to assert social superiority evolved into a system of social and, most importantly, physical

avoidance practiced in the white community. Since interracial relationships and biracial children

were markers of the most extreme sort of violation of these principles, many times whites would

attempt to deny or minimize the importance of their black kin. One black woman stated the case like

this:

> They have a lot of people here, us colored people are family to the white people.
> They don't want to say or point out, yeah, that's my cousin because we are black. Saba
> still, I can say still have a little bit of racist inside the place. No matter where you go,
> you're going to find it. Saba do have a problem with a little bit of racism. Nobody can't
> tell me wrong that I am saying that cause that is the truth. Because how come if we're
> family, you're white, I'm black, and you never tell me that we are cousins, this, that, and
> the other, and now say that you don't think we're family? You act like you'll pass me on
> the road just like a dog that's there. We're family. Maybe my father is black or maybe
> my mother and he done this, or that, or the other. Maybe our father did that, or my
> grandfather did that but come on. They don't say nothing to one another. They treat us
> as if we're not family. You got some again that would say look, even though our family
> did this, our family did that boy, we're still moving as one. It's mostly the colored people
> you'll find together now and then that we'll call each other now and again cuz or hello,
> man you know, we're all one family. But for the white people to say like the families of
> the colored people are different, you know, they don't want to say yeah, they don't want
> to recognize it, not at all.

And another black woman expressed confusion over how black and white people came to be related

on Saba:

> Here in Saba you can't, well, for me, I still can't figure out, you know, that how
> the white people and the black people, they were related. I can't figure out how that
> happened and still there are problems [with racism]. Because a gentleman celebrated his
> 90th birthday, Monday was his birthday, and they had a church service for him. And Will
> Johnson, he gave the life history on him and when he ended he said that his uncle was
> related to this gentleman. And this gentleman is black.

Denial of familial connections between the black and the white communities is common on the part

of some white families and suppression of the history of interracial unions and biracial people has kept the wall of separation between blacks and whites firmly entrenched for parts of the white community. The experiences of ancestors and relatives who crossed those lines are generally known but seldom publicly acknowledged or discussed. Avoidance of social interactions and physical contact are the primary ways that some white Sabans continue to keep themselves apart and these behaviors are very apparent to both black and white people who feel that these actions are "old-timeish" and unnecessary. One black woman shared her perspectives on how racism is shown by white people by saying that:

> Even the small little children are growing up with the racism inside, even the small children. You have some kids, I know when my daughter was getting in the bus she slipped up and got on as if my child couldn't sit in the front and she got on very nasty and they grow up with that, the way their parents and grandparents grown up the children are growing up with the same mentality. The children, if somebody touch them they get down like that [cringing], it comes from the home. You don't teach your child right, the child won't come on the road walking or doing right because the child learn everything at home.

And biracial woman added that:

> For white people who don't like black people…you would notice that the black people are in that corner of the room and if they're racist they won't probably stand over there. They'll try not to associate with them. Or they'll pass a black person on the road and don't say good morning or good afternoon or whatever. And of course there's another group and they're white and they don't like black people and they're overfriendly and just trying to act like they like you because they're scared to show their real feelings and maybe you would feel they're genuine, but I would know they're not. It's that kind of way. Maybe the black person would feel that oh, they actually like me, but there's something there. You just don't know how to explain it but you can just see it…In my situation, when I got married, I had white people that stopped talking to me and actually treated my husband really nice. That's how they show you. It's like they're scared to acknowledge that they're discriminating so they were mad, pissed off at me because I made that situation but then they'll be nice to him and they'll ignore me. And I used to be so pissed off. And it's people you really thought were your friends that would speak to you really good, like if there was a conversation going on they would act like you didn't even really exist and they would just speak to him and that totally pissed me off. I guess they thought that he wouldn't have been interested in me unless I'd accepted it so I was the one that had brought the man home. I was the one that was responsible, not him. So it wasn't like they felt that he had fallen in love with me. They felt that I had gone chosen him or whatever. And as far as the children is concerned, I know when they was small [some of my family] would talk to them but never touch them. They would stand in front of them like "hi, how are you?", you know, but they never really hold them or actually smooth them down or pat them or anything like that. Like they were scared the color was going to rub off or something like that. But now they have black grandchildren of her own now so they always say you shouldn't spit in the sky because it falls in your face.

Another black woman shared her thoughts on white people's attempts to remain physically separated by saying this about racism in her community:

> It still do. Sometime you hear it happen around here where you work, the example I gave from in church [where white people sit on one side and black people on the other]. To me, the children do not mind until they reach a certain age. Maybe 10, 11, 12 years old it changes. I have the experience of one little girl, whenever I go to tell this one little girl hello, she like pulls away. Every time, when I want to go shake her hand, she doesn't want to shake it. She doesn't want to shake my hand. And I would say hello, how are you, and nothing. I know her mother. She is civil to me. She is civil. She is friendly but it has me puzzled, how would the little girl react like that? And I'm not the only one that has observed that.

Lastly, a white woman summed up the predominant feelings of most, but not all, white people by saying that:

> You can be very good friends with them, I mean, I have friends that are black, I go to parties and I can dance with them and stuff, but this is where the average person would like to draw the line, you know. You could be my friend, my good neighbor, my children could play with yours. You can even go to dinner with me but please do not marry my children or have children with my children because I think from experience, the few examples that there were in the community, it just doesn't work, culture wise.

While some white Sabans would be less generous in the boundaries they placed around interracial interactions, most would agree that transgressing social proscriptions against social and physical interactions by engaging in sexual and familial relationships with members of the black community is taking things too far. Of course, there are generational issues at play and most younger white Sabans are more open minded about these issues, but the first hand experiences that two of the black women above had with white Saban children shows that these rigidities are still taught in the homes of some white families. Since interracial unions and biracial children are the most extreme examples of racial transgression, people's reactions to these situations give insight into how Sabans encounter and experience race in their families and in their communities.

The discussions that people have about biracial children and the ways that biracial children integrate themselves into Saban society both reinforce and challenge racial thinking and divisions within and between the black and white communities. Sensitivity to the desire of some white people to avoid physical contact with blacks structures many of the interactions between these groups and, interestingly, healthcare becomes one arena where some of these biases come to the fore. One white

woman who is very liberal in her thinking about race was once hospitalized and told that she might

need an emergency blood transfusion. In this exchange, the black nurses in charge of seeing to her

care asked if it would be alright if a black man were to donate his blood to her and, with some

bemusement, she replied "only as long as I come away with brown skin and curly hair!". Since the

majority of the nurses are black, situations arise quite frequently in the daily flow of hospital activity

and some older white people express extreme discomfort when black nurses are left to tend to them.

What these stories indicate is a fear of contamination in certain segments of the white community and

their take on biracial children is often couched in similar terms and is centered on certain attributes of

the child's physical appearance. One white woman described the discussions about biracial children

as follows:

> And then it's funny, you know, you have a child from a white and a black and
> then it all depends on how did this child come out. Like did it come out dark with really
> curly hair or is this child like really light with straight hair and people have these
> conversations on the island because if a woman is in the hospital giving birth to a biracial
> child, before the child is born you'll hear people say, I wonder what the color of the skin
> will be like? I wonder if the child will have curly hair or straight hair and that's the first
> question that's asked when the child is born. Well, have you been to see her baby? Well,
> is the skin like really dark? As if that's going to make a difference. Actually Sabans
> refer to good skin and good hair. They refer to good skin means as light as possible and
> good hair means straight hair, especially the older people. That's how they will refer to
> it, not the younger people. But that is actually getting better, it's changing.

After the violation of separation has occurred and a biracial child enters the world, people in the white

community are keenly interested in whether the child appears to be more "white" or more "black".

These discussions show the fears that some white people have about where biracial children will fit in

and if they will be able to be integrated into white society that continues to reject physical closeness

with black people. They hope that the traditional markers of race, skin and hair color, will fall more

to the "white" side of the spectrum and, therefore, carry more of the social benefits that they see

embedded in the privileges of being white. If biracial children can look white, maybe they can also

be white in Saban society. Since skin and hair are still judged to be good (light and straight) and bad

(dark and curly) and since social experience is still, in some ways, defined by these physical

attributes, some black women suggested that difficult experiences with race actually became a

motivating factor in why black women chose to have children with white men. One black woman

shared her thoughts as follows:

> A child born in that kid of situation, where to they fit in? I think some people actually willfully gets a child with a black man because they wants this red-skinned baby. And I think that black women wants to know they getting a child with a white man because they want to highlight its complexion, you know? Some women they want to shed light on their body. If you are dark, you know they are dark, dark women their whole life they have been struggling with the fact that they are black so I just think they wants to know that they have a child with redskin. Maybe because of what they went through. They don't want their child to go through it, I would faster think that it's struggling your whole life as a black person, they don't want their children to have to go through that so maybe they want to know that their child, the child may not be white and it may not be black, but at least it won't have to go through the whole controversial black issue that they went through.

Racialized thinking and devaluing blackness are internalized by some black women who struggle

with the issue of race in their own lives. This, in turn, affects their childbearing decisions as they

choose to have biracial children in the hopes that reducing the physical markers of blackness will

bring their children more positive social experiences. Repeated stories of childhood teasing related to

skin color cropped up in many black women's discussions of race and several shared that children

today can still be heard calling each other racial slurs like "tarbaby" even in cases where skin color is

almost identical between the taunter and the object of their scorn.

The experiences of biracial people are dependent both on community perceptions of race and

on their specific circumstances which are often shaped by whether their mothers are white or black.

However, the question always arises: Where do biracial people fit in? Until quite recently, biracial

people tended to be sorted into either black or white, depending on the race of the mother, but biracial

people have always been viewed as different and, in some cases, unpredictable as to their racial

loyalties. One white woman gave this account of biracial people and the social ambiguities of having

mixed heritage:

> [There are a few biracial people here], they have like clear skin but it's like they tell you, I like you because you is white, because I am white. But then on the next hand you have to watch that person because all the time he thinking what do she think of me. And then he'll turn around and say, you know, I just said it to hear what she got to say, he say to the colored man. I just said it to hear what you had to say. So, when there comes that mulatto you have to be very careful what you say about the colored because really, he's not really for that side. He's thinking on the other side too. Okay, and it brings a conflict with the white man and the black man, so that race you really have to respect

with their attitude. You never dare call them a nigger. He'll dislike you always. You have to watch your words when you [talk with] a colored person. It's always been so and I think that now it's even worse.

But a black woman offers a slightly different take on the social lives of biracial people:

It's difficult, but I basically think you, as a black person, you accept the fact that they are white. As a child growing up they used to have these meetings when you were coming back from vacation, there was this one incident when there was this guy that was my color, he has slick hair, but he was my color. Actually he was a little darker but his hair was straight. So they had a thing they were doing where they put black on one side and white on one side. I can't remember what it was about but he went and he stood on the white side. So I willfully walked behind him and he said, well, you're black and I said you're black too. You have to be on this side too. And they said no he is white and you are black and I said no, if I don't fit here then I don't fit here. So I just stand, I came in the middle and I stood out. So you as a person you don't fit in the black or the white.

And another black woman adds that:

Some people enjoy it [having biracial children] because they got a little thing in-between. Some people they because you're mixed, and especially if it's something to do with black person, then they call that child a pure nigger. And what the child have to deal with then there is that the child don't know if it's black or if it's white and sometimes it could be confusing because I have nieces and nephews who are mixed and many times it come up that they were told, oh, you a nigger, oh, you white. And then they say, what am I actually? I say look, you just happened to be mixed from black and a white person. I said God cannot kill you for that.

While a biracial woman complicates the picture by saying that:

For mixed people some people are mixed and they can't accept it and they would tend to, especially if they have white skin color, they would tend to discriminate the black in more or less the sense that they feel trapped. They have black heritage but they don't really want it so it would be from trying to act as white as possible I guess and trying to be accepted socially in the white area. I would say some people even go so far as not to acknowledge the black people that are their family maybe, you know, and try to stay away from them as much as possible. Or if they do have to be around them they would do it in a way that they don't really have to be seen.

What all of these narratives show is that biracial people have very complicated social lives and that some can shift easily between the black and white communities while some feel that they need to reject one in order to be accepted in the other. Most black or white Sabans feel that biracial people are in a difficult bind and that they struggle to find their place in a world that still sees life in a black/white racial dichotomy. They are sometimes seen as much needed bridges between the two communities and sometimes seen as evidence of unforgivable social sins committed by their parents. Some are asked to choose their loyalties while others enjoy a certain level of social flexibility as people who occupy a liminal social space. While many Sabans wonder and worry about the futures

of biracial children, all express opinions about the relationships their parents shared that run the spectrum from complete acceptance to complete rejection.

In the flow of conversation about Saban families, many women would spontaneously turn to the subject of interracial unions and childbearing as flash points in Saban social life and would offer their own diverse perspectives on the stability of interracial relationships and the differences between types of interracial arrangements found on-island. Although the most intense discussions centered around recent examples of non-marital childbearing between older black men and younger white women, people tended to express very different views on couples where the woman was black and the man was white versus couples where the man was black and the woman was white. Overall, though, any interracial union is bound to kick up some dust and spark community gossip. As one black woman put it:

> It the everlasting talk and everybody's eyes is on them on the black side and on the white side. And every move they make, they is wrong or they is right. They are not left alone to themselves. They do not worry about what you do or what you say because they're living their own lives but everybody mouths is on them. That's why you see that it's still discriminating on the island because look at he, he going to take that black woman, for instance, and everybody's talking it, oh look at she, she going to take that black man and they just continue talking. You don't just leave them to themselves. The everlasting is with the same song. But the people, I can tell you nowadays, do not worry with them anymore.

Sometimes the nature of that everlasting talk has a lot to do with how particular Sabans view the practice of interracial dating rather than the specifics of each individual relationship. One white woman shared that she had heard other white people say that "If the Lord meant for blacks and whites to be together, Adam and Eve would have been a mixed race couple" to which this more open minded woman proclaimed "Well, how do you know they weren't?". Religious filters are still commonly used to support racist ideologies among some parts of the white population and one white woman told of how her own family members warned her about religious sanctions against interracial unions:

> I know there was older people that even told you that in the Bible it said you couldn't marry colored people. I'm like show it to me, where in the Bible it says this? My grandmother from my father's side was very racist but my grandmother from my mother's side was a very nice open down to earth person and as long as the person love you and you love them she didn't mind what color creed or quality they were as long as you were happy. But then my grandmother from my father's side was very racist and

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yeah, you don't read the Bible and the Bible tell you that you are not to marry colored men.

Apart from appeals to religious proscriptions of dubious origin, many white Sabans express negative feelings about interracial unions in terms of a loss of "white culture" that has been so integral to the history of the island. One white woman expressed sadness that the "white race" on Saba was declining as more young white men and women turn away from marrying their own:

> I'm afraid that in years come we won't have the white race no more on Saba, the way how its here now, because life has changed. Because the white girls are hooked up with the colored, the colored men are looking for the white girls so that totally, in a few years, we'll have a different race, a mixture, of course, right now. Because you see, in years gone back we was not taught that way. They taught you, you know, you are the one race. In years gone back we was taught, you know, you was white and you was colored so you know you respect but you hang more to your own color. That's changing. Cause theys taught different.

Despite the lack of clarity about what constitutes "white culture" on Saba, it is clear that feelings of encroachment and a sense of inevitable eradication of a way of life weigh heavily on the minds of some people from the white population. These fears find voice when people talk about their perspectives on interracial unions and biracial children even though all women, black and white, showed compassion and understanding for the families who are intimately involved in working through the difficulties and challenges encountered when crossing those social divides.

While this is the general backdrop that gives social meaning to interracial couples and biracial children, discussions with Saban women revealed that there were distinct differences between the ways that women saw interracial couples where the man was white and the woman was black versus interracial couples where the man was black and the woman was white. On the whole, women, both black and white, agreed that relationships between black women and white men tended to be more successful than those between white women and black men because they felt that a black woman could more easily integrate into the expectations of family life in the white community while black men tended to be more exploitative in their relationships with white women. What emerges from the different ways that women talk about these types of interracial unions is the fact that gendered expectations of family life and the roles that men and women play in their families are the

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most relevant factors shaping public opinions rather than racism and racial bias per se. When women express concern or outright negative feelings about interracial relationships they tend to do so within the context of family life and point to the divergence between how they think that women and children should be treated in a relationship versus how they are actually treated in real life scenarios.

Relationships between black women and white men generally do not usually generate as much community chatter because most women felt that these relationships were more likely to succeed because white men tended to be more willing and able to support their women financially and because black women slipped more seamlessly into the expectations of family life in the white community. One white woman summed up the situation like this:

> I think that that way works better. There's more harmony within them and they can actually stay longer together. Because the black woman has different qualities to the man. She's not that violent, you know, and the woman will quicker take habits and customs from that white family she's entering into, like from her husband's sister and mother, and not that they condone the relationship any more than the other way around but I think that she is more patient and more willing to make a go at it. She is not going to be violent and the white man is not going to really be violent. He is going to try and you will see it work better. You will see it work better.

In this narrative, black women are painted as being more patient than black men and more willing to work through the difficulties of maintaining an interracial union in the face of community disapproval. The fact that most white men have not relinquished their roles as family heads and economic providers also plays a role and several black women specifically stated that white men could "do more" for black women than most black men. However, the rewards are equivocal and come at the price of alienating family and friends who feel their black female kin who are with white men are putting on airs. One black woman makes these general points by saying that:

> With the white folks if you have a child with a white guy and his family is from Hells Gate, or anywhere, mind you, you can get supported. Because once you got a child with him, the family alone loves the child as if you never even loved the child. They love the children because the children don't pay for their parent's mistakes. They love the child like everything. In the black community, somehow, in ways they accept that you got a white guy because I guess a white guy could do for them. Their family alone could do for them. They're accepted, you know, high class. When they have parties, I can sit in a chair too, you know. In a high kind of way. Sometimes they pass you straight like sometimes they don't want to say nothing to you like hi, hello and it causes one whole bunch of confusion… Somehow when they have a white guy, no matter what it is, they brag like mmmhh, I can do this and that and the other and that's going to happen and this is going to happen. I can go here I can go there. Oh, look at my children they are whiter

and look at your children, they are blacker. They say certain things like that and sometimes we, as colored folks, when we see ladies, like black skinned ladies with white guys, you know I am happy for them because, you know, because I feel for anybody that it's your business what you choose. I guess they're happy with it 'cause their children is this, their children is that, you know. And in Holland that's the biggest thing now. In Holland all the colored people are married to white men. They always mixed, I don't know what is the reason. All my cousin's children in Holland all of them are with white men. White men can do this, white men can do that. I guess they can support this and support that. I guess sometimes the black boy don't want to go nowhere. He don't want to set nothing for himself. He don't want to do this, so I got a white man. He's high society. He could do this, he could do that while you, hey, you don't do nothing for me so I got something else.

Black women who are with white men often experience financial stability and support through their relationships for the first time and the stark difference between what most white man can "do for you" versus what most black men can do gives them as sense of moving up in the world both economically and socially. After struggling in their relationships with black men, most black women are supportive of their friends and family who have relationships with or marry white men because this allows some black women to have stable home lives where men continue to fulfill their traditional roles as economic providers. However, when these black women denigrate and put down their friends and kin who have not entered into interracial relationships they can instigate social friction by taunting other women about not only their presumed inferior socioeconomic status but also the futures of their children who are not integrated into white society in any way. The status of living abroad versus living on island also comes into play in these dynamics as Holland becomes a central site where these kinds of relationships are allowed to develop and take root. The collective actions and attitudes of some of these black women not only recapitulate racialized thinking about the value of whiteness but also lay bare the real socioeconomic differences that exist in some all-black versus interracial unions between white men and black women. The ways that white men and black women relate to each other socially and emotionally are also pointed out as one reason why some black women opt to become part of white families. The same black woman from above makes this case as follows:

What could a white guy do to a black lady to get her so mad? Hardly nothing because they are so shyish. If you tell them to sit down, they'll sit down. If you tell them to stand, they'll stand, you know. I used to like a white guy and you tell him to do anything he like a little dog. You tell him to sit, he sit. You tell him to come, he come. They really don't treat us like black people, like how our own black people will treat us.

> That's one thing. They have more respect for us. Our own people don't have respect for us. Colored people will say this, and that, and the other, Oh, we beat you this, we beat you that. We diss you this and we dissing you that. But the white guy there, he'll follow you at all times.

White men are seen as more docile and more willing to act respectfully towards women than many black men and these attributes are also appealing for black women who are looking for a quiet peaceful life rather than one filled with relationship drama. Of course, white men are fully capable of destroying the peace in their relationships as well, but some black women seem to feel that white men are both more likely to be good providers and more likely to be controlled and respectful towards their women. However, one black woman who used to think this way has recently reevaluated her position and expressed these changed views by saying that:

> To be honest with you, I, as a parent, when I was growing up, not as a child, you know, later on, when I started getting children, I also told my children to make sure they got married to a white guy. But now, do they actually treat you different? Because nowadays I think that a white guy will treat you just as good or just as bad as a black guy will treat you. It's your choice, huh? The choices you make you have to live with it.

She suggests that white men are less and less likely to treat their women differently than black men and that men who treat women well and those who treat them poorly can come from either community. It is difficult to know whether she is making the argument that all men are now more likely to treat their women poorly or that there is growing variation in both the black and white communities, but she no longer feels that there are any clear cut advantages for black women to marry white men these days. However, the less hostile reactions to these relationships expressed in the white community and the generally positive reactions in the black community, at least among women, stand in start contrast to the firestorm that surrounds interracial relationships between white women and black men.

The successes and failures of and community perspectives on interracial relationships between white women and black men depend on the unique qualities of each relationship and on the depth of the schism between the expectations of family life in the white community and the realities of family life within these couples. While black men who are meeting their responsibilities as partners, husbands and fathers are respected, those who do not are too often held up as evidence

against all black men. One white woman puts describes the phenomenon like this:

> And depending on the person, my husband, some people like him and some people don't but most of the people like him because the way he carry hisself. He take care of hisself and he have a good job and he take care of his family. Now, there are some black men that marry the white women or they get a baby with them but then after a while they don't worry with them or they don't marry them or they don't take care of the kids or they don't have a good job and, you know, they are just there to say that they are married or something. But my husband, there's a lot of people that look up to him. They don't see no racist there. They talk to him good and they mix with him. He have a lot more white friends than black friends. I guess they feel good around them and he feel good with them, I guess.

Unfortunately, evidence against the long-term compatibility of these kinds of interracial relationships abounds in the minds of both black and white women. The young age of the white women who have recently had children with older black men, the fact that many of these black men do not contribute substantially to the economic stability of their households while the women work outside of the home, the tendency of these relationships to exist outside the context of marriage, and the suggestion that some have been marred with infidelity and domestic violence combine to make these relationships not only unfulfilling for the partners involved but also unhelpful when it comes to trying to bridge the gap between the black and white communities on island. White women are fixated on their feelings that these young white women are throwing away their futures to be with black men who treat them very poorly and who, in their opinion, will never live up to their responsibilities as partners and fathers. When asked about the recent rise in interracial unions and childbearing between white women and black men, one white woman shared the following thoughts:

> Some people are outraged. The thing here is that everybody cares what everybody thinks and they all know these families. They would think twice before showing a lot of approval. You never know what to say, whether to say congratulations or not, but they will have a baby shower, for example, and people will go and that amazes me. In other words, there doesn't seem to be as much stigma or shame about things as there used to be. I heard for example, I'm thinking about a girl who got in with this black guy who was a few years older, got pregnant, then the older sister is throwing the baby shower. People are going and bringing gifts like as if this is the way its done. But then you'll hear other people saying "What is this girl doing? She's ruining her life. I can't even go to this baby shower". Certain people will maybe say what they think and maybe the others either they don't think that or they are afraid to express it. They are good friends with the mother or with the girl or with other members of the family and they will go on and bring the gifts. And the girl will generally get a job later and the grandmother will be babysitting. And that is the pattern that you had in the black culture for all those years. A segment is going that direction. And maybe that's going to be just a period that maybe they'll come out of that but, of course, then the children are already interracial.

But people will say that they've seen many families go from black to white and from white to black and that will happen. Their children will be interracial, their children will be sort of medium brown to light brown, and then they'll marry a white person and then the next generation will be so light that no one would ever know that they weren't 100% white. And that happens all the time in the Caribbean. So this could be just a passing thing also…Now the feeling with the teenage girls [as opposed to older women] getting pregnant is that they have been taken advantage of by older black men. A lot of people seem to think that. Now why they're doing that, it's hard to say. To me, it looks like a product of low self-esteem. They are not leaving the island, and they seem to be girls that are really intelligent, that's the paradox, but they must feel somehow that they're not going anywhere or they're not going away to study and somehow they get trapped in these situations or somehow it's a behavioral thing, a negative attention thing. Other people would say they are ruining their lives, why are they ruining their lives this way? I don't know, really. In some situations I suppose they will get married or they do get married and they're happy but these are girls that are quite bright and I think they should be going off to study somewhere. They don't go because they got pregnant. That's how it looks to me. It just looks that way to me. These are bright girls in school and now they have black babies and you wonder why? What's the attraction there? I wouldn't think that it would be any better with white babies. I think they should go off and study and develop themselves. And there's all kinds of birth control around and all kinds of information about it, even in the school. So isn't that odd? It's like a conscious choice.

In this woman's narrative, the community is clearly unsure about how to react to the news that a young white woman is having a non-marital child with a black man. Not only is it shocking that a child is to be born out of wedlock but also that the father is a black man who may or may not be intimately involved in that child's life. The age of the women, or girls, is also of great concern because early childbearing hinders the furtherance of education which is now seen to be the key to a successful life either on Saba or on foreign shores. She suggests that a feeling of hopelessness about the future may have played into this childbearing pattern and that crossing racial boundaries and having biracial children outside of marriage is a way to get negative attention from their families and to place all of the focus on dealing with the situation in the best way possible. Early childbearing, though, is the most pressing concern for this woman and she clearly states that it would not be "any better with white babies". Choosing to go down this path or, at a minimum, not protecting themselves by using birth control, creates dramatic ruptures in the way that most white Sabans still view the normative process of family formation and creates a lot of social anxiety both at the level of the individual families and in the wider society. These anxieties stem from a lingering belief in the necessity of keeping a wall of physical separation between white and black people but are more often discussed in reference to the racially divided expectations about the roles that men and women should

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play in their families and the sudden closing off of potential futures for young, unmarried, white

mothers of biracial children. Another white woman added to this general perspective by saying that:

> It was never approved, up unto 2004 nobody says this is a good thing, but people are still not in favor of it. Oh no, they feel that, and remember we are talking about Saba now with just a few people, maybe elsewhere it is different, they feel that, the few people that have tried it, it has never worked. The black male is abusive, very often. They beat up these women once they get there with them, black men. They leave them. They cheat on them all the time. They get children with other women. They are not macho, part of them, if you don't have a couple of children outside your relationship with the person you are with and they will like, I know people here on Saba, like young white girls who will defy everything that they believe in. Their parents will threaten with them but they will still fool with this black person. They will get a child to find out just a couple of months later that this man didn't want them to begin with. He has already moved on to the next woman and here you are with a child and these parents who you left, because you wanted to make up your own mind about this, you have to go right back to them to ask them to help you with this biracial child. So you are actually forcing your parents, in a way, to accept something that they are totally against. But, of course, you love your child. This is your grandchild. The child is the innocent person in this situation, you know. So, you find the courage and the strength to deal with the situation, but it is not a situation that you like. And then sometimes if you get a child, say, let's take it from the white girl having the child with the black man and he's not going to marry you anyway. That is not going to happen. He is just going to have a fling with you and leave you which is most of the cases here. Then your chances of finding a white man, if you want one then, to share your life with, they are going to look at you, you already have a child for this black guy, I'm not going to be with you. So then these white women kind of continue, then, finding black partners and most of the time they fail. They are failures. Let's face it, they fail with the same color also, of course. But I think that the cultures, although they left their countries years ago, for some reason their thinking is different from us, even in today's modern society. They cannot be the same of us otherwise we'd all be wandering around with the same skin color…[Also], you have people here that actually think that once a black man is with a white woman, he has found everything in life. No! That is not his ultimate goal in life. He will cheat on that white woman the same way he would have cheated on the black one. It's not going to make any difference to him. They think that black men should feel privileged to be with a white woman and a lot of young girls are with black boyfriends because they're charmers, they're sweet talkers.

These situations set into motion a flurry of social activity that often culminates in the abandonment of

the woman and her child by the father and a return to the natal home where love for the grandchild

usually trumps any feelings of resentment and rejection felt by the parents. The potential to marry

later on, particularly to a white man, is much reduced and a cycle of dysfunctional interracial

relationships takes hold of the lives of these young girls. Violence and neglect are seen to be an

integral part of these interracial unions and cultural differences related to family formation practices

and gendered relationships between men and women in the black and white communities are thought

to be too vastly different to support relationship success. A third white woman expressed a different

view about why these relationships form and how they are perceived in the community:

> Because what happened, the colored man want to get into white race. You see it everyday of your life. Because you can see it because the first thing they see a little girl or anything like when theys growing up or even if they see youself on the road theys all the time "Psst psst you whitey, you for me you know". Yeah, that's the way how they win you over. It's like the colored man is having a command over the white. So after he can get you then, after he can get a white person, you'll hear the colored say oh look, look at the white person is gone to the dogs, you know. That's the way I'm talking. We got what we want. We got the white woman for this man. See? It's like they have a command that they want to put over a white person.

Issues of race and power surface in her description of the relationships that exist between white women and black men and the establishment of these relationships provides one way for black men to exercise dominance over the white community at large. This may play a role in the experience in some of these relationships and may have more to do with projections of power between black and white men through control of women. When asked whether the transformation of Saba from a majority white to a majority black community had had any effect on the interactions between black and white people, one black woman suggested that:

> I think you can feel and sense a fear, I think, amongst the white people. A fear. Because society have to change now, we are going back now to the black man involving himself in the white community and you can see that fear because they don't have no longer control over their daughters. That's one of them, you know, and I think that is a main thing that they see fear. That they are losing control over their daughters.

Exercising control over the sexuality of women, particularly daughters and wives, has been a long held tradition in the white community and white families continue to be keenly sensitive to the gossip that certain behaviors can generate and remain determined to limit the amount of talk that people can pass about the women within their own domestic units. When daughters go astray, particularly across the racial divide, many white fathers feel a sense of humiliation and betrayal that plays out on a very public stage. Loss of control over white women is an emblem of the loss of white men's control in society more generally and is a constant reminder that white men no longer hold the same position of social power either over women or the black community that they once held in the past. What it really boils down to, though, is a racialized struggle over how families "should" form and function in Saban life combined with bitter disappointment in the white community over the futures that many

young white women map for themselves through early non-marital childbearing with black men who don't conform to expected standards of partnership or fatherhood.

When thinking about the relationships between white women and black men, most black women are equally cautious and critical but tend to be a little more lenient on the men who are involved in these liaisons by placing more blame at the feet both of naïve white women who accept poor treatment and of black mothers who coddle their sons in childhood and, later, in adulthood. One black woman clearly makes these points by saying that:

> At this point in time I have come to realize, say for the past five years, that more white girls are getting pregnant from black guys while the black girls are getting less pregnant. I don't know why but I think that a lot of them are also leaving. A lot of the black girls are leaving the island but a lot of the black guys aren't. Then we have that if they are all the same ages, a lot of black guys are getting involved with white girls and financially they are also being supported by these white girls. So, in other words, they are sitting at home not working, in other words they are doing the babysitting while the women are working, while the white girl is working. Is it right? The question remains, is it right? I guess the question that also comes up is were they raised that way? Because we, as parents, at a certain point we, like I said, we protect our children but we forget to educate them. We protect our girls in the sense that they can't go here, they can't go there, they can't do this. And then we still have this tendency of feeling that we have to do everything for the boys and parents still do that today. Everything has to be done for the boys. While the girls, you know, are not given the opportunity to do that. Because I feel something had to play a role in these boys lives that they feel they can stay home, mind baby, and the woman working. Something, I don't know what, played a role there. I'm going to be honest with you, you're not going to lie around and do nothing with a black woman. So, I don't know if it's the necessity of a white woman having a black man is so important that they would tolerate it while a black woman knowing that she will get the next black guy and knowing that there is always another man there, I don't know. The white women are really holding on to them. Based on what I have seen so far. I ask myself, why? When I see girls, young girls, white, I mean good looking girls in a situation like that I ask myself what, why are you doing this? Why are you doing it? Why are you accepting it?

She questions both why these black men feel that they can rely on their white girlfriends financially and how their own mothers may have created a situation where their sons feel as if women are there to cater to their every need. She identifies what she perceives as a real difference between the ways that black women deal with black men versus the ways that white women deal with black men and suggests that something about white women leads them to "hang in there" despite the fact that their men are treating them with little regard emotionally or financially. To her, black women simply wouldn't put up with a black man lying around "doing nothing" and she marvels at the fact that white

women are willing to put up with so much abuse. This difference is likely rooted in the fact that most

white women are still raised not only with the belief that it is their responsibility to take care of their

men but also with the belief that their efforts will be returned in kind. When black partners do not

respond the way that white women feel they should, it seems as if they read this as a failure on their

part and try even harder to create a situation where the man will rise to meet the responsibilities that

she has come to expect. In a social environment where many white women are taught to sacrifice and

suffer silently in their relationships, it is not particularly surprising that these behaviors manifest

themselves in interracial relationships. However, the deepness of the gulf between the expectations

that white women have for their men and the realities of these interracial relationships makes their

struggles seem incomprehensible to both white and black women who are on the outside looking in.

Some black women were even more assertive in their critiques of white women who refuse to stand

up for themselves and black men who continue to use them for their own ends. One young black

woman stated the case like this:

> If a black man is with a white woman, the thing is, I guess, the black men here,
> some of them, wants to use the woman, I hear. That's knowledge I have seen over the
> years. Maybe I won't say use her but she got this, she got money, she got this and that
> and the other. If she going to go to Holland, she going to go to Europe, she going to go to
> America, I'm going to stay with her for a while. The thing is I feel he use her like he
> would not use a black woman, you know why? We are standing our bound. What you
> can do to her, maybe don't come around me. You know you don't do it around me, I
> going to set you straight. If I tell you to sit in a chair, you sit in a chair if you going to lie
> in lap. Well, I guess the white ladies, she would do. It's happening here all over,
> because all of my friends think all the black guys here take advantage of the white ladies
> because I guess they can do for them. They have jobs. They sit home. They don't work.
> They can support them, you know. They can lay at home bringing their salaries giving
> them cars and giving them clothes and this and that or the other. They don't have to
> work. I know some people say it is like abuse but I don't see it that way, as abuse. I find
> the guys use the women because the women are working, they have jobs, they support
> them, so what else is there for them to do? The woman is supporting them, you just sit
> back and relax.

As with the case of black women with white men, some black men see white women as their way to

an easy life and, if the white women are willing to put up with this, then the feeling is that they get

what they deserve. However, the thought of a man living off of a woman still runs counter to

traditional gender norms that position men as the economic centers of their families and is especially

offensive to a large section of the white community that still lives within these social norms. Although black women have declared their financial independence for longer than most white women, many black women are similarly dismayed at the what they see as a lack of work ethic in their sons and partners and have begun to openly wonder how this situation has arisen and what they can do to stem the tide and reintegrate their men into the socioeconomic fabric of family life.

Social pressures to marry within your own race that emanate from the black and white communities and variations in gender norms that structure the ways that men and women communicate with one another contribute to both stabilities and instabilities within these interracial unions. One black woman suggested that constant criticism from the black community, rather than the white community, is one factor that keeps black men and women from committing to their white partners:

> But here they still have that strong that you need to marry within you race. You need to marry within your race. Because right away you could hear them say, well, you downgrading the black man. What, the black man ain't good enough for you no more? You know, like that, because you got involved with a white man or you would quickly hear them say, oh, what happened? You can't find a black woman, you have to go and look for a white woman? You know, you will hear that also. And sometimes I think that what causes young boys too, not to be sure of themselves, whether to stick into that relationship because you see that most of the relationships between the black and the white right now, you can see that it's the woman hanging on to the man. The man don't need to work, he can stay home. It's the woman that's doing the working. That type of relationship I find we see a lot. And it is to me because the man is not sure whether or not he should stay in this relationship because of the pressure. What happened? You can't find yourself a black woman? You had to go and get yourself a white woman? He's hanging on to that white woman because the child is there but what's going to happen? Sometimes you can see it on them that they're not sure.

Insecurity in the face of public pressure and disapproval increases the likelihood that these relationships will fail despite the propensity of white women to do everything they can to "hang on to their man". Sometimes these qualities of "hanging in there" are highly valued by black men who feel that white women can meet their needs in ways that black women are unwilling or unable to do. A biracial woman expressed this sentiment by laying out the basic differences in the ways that she feels white and black women approach relationships:

> I also think that black women are more rough in a relationship, I think white women are more softer. When I say softer, they're more emotional. They're more loving

in showing their love and stuff and when it comes to black people I think that they deal with rejection and those things in a rougher manner. I don't think they put as much feeling in it as white people because I seen shows and people in general, and I've talked to people before and if I have a problem with my boyfriend I'm the kind of person if I get upset I cry easy. And I know that my boyfriend doesn't like crying and my ex-husband didn't like it. And if I went to other boyfriends and they were black, they can't deal with crying. They don't like crying and they don't understand why I cry. And I cry to make myself feel better and they can't understand that. And if there's a break up or argument or something I just know them to be more rough and just deal with it and you don't see any sign of emotion or anything like that. I can't say that all are like that but most of them I've ever seen, that's the way they are

And a white woman reiterated this perspective as follows:

My husband always tell me that he never want a black wife because he said they have a different character and they want to be with other men and, well, the one he was with, that he got kids with before he met me, she never took care of the kids and she was always out and she was with different men and I guess, he said that, like, well, I'm always cleaning and there's some you will find that are very clean and then some again they don't care. They don't give a damn what happens, how the house is or how the kids are. But then again you'll find some that is clean and taking care of the kids, you know.

Black men can be attracted to white women who express vulnerability in the context of their relationships and who fulfill their traditional roles as wife and mother by seeing to the needs of children and, importantly, to their men who retain the position of household head. Of course, many all-black relationships also show these qualities while many all-white relationships do not but a general sense that white women will tolerate what black women will not stems from the different expectations about and experiences of romantic relationships and processes of family formation and dissolution in these communities. The intersection of these differing perspectives and experiences in the context of interracial couples has made them the topic of on-going public and private discussions about the proper modes of family life, how social norms related to gender are enacted within the context of families, and how the black and white communities both overlap and diverge in their perspectives on these issues in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Experiences of interracial unions from the perspectives of the individuals involved, their children, their families, and the community at large are very diverse and depend both on the specifics of the couple and on the surrounding social environment that exerts pressure on them in various ways. Racial bias and outright racism do play a role in how some white and black families respond to sons and daughters who become involved with members of the opposite race and fears over the loss of

white culture and the loss of power amongst white men do shape some of the responses in the white community. In fact, many black women who were, themselves, unsure about the long-term viability of interracial unions expressed their belief that racism, itself, is responsible for the rise in interracial dating and childbearing. These views are encapsulated in the flowing explanation offered by a black woman:

> I think maybe what's happening, where the white people are failing, is they express it [racism] in the house with their kids, that they are racist, that they are against black people. And what is happening is these children are leaving the island. They are going away to further their education and they are in college, they are meeting up with students who are from different backgrounds, are from different colors and the challenge of just, in other words, you're challenging your parents. Why is my parents against black people? And they take on that challenge and that's where issue comes up. The saying goes, once you touch black you never go back. You do find yourself involved with a black person and then maybe once you get involved with them, that's it. And then you went against everything your parents spoke and maybe because of your parents hammering on that subject of black, black, it drove you to go towards the black person.

Rebelliousness amongst the youth has led them to experiment with relationships that their parents oppose and this curiosity springs from a desire to taste forbidden fruit. Once the process is set in motion, the die is cast and parents can only stand by while their children actively defy their old-time thinking by establishing interracial relationships. While some of their hesitation to endorse interracial unions is no doubt a part of their views on the superiority of whiteness, many white people and black people alike make arguments that cultural difference in the expectations of family life lie at the heart of community wariness about the longevity of these relationships. In particular, the divergence between the socioeconomic expectations of fatherhood and manhood and the specific historical constructions of femininity in the black and white communities creates rifts in the fabric of family life when expectations in the minds of black and white men and women deviate from the realities of life with their opposite-race partners. To claim that racism, alone, is responsible for the negativity surrounding interracial unions and childbearing is to miss the fact that ideas about family life and the historically developed social and gender norms that articulate around family formation processes in the black and white communities play an equal if not greater role in the experiences of men and women who transgress the racial divide in Saban society.

Despite evidence that interracial relationships are troubled not because of racism alone but because of historical differences in the development of gender norms and family formation practices in the black and white communities, there is a small group of men who, when unable to find white women who were not closely related, have chosen to marry Colombian women rather than search for a bride in the native black Saban population. Some women feel that the high proportion of disrupted interracial unions plays a part in these decisions while others feel that these men simply would not have married black no matter what the circumstances. The former view is expressed by a black woman who reflected on their hesitance to marry a local black woman like this:

> And then you know what could have caused it too, you have cases when a white man has married a black woman before but was not treated well and that could have a negative impact too. The man was not treated well. And that might make also the society think, well, stay away from their women. Those are not what we want. We want someone who would be willing to really meet our needs.

Pointing to amorphous needs that were not met in relationships with black women again raise the issue of differing expectations that white men have about the roles that their women should play in relationships and may be code for the belief that they are looking for traditional women who will cook, clean, and take care of the family as their primary motivations in life. In looking outside, this group of Saban men turned to Colombian women as an alternative group who weren't considered to be socially black, even though some Sabans insist that they really aren't white either, and who come from a social environment that intersects well with traditional white Saban ideas about a woman's role in family life. The racial, health, and gender aspects of these decisions were well known and well discussed by a range of Saban women. One black woman described the intersections of these concerns like this:

> To me they heard so much of marrying each other, okay, yous marrying your first cousin, yous marrying your second cousin, oh yous marrying your Aunt Jo, yous marrying your Uncle John. So, automatically they get tired of that and they decided to make a change. Let's marry a stranger, we'll change it. Theys heard so much about us marrying each other and the thing of it I fancy is that it comes to discrimination. They don't want to marry a real black woman, let's say to make a change. So, they'd rather go outside to Colombia. They have at least a little fair color. That's the way I look at it, to make a change and then the people they self, even if they are not really for it, they will tolerate it.

And another biracial woman added that:

> And I guess the reason why Hells Gate people chose the Colombians is because they're closer to white than the Santo Domingans are. I mean they have white Santo Domingans that are very clear and stuff like that but I guess they were not considered white so they wanted a white girlfriend. Plenty times the parents say you can bring me anybody, just don't bring me a nigger. You know, those kinds of things. They would just be like that. So, it's just the fact, I guess, that they feel that anybody would be better than a black person when I know some white people that I wouldn't even want to wipe my feet on because of their character or whatever.

While both of these women focus on the racial aspects of selecting Colombian brides, others focus in on not only race but also community concerns over the need to diversify the gene pool in these small island communities. A black woman addressed these issues as follows:

> I personally think that it is because of race again because the Colombians are more like their color type, to say, well, you're marrying a white person. And I don't really even know, because I really think that it started by one woman coming here and making an advertisement so initially it started out like that. So, that one woman you know, made a drastic change and the change was because I think a study was done and they realized that most of the white people were suffering from cancer, skin cancer and it was because of intermarriage and that they needed to go out there and get other women instead of getting married or having children with their own. It had really come where first cousin would have end up being with first cousin and thing like that and I think a study was done and ended up showing that most of the cancer problem was that the immune system was breaking down and they needed to scatter the blood. And so they start coming, you know, but then you end up also with the problem that a lot of these women came and they brought their child with them, their children that they had, you know, a lot of them came with children and then you had where some men then accepted the children and some men then did not. Well, they were glad for the woman in the house that met their needs, that give them children and that was it. And then again you have social problems because these young boys and girls, some that are making it and some that can't make it but I find that the majority of them are people that can make it. To me, they are well taken care of, the majority. But the main reason why was that research that was done. Because it really was that a lot of people were suffering with skin cancer and as they got older that they had a lot of skin problems, medical reasons and so they had a doctor here and they did the research and I think that he really came out and told them what was going on and that was one of the reasons.

And a white woman echoed these general thoughts by adding that:

> There are medical concerns, my mother in law used to say that a doctor told her once that it would be healthier on Saba if the black and white intermarried than for whites to keep marrying whites and blacks to keep marrying blacks because then there really is intermarriage, you know, genetic problems. In Hell's Gate for example, there are many Colombian wives and they are mostly white, or partially Indian, very light. The Santo Domingos on the island are also intermarried but they are mostly black. And the way it looks to me, Colombians mostly marry whites and Dominicanos mostly marry blacks. I think that it's pretty much perceived that way…I don't think these men from Hell's Gate would have married black women so I see that as a positive development because they are at least married and they can afford to have families and the population goes on and the island comes up a little bit, the population is increased. Otherwise there would just be a bunch of single men over there. That's what there were. And for the most part they're

a little bit shy. The pirates went and brought their families as far from the harbor as possible and it's sort of isolation and in their little shell.

The particulars of these men's situations and their unwillingness to look to Saban women from the black population made Colombians seem like a good alternative that allowed them the comforts of family life without risking social sanction from their conservative peers. However, there are inconsistencies in how well Colombian women fit the traditional mold of sexually pure womanhood in white Saban society and many Saban women were quick to point out that many Colombian wives came from difficult backgrounds and already had children before they arrived on island. This led one white woman to say that these white men bring in Colombian women like they are "little brides" while Saba women who had similar marks against them would be cast aside as tainted and unworthy. The willingness of some white Saban men to be flexible on issues of sexual purity but rigid in the arena of race is quite interesting and suggests that some sections of the white community remain adamant in their desire to segregate the races even if it means that they, themselves, marry "not quite white" women who are not blushing virgins on their wedding days. A different white woman pointed to the negative influences that this trend has had for white Saban women when she asserted that "the Saban men will do a lot more for the foreigner than what he would do for a Saban wife" and that this sends the message that white Saban women aren't good enough for them anymore. Yet another white woman discussed these ironies when talking about the origin of Colombian women and their current position in Saban society:

> Poor, I guess, I think some was prostitutes. It's true. I know two particular ones that are here and their husbands found them, how should I say, in the house in St. Maarten where they work. And then they brought them here and then they went back and they went back another time they brought them back to Saba until eventually they married them and now they think theyself to be high society women in the community. They have kids, the men have built them big-time houses and you don't say to them that you come from the brothel in St. Maarten because then they'll be highly offended. They think themselves high society now.

Although the truth of these sex-industry claims was not verifiable, even though these claims are widely circulated, it is interesting that most Saban women felt that these marriages were more business deals than affairs of the heart. To contrast the difference between Saban and Colombian

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women, some made it very clear that a Saban woman would not marry for money. When asked why some white Saban men are choosing Colombian wives over their own, the same white woman from above replied that:

> I think our Saba women is better than those women. I don't know why, if they couldn't find one to marry, I really don't know. In taking care of their family and you know, our Saba women is not marrying the man for money, not there to talk oh, I'm with the man but I don't love him but I just got to stay with him to help me financially. And, you know, things like that. If I marry a man, I marry him because I love him. Not just because I need money and I need a house or I need to send money back to support my family down there. When the women come and marry the men, the men have to help to send money back home to their kids or their mother or their sister or their brother sometimes back in Colombia. Because not all the women will work. The women come, they find a rich man to marry and they can sit home and just have the man bring home the money. Maybe they felt like the women off of Saba would be better but they get fooled. I think some of the men they marry, no women is going to fall in love with them and they're so desperate and these women are just looking at the money figure and the house and the help always financially. And the men are just thinking, "oh, finally I got a wife". Well, maybe they are attractive to some women but maybe the women don't want them cause I don't think Saba women is going to marry you just for your money. They're going to marry you cause they're in love with you. And maybe they don't see these men as men to love.

The themes of racial bias, the restricted opportunities to marry available to these men, and the business-like arrangements that characterize most Colombian marriages were echoed in many other perspectives shared by black and white Saban women. These themes clearly came through when one biracial woman shared her thoughts:

> I personally don't have a problem with that because most of the men that got married to the Colombians had either never had a serious relationship here or nobody liked them for whatever reason so I think that if they got Colombian wives, I don't begrudge them that because, you know, they got a wife and they got children and they had a companion and they are happy or whatever. Maybe they're not happy but some of them act that way. And I must say plenty of the Colombians they try to speak English, they try to learn English and most of the Hells Gate guys, they all had nice homes and stuff like that, you know. So, they got pretty good deals, the women. And I guess the men got a deal cause they had someone to make love to and take care of them or whatever. So I guess it worked out for both of them.

And again resurfaced as a white woman offered her own opinion as follows:

> When I think on the Saban men who had these women imported, it is because these men they didn't have really anybody on Saba. There was nobody left on Saba that they would be with, and these are normally men that Saba women are not going to be with to a certain extent. So they bring in, usually these are beautiful women that they bring in, and the way I understand it, these women come from sometimes very poor backgrounds. They have very hard lives where they come from. That's why they're so willing to leave their country. And so actually for them Saba becomes the land of opportunity and oh boy, opportunity it becomes. These women are very money oriented.

If you do not have money, they are not going to stay with you. Some of them come on a trial basis. Some of their first questions are do you have a house and do you have money, otherwise, they're not going to stay with you. I think it's because of the poverty stricken scenarios they go through. They are looking now for a better life, economically, financially, for themselves and for their children. Most of them have children that follow. So they come to Saba, they get married to these men, they are absolutely no bother to the community in no way, shape, or form. They respect the community. They respect themselves. They do not cheat on these men. They have beautiful children. They are good mothers. They are clean. They are impeccable cleaners. They clean for everybody on the island…But these women live real well on the island. They are in nice homes. They go and get their license and their husbands immediately go and get them new cars. And they are hardworking people. They are very hardworking and they normally keep to themselves a lot. Sometimes you don't realize how many Colombians are on this island until, say if there's a Saturday night where it is advertised that it is Spanish night so they will play all this Spanish music and you will be surprised how many Spanish people are out there, but no, they are not a bother to this island.

Saban women generally felt that Colombian wives were faithful to their husbands and good mothers to their children, however, the process by which they came to the island not only ran counter to Saban women's ideas about love but also offended their emerging modern sensibilities about women's equality and empowerment in the context of male-female relationships. A white woman describes in detail how Colombian women entered the island and how they established relationships with local white men:

What happened with the Colombians, is one person brought a Colombian in and when they saw there was stupid white Saba men with money, sorry who's listening to this, but I got to tell you the way it is, stupid white Saba men with lots of money and they kept bringing more and they would tell them before they left Colombia which man they was coming for so when they reach here they know it's that man I got to be with until I can get him twist around my finger to marry me and get all his money. One came, when that one came she brought pictures of others and she would show the men and then some of the men got to pick which one that they want . She knew which one of the men to pick that had the money and show them the picture. [I know a man that] was shown a picture but when the woman got here she wasn't the one in the picture. He was like, this woman was ugly, but he had no other choice but to take her. And not only that but you have to pay so much money to get these women to come here and then when they get here it's not so easy to settle down with them and, I guess, to send them back you got to pay more.

While two black women shared similar concerns, shock, and amazement in their depiction of how Colombian women were recruited to Saba:

In former years you had that family were marrying within each other and now they have gone to the outside. That's one good thing about it, right? But then when you get one sister here, we used to have a guy who used to live here in Hells Gate, he used to be referred to as the Colombian Ambassador. He was bringing those women so they could marry some of those guys in Hell's Gate. And you mostly see it, Hell's Gate, is the Colombian place. What we do know is that when these women come to the island they come prepared because most of the time what they don't have in their country they have

here. Because they come here and have a ready-made house.

and:

> I don't know what to say about the issue of the Colombians because the issue about them being ordered and picked from a book, is like, I haven't lived with that yet. I'm hearing this story but I don't know how much of it to believe. You know, living in a modern world, in the 21st century, you think, "Do these things really exist here?". And, apparently so. And you ask yourself, can't the guy really pick from his own?. Of all the women they have on Saba?" And I think with the Santo Domingans, they are not really picked up, they just move to the island and they fit themselves into the community. But the Colombians they are actually specially picked and brought to the island for Jack and for Tom and for Jim, you know?…We on Saba, we have so much freedom. And our children has so many opportunities in the sense that they can leave and go other places and do other things while maybe coming from Colombia, where financially you were not stable, and moving to Saba, you hitting the nail on the head. Financially, you have expanded your goals. You know, they fight to get their Dutch rights, to get their Dutch passports, so you can see that where they come from it was a struggle and where they are, now they appreciate where they are.

Both of these women describe the process as a trade of commodities that seems anachronistic in an age where women can work and depend on themselves for a living and where love is the defining principle that keeps most Saban relationships together over time. They recognize the dire circumstances that many Colombian women flee from in their native homes and, in some way, admire their determination to make a better life for themselves by establishing themselves on Saba. A clear line is drawn, however, between the boundaries of wanting to make a better life by migrating to the island and eventually marrying a Saban man, as happens with many women from the Dominican Republic, and the business transactions necessary to "order" Colombian women and, upon arrival, to provide them with the material needs that they demand before and after marrying these white Saban men.

White Saban men who marry Colombians are not the only Sabans who are actively seeking out partners from off-island, although they are the only ones who have an arrangement like the one depicted above. Increasing economic opportunities on island have not only made life easier for locals, but also have become a beacon to migrants from all over the Caribbean, Europe, and North America. Demographic trends in blended families show an increased prevalence of households that contain one Saban and one non-Saban partner and Saban women, themselves, had a lot to say about

this new trend on island. One black woman said that:

> The rest I got interested in is mostly from abroad because I found out that Saba guys all think alike. They don't want no, nothing for themselves. Everybody wants to see themselves in a bar everyday. Spending money every day. Being with their friends every day when they could be home with me, loving me, they going to be out spending a hundred guilders, two hundred, sitting down in a bar with your friends. While that same money could have been there, you could have been supporting me with that money. Yet everybody want to be in a bar with their friends, spending money on this and that, you know.

In her mind, the competition offered by men from other islands unsettles Saban men and makes them uncomfortable with the fact that many Saban women are no longer looking to their own for companionship. Having relationships with foreign men is one way that Saban women can express their discontent with local men who continue to neglect their responsibilities as partners and fathers. The same black woman hammers home this point by adding that:

> Now here with the other guys, now, they see us with guys from different islands and they say, why didn't you marry us, why don't you want we no more?. You know, you don't want us no more. Oh, You'd rather pick up a foreigner, you'd rather pick up this, you'd rather pick up that. But I always tell them, now, you tell me, if I was with you, what kind of life would you give me? What did I see you benefit from living on Saba? What did you do for yourself? You don't have no foundation, nothing, you're in the bar every day. If I want you home, you're in a bar. If I call home you're not there, you're here in a bar. You're with your friends. Everybody's got this thing with friends, friends, friends.

The rewards of engaging in relationships with foreign men, though, can be equivocal because many already have families waiting for them on their home islands. One biracial woman talked about the general lack of men on the island and the ways that non-local men are integrated into the lives and families of Saban women:

> I think that the scenario of one man having children with different women here right now is lack of men on the island. I think it could be, well, not that there aren't men, but put it like this, the good men are taken already. Some are gay. Some are alcoholics. Some are drug addicts. And there's a handful left to play around with so if you don't get off from Saba, well, some people have a relationship where maybe they have a boyfriend overseas, that don't usually work, it depends on the person, but that usually won't work all that well. So, yeah, the super guys have to take care of all the ladies and if they get this one pregnant or that one pregnant then there's a baby. There's a lack of good men. I haven't been able to find one here. And then what also happens is that sometimes, like, we have the workers down at Fort Bay and they've been here let's say for a year and they're going to be here for a while. People could fall in love with them and maybe get a baby for them but if they're married back home or whatever and they decide that they're not giving up their wife for you, they're going to go back. So then you're left as a single mother again with the baby. Or like when we had the hurricanes we had workers come from all over, Curacao, Aruba, guys from Dominica and some of them has been here five

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years and stuff like that. Some of them have families back home but it's just that they travel out to work and in those five years you can make a lot of kids. You can fall in love with someone. You can build a good relationship, it's just that there's somebody back home. In the mean time you've made a life with that person. I just look at it like this, I think that men are so limited that when a woman finds a good man she's like, well, I have to do things with him, I have to do everything with him because I don't know how long it's going to last. I guess you get all carried away with the fact that you're in love and you have somebody and you just don't think on the other consequences that there are to it.

Foreign men, then, end up being a lot like many Saban men in the long run as Saban women who are the "other women" in their lives are in danger of having their relationships disintegrate if a wife or girlfriend convinces their man to come home. Relationships between local people are also taxed by the presence of new men and women on island as new sexual opportunities open up where fewer existed before. When asked whether the influx of foreign women has had any effects on the prospects of local women forming relationships with local men, one white woman had this to say:

> Maybe it might be difficult for the women that the men might look at these women and be willing to marry these women more faster than us Saban women because these women know how to do things to get the men more attracted to them…And there's also Saba men that are married to Saba women and then, say for instance, these women come, especially if they're new, and then they get the jobs in the bars, the men go and they sit in the bars all day, watch these women, and leave their wives at home. That happens because these women dress with all the things that attract the men and they make sure their hair is fixed and they make sure they look beautiful and you know, some of the men are stupid and prefer to leave their good wife home and go out and look at these women who come from the brothels, because most of the Santo Domingans also come from the brothels, and their women also to sleep with any man. So the men sometimes go to see the women and get a different challenge I guess, different to their wives at home. Sometimes they sleep with them and sometimes they even end up getting divorced through these women. I find that the Santo Domingans that used to come years ago were more to themselves and not really worry with the Saba men but there's more and more coming now and these that are coming now are more carrying themselves to be more attractive to the men. They mostly get jobs in bars and you know that attract the men and that's why the people will bring them in and hire them to work in the bars because they know theys going to make money because the men are going to come in a sit and drink and drink and drink just to sit there, some just come in to sit and watch this particular woman.

For Saban men who are already inclined to be unfaithful, the wave of new women coming into Saba has expanded the selection of potential "other women" and some of these liaisons are said to have destroyed island marriages and long term relationships. The modesty valued by most Saban women is not always in evidence in some foreign women who have different ideas about womanhood,

sexuality, and the games that men and women play to get what they need from their relationships. A black woman succinctly summed up the feelings of many Saban women

> Now I guess everybody seen more people coming to Saba and everybody's like fantasizing, fantasizing, you know, going for what they see and what's the cause of it at the end? They don't get nothing. So, that's the main thing here.

The exhilaration of seeing so many new faces can easily turn into a roller coaster ride of infidelity and relationship dissolution as some Saban men and women bounce from one partner to the next just to find that the grass is not, in fact, greener on the other side. For Saban women, the stakes are high because they are the ones who are left with the responsibilities of parenthood if their men, local or foreign, choose to opt out of family life.

All threads of a shared cloth: History, modernity, and Saban family life at the turn of the 21st century

Whether it's Colombian women marrying white Saban men, Santo Domingans marrying black men from The Bottom, black women living with men from St. Vincent, or white women marrying men from Bonaire, Saban family life is more complicated than ever and reflects the growing economic and social diversity of the island as a whole. In this modern social environment, Saban men and women must negotiate the pitfalls and opportunities of a range of family formation practices that now allow for greater flexibility not only in their choice of partners but also in the ways that Sabans set up their most intimate relationships as marital or non-marital arrangements, the terms of entering and exiting those relationships, and the ways that men and women triangulate around issues of gender, work, and childrearing to get what they need through their bonds with one another. Tradition intersects with a push towards modernity as men and women, husbands and wives, boyfriends and girlfriends try to define their place in the world through appeals to historical patterns of partnership and through carefully weighing the benefits and disadvantages of deviating from those social scripts.

Shifting gender norms, the meaning and experiences of marriage, the rise of divorce and cohabitation, the transformations and similarities in the experience of non-marital childbearing, and

the increasing prevalence of interracial, interethnic, and multi-national families make Saban families fertile sites of cultural production. As Saban families take form, history folds back into the present tense as some Sabans follow in the family-building footsteps of their forefathers and foremothers while other Sabans struggle to find new social spaces connected to but not dictated by tradition. Marriage retains its strong central role in family formation processes in the white community but has become less relevant as a precursor to starting a family in the black community. However, most black Sabans do eventually marry, even if it is after their children are grown and have families of their own. This speaks to a continuing desire to find long-term companionship even when the instabilities in relationships make this a difficult, and, for some, elusive goal. The ideals of marriage often conflict with the realities of being a husband or wife and, for women, being married does not necessarily mean that your spouse will be fiscally reliable or sexually faithful. Divorce provides men and women in unhappy marriages with an alternative but many Sabans fear that this is an easy way out and that the availability of divorce has further destabilized marital relationships on the island. For others, divorce is a means to assert not only their power as women but also their power as mothers who are responsible for making a "normal" life for themselves and their children in the wake of divorce.

In this social environment, where the legal and social benefits of marriage are often equivocal, many women are opting to form cohabiting relationships with their partners and women in these relationships consistently point to flexibility as the key benefit of engaging in unions not defined by legal marriage. The fact that men and women can come and go as they please is attractive to Saban women who deeply believe that relationships are not meant to last or that marriage will change their "good" relationships sour by injecting a "you have to do what I tell you because you are my wife or husband" mentality into the rhythms of family life. Freedom, though, can also be a burden that falls mainly on Saban women because relationship dissolution usually means entry into single motherhood. The lives of divorced women with children and women who had children outside of marriage mirror each other in many ways and are usually defined by the absence of significant

financial and emotional support from the fathers of their children. Despite these commonalities, community views on non-marital childbearing are mixed and some see it as a way for well-established professional women to exercise complete control over their home lives while others read the situations as a lack of power for women who are unable to force their men to pick up the slack and take care of their children. Battles over recognition of non-marital children are central in these power dynamics as many men refuse to acknowledge the children of women who might "cause trouble" for them and many women block recognition to shame fathers who do not contribute a "red cent" to the care of their children.

Interracial unions are still the source of much community debate and although some disapproval is clearly linked to ideas about the superiority of whiteness, many women, white and black, express concerns that are related to the treatment of women and children within the context of family life. Disjunctions in the experience of family life in the black and white communities have produced different expectations of the roles of men and women in their families and the incongruence of these expectations emerges dramatically in the context of white woman/black man relationships on Saba while, interestingly, it tends to be less acute in black woman/white man unions. Black and white women felt as if white women in relationships with black men were being exploited in different ways. Black women, in particular, asserted that black women would simply not put up with that treatment in their own relationships with black men and expressed awe at the endless ability of white women to "hang in there". Although the reasons for these qualities of black/white relationships are complex, the historical expectations that white women bring into their relationships prime them to sacrifice and struggle to hold their families together while black women may be equally pained by a difficult relationship but tend to be more pragmatic about determining when it's time to cut their losses and strike out on their own. Conversely, black women who establish relationships with white men are subject to different kinds of social pressures. Most Saban women agreed that it was easier for a black woman to adjust to the socioeconomic perks of being with a white man because a white man was viewed as more likely to spend money on their partners, to marry them after a shorter period

of time, especially when children were involved, or at least to provide socioeconomic support for any children that came from the relationship. However, some black women were displeased with perceived attempts to "put on airs" by black women involved with white men and suggested that the pleasant social front projected by these couples could hide underlying racism experienced by black women and biracial children at the hands of white partners and fathers. Some even questioned whether the "benefits" of being with a white man even existed in modern Saban society anymore and that a black man and a white man were just as likely to treat you well as treat you poorly. In both of these kinds of relationships, it is clear that men, black and white, exercise a lot of control over how these families are formed and maintained over time and that the divergent histories of family formation processes in the black and white communities prompt more black men to follow a non-marital path in their own adult lives and, specifically, in their interracial relationships and more white men to follow the well-worn path of marital family life with their black partners. The experiences of women in interracial relationships are heavily shaped both by the ways that black and white men view family life, particularly the role of marriage and the socioeconomic support of partners and children, and by the expectations that women, themselves, hold about their own roles as partners and mothers. Incongruities in these expectations creates dramatic tensions in black man/white woman relationships that are played out in the scrutinizing court of public opinion but white man/black women relationships also provide their own challenges even if women in these relationships are afforded better economic opportunities and the promise of long-term support from their partners.

For white men who are uncomfortable about crossing the color line, Colombian wives provide an attractive alternative but striking up relationships with and marrying foreigners is not confined to white men who marry Colombians. Saban women are generally supportive of intermarriage with Colombians because they insist that these men would otherwise be lonely bachelors or divorcees sitting alone in their Hells Gate homes. Despite this generally positive attitudes, most Saban women are disturbed by the business-like transactions that form and hold together these relationships and some are not pleased that local women, black and white, are being

swept aside for foreign brides. However, all Sabans, men and women, now have a greater opportunity to meet, fall in love, and start families with people from a variety of other places who now reside on island. The tenor of these relationships, though, can often parallel Saban women's experiences with their own because many of these migrant male laborers are married, have families on their own islands, and choose to return home even after establishing new relationships and families with Saban women.

These are the constraints and opportunities swirl around modern Saban families and given meaning not only to Saban relationships that follow traditional lines but also those that veer off the traditional path into uncharted territory. Instability is a hallmark of many family lives and the declining importance of marriage, the rise of divorce and cohabitation, the on-going practice of non-marital childbearing, and the increased prevalence of interracial, interethnic, and blended-nationality households have impacted Saban families in myriad ways. The uncertainty of the future has instilled a "live for today because you don't know what tomorrow will bring" mentality in many Saban women although a good number still stand firm in their emphasis on the value of long-term durable relationships that exist only within the context of marriage. Working women universally express a sense of empowerment in their growing ability to take care of themselves and their children but this empowerment is usually tinged with disappointments in the economic and social contributions of their partners and anxieties about splitting time between their working lives and their responsibilities as mothers, girlfriends, and wives. What emerges from this analysis is that there is no one ideal family form or one perfect family experience. Instead of striving for unobtainable perfection, Saban men and women do their best to cobble together mostly happy family lives not only for themselves but also for their children.

Table 9.1: Cohabitation patterns, 1964, 2004

Cohabitation, conjugal, 2004	Hells Gate	Windwardside	St. Johns	The Bottom	Total island
White households	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.03
Black households	0.00	0.10	0.15	0.17	0.14
Biracial households	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interracial households (White and Black/Biracial)	0.28	0.42	0.40	0.33	0.34
Interracial households (White and Colombian/Hispanic)	0.10	0.33	0.00	1.00	0.22
Black+Biracial	0.00	0.67	0.11	0.45	0.36
Black/Biracial and Colombian/Hispanic	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.50
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.25
Total cohabitation rate	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.16	0.12
Number of cohabiting households	7	12	6	19	44

Cohabitation, conjugal, 1964	Hells Gate	Windwardside	St. Johns	The Bottom	Total island
White households	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.01
Black households	0.00	0.08	0.14	0.06	0.07
Biracial households	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interracial households (White and Black/Biracial)	0.00	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.18
Interracial households (White and Colombian/Hispanic)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Black+Biracial	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Black and Colombian/Hispanic	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total cohabitation rate	0.00	0.02	0.07	0.03	0.03
Number of cohabiting households	0	2	3	3	8

Table 9.2: Proportion of recognitions happening by age X by child's birth cohort and race

White

	1856-1875 (n=0)	1876-1895 (n=1)	1896-1915 (n=9)	1916-1935 (n=3)	1936-1955 (n=0)	1956-1975 (n=4)	1976-1995 (n=5)	1996-2004 (n=0)
0-1		0.00	0.11	1.00		0.00	0.40	
Under 5		0.00	0.22	1.00		0.25	0.80	
Under 10		1.00	0.44	1.00		0.25	0.80	
Under 20		1.00	0.89	1.00		0.25	0.80	
Over 20		0.00	0.11	0.00		0.75	0.20	

Black

	1856-1875 (n=6)	1876-1895 (n=23)	1896-1915 (n=22)	1916-1935 (n=46)	1936-1955 (n=38)	1956-1975 (n=46)	1976-1995 (n=44)	1996-2004 (n=12)
0-1	0.00	0.17	0.05	0.20	0.24	0.15	0.45	0.75
Under 5	0.00	0.26	0.09	0.41	0.47	0.26	0.64	0.83
Under 10	0.00	0.57	0.27	0.67	0.79	0.48	0.86	1.00
Under 20	0.17	0.96	0.86	0.96	0.92	0.93	1.00	1.00
Over 20	0.83	0.04	0.14	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.00	0.00

Biracial

	1856-1875 (n=0)	1876-1895 (n=6)	1896-1915 (n=7)	1916-1935 (n=21)	1936-1955 (n=6)	1956-1975 (n=15)	1976-1995 (n=26)	1996-2004 (n=6)
0-1		0.33	0.00	0.14	0.33	0.20	0.46	0.83
Under 5		0.50	0.14	0.33	0.33	0.47	0.62	1.00
Under 10		1.00	0.29	0.81	0.33	0.73	0.77	1.00
Under 20		1.00	0.71	1.00	0.67	1.00	1.00	1.00
Over 20		0.00	0.29	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00
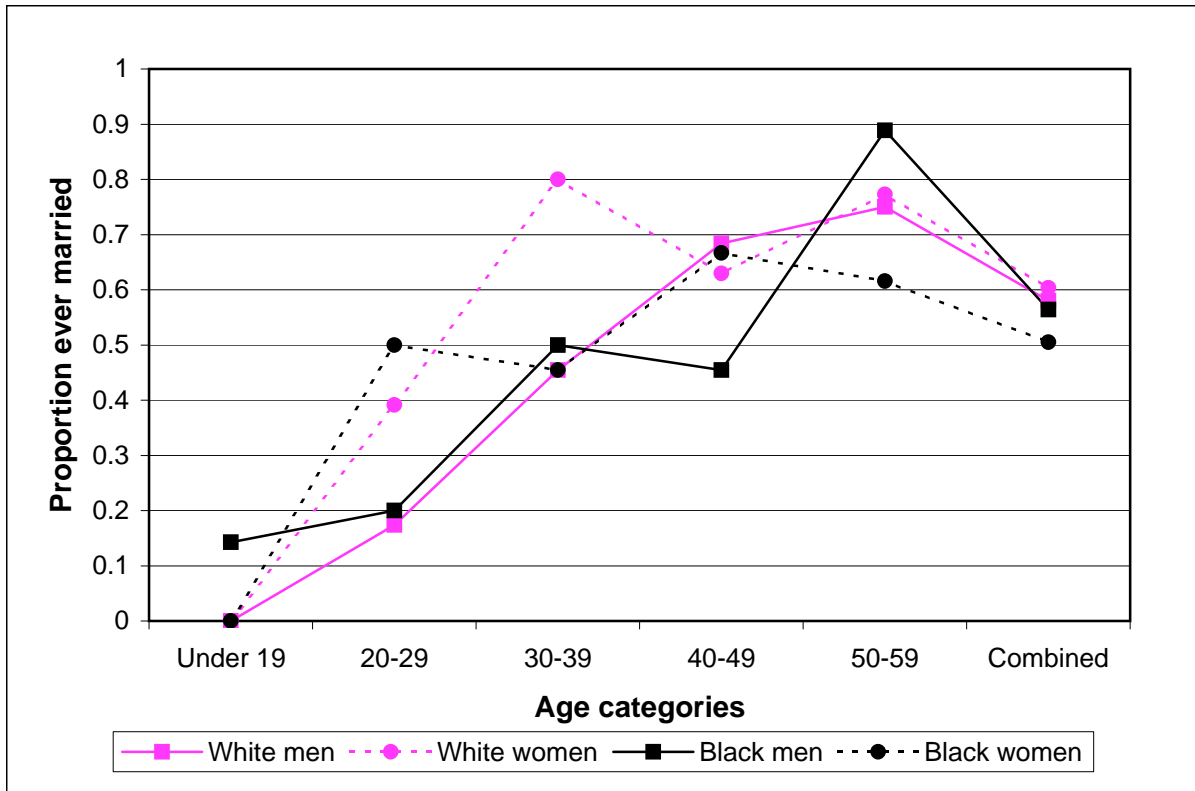
Figure 9.1: Proportion of ever-married Sabans, 1964
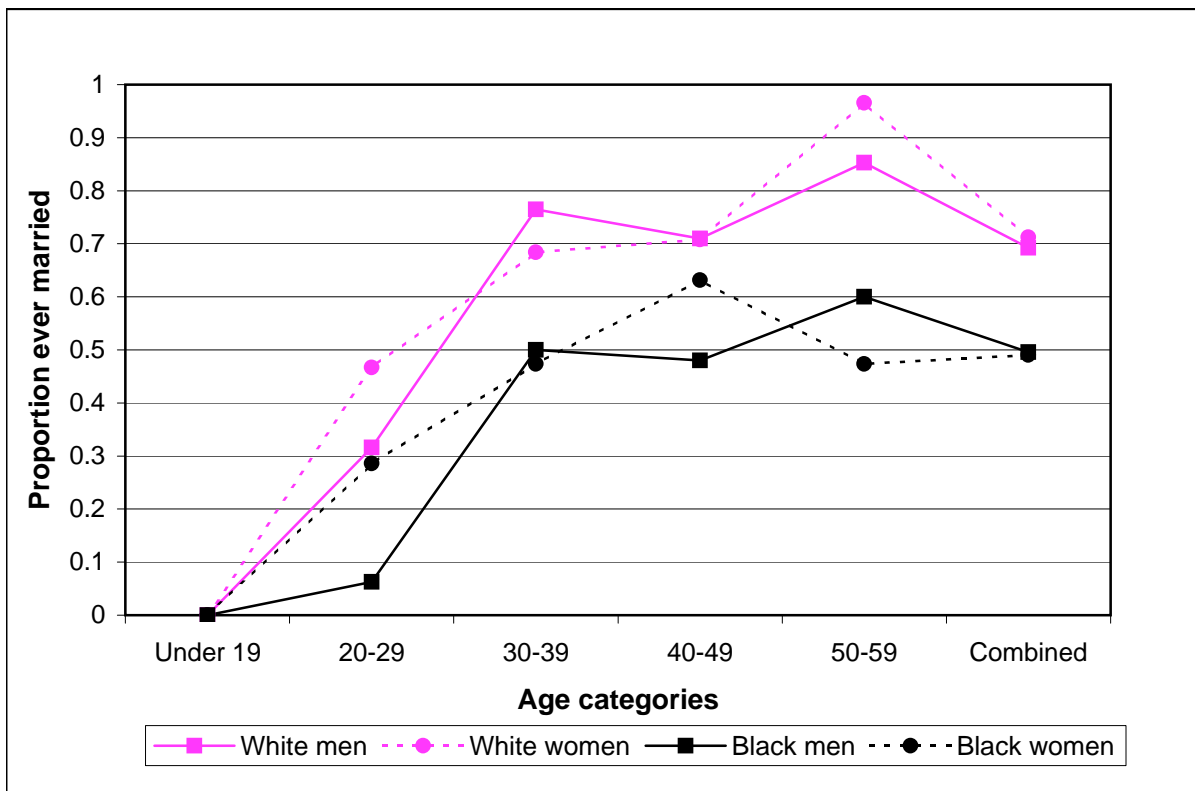
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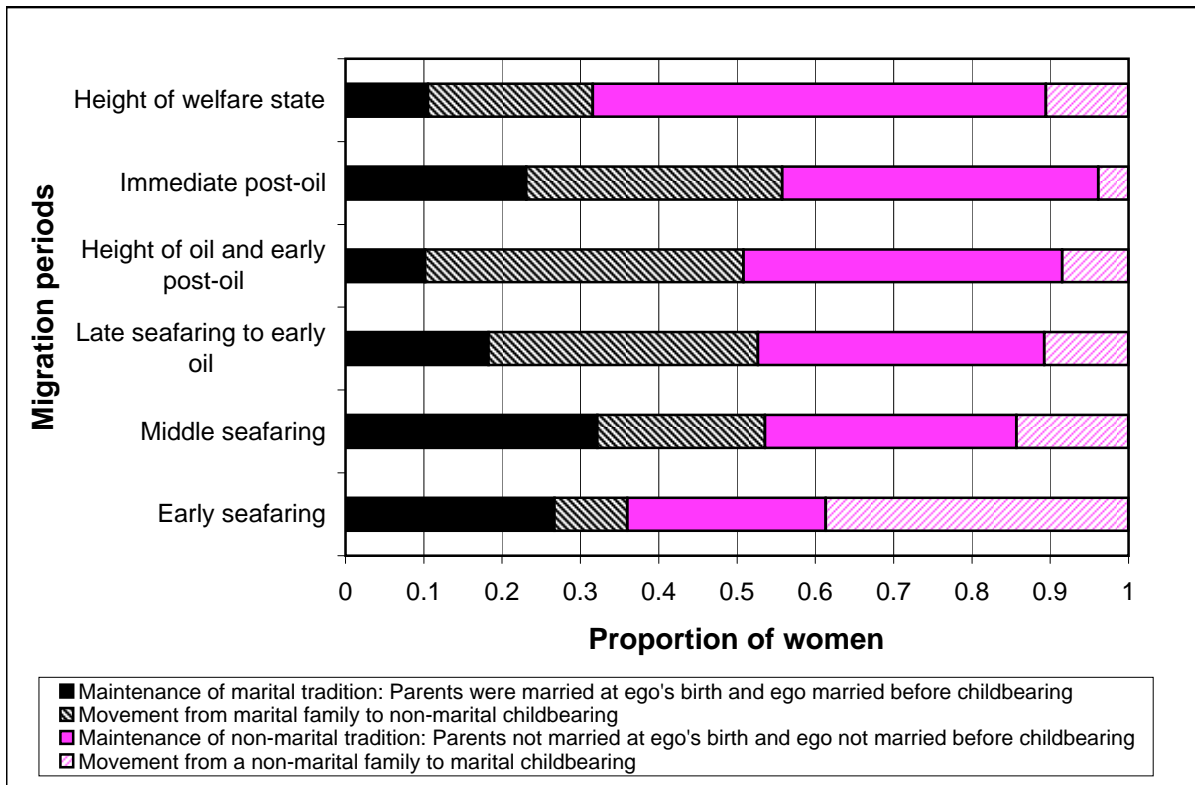
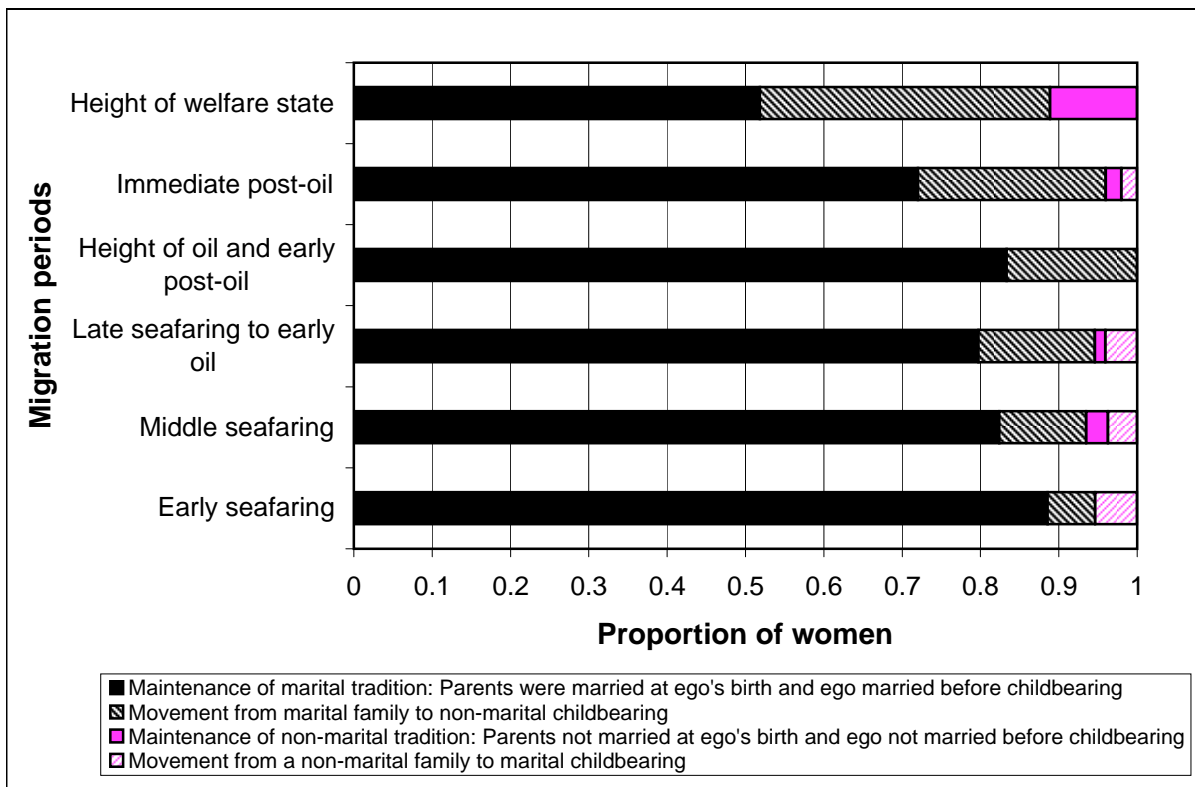**Figure 9.3: Family Formation traditions: Black**

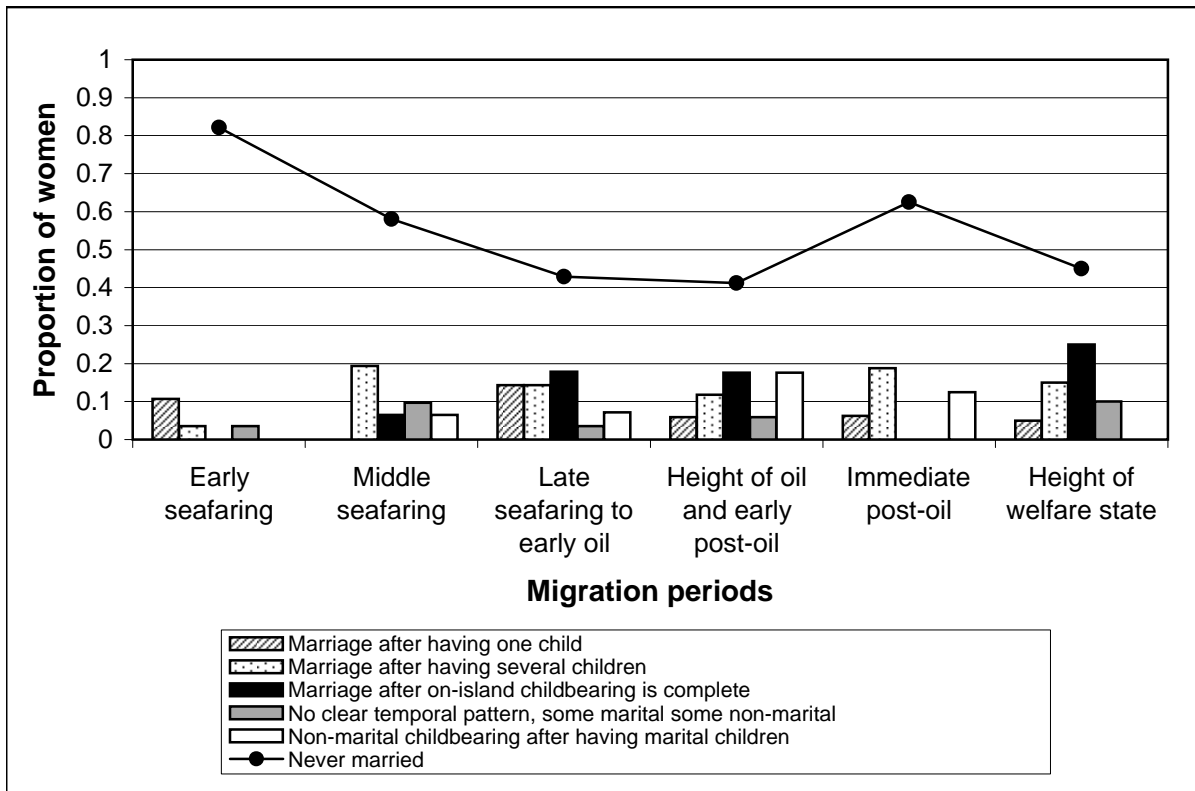**Figure 9.4: Family formation traditions: White**

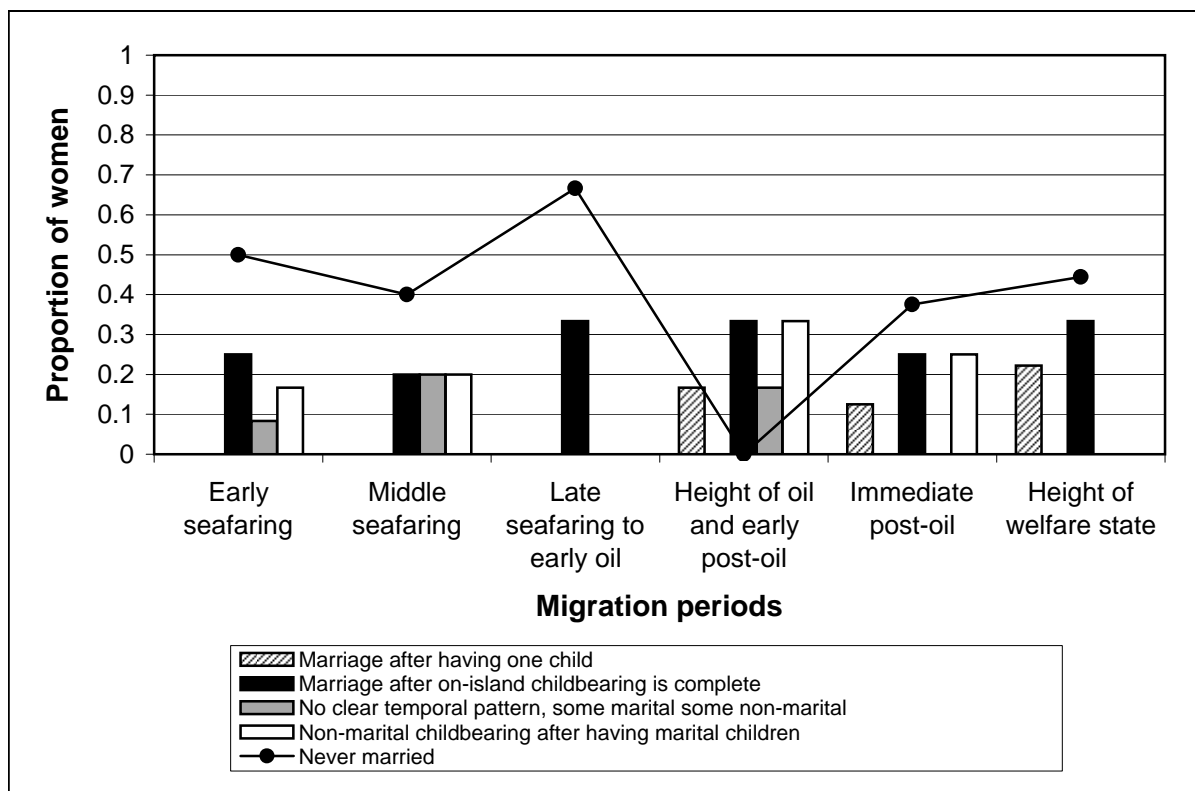**Figure 9.5: Marriage patterns after non-marital childbearing: Black**

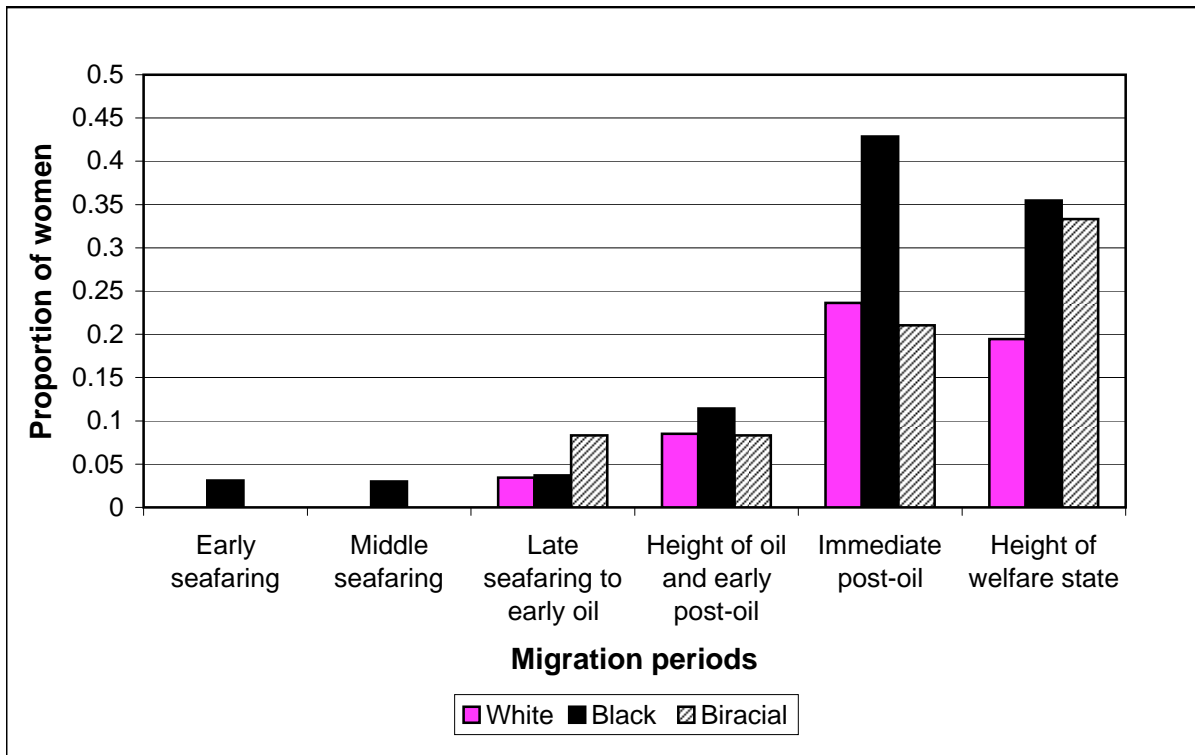**Figure 9.6: Marriage patterns after non-marital childbearing: White**

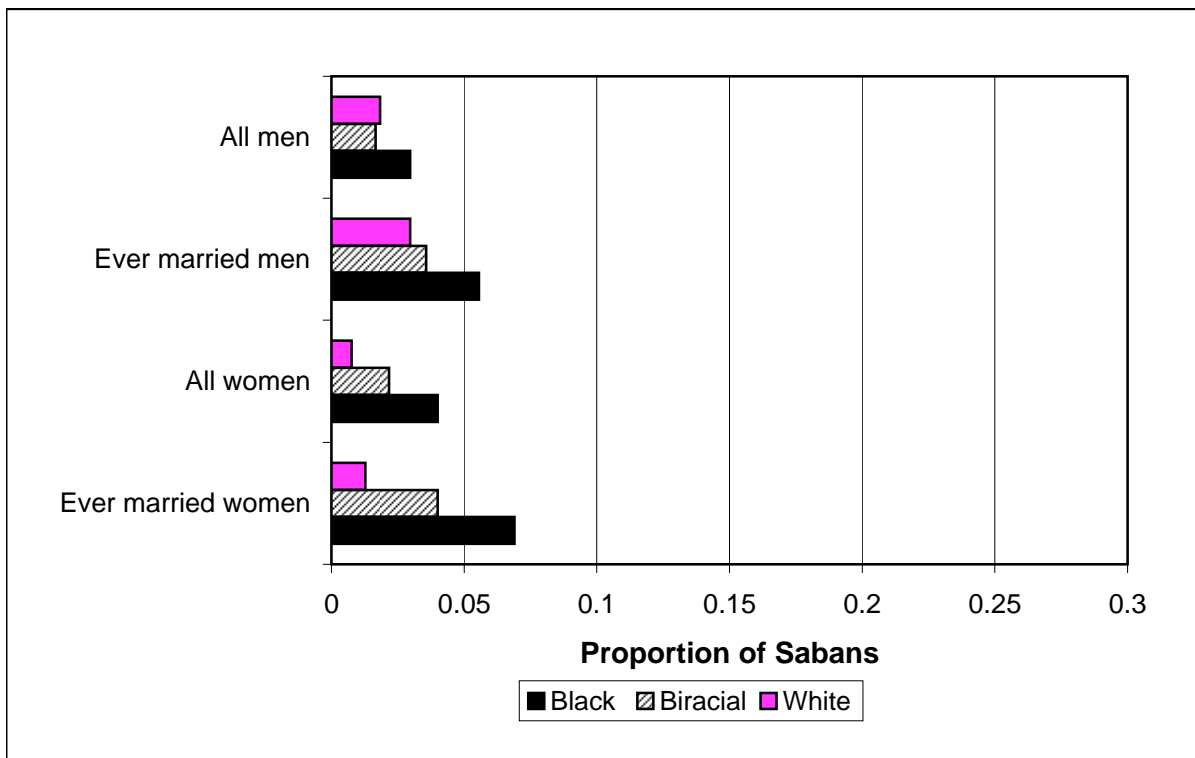**Figure 9.7: Proportion of first marriages ending in divorce: Women**

Figure 9.8: Proportion of divorced Sabans on island: 1964
(All men/women=proportion of divorcees in total population of men/women; ever married men/women=proportion of divorcees in total population of ever married men/women)
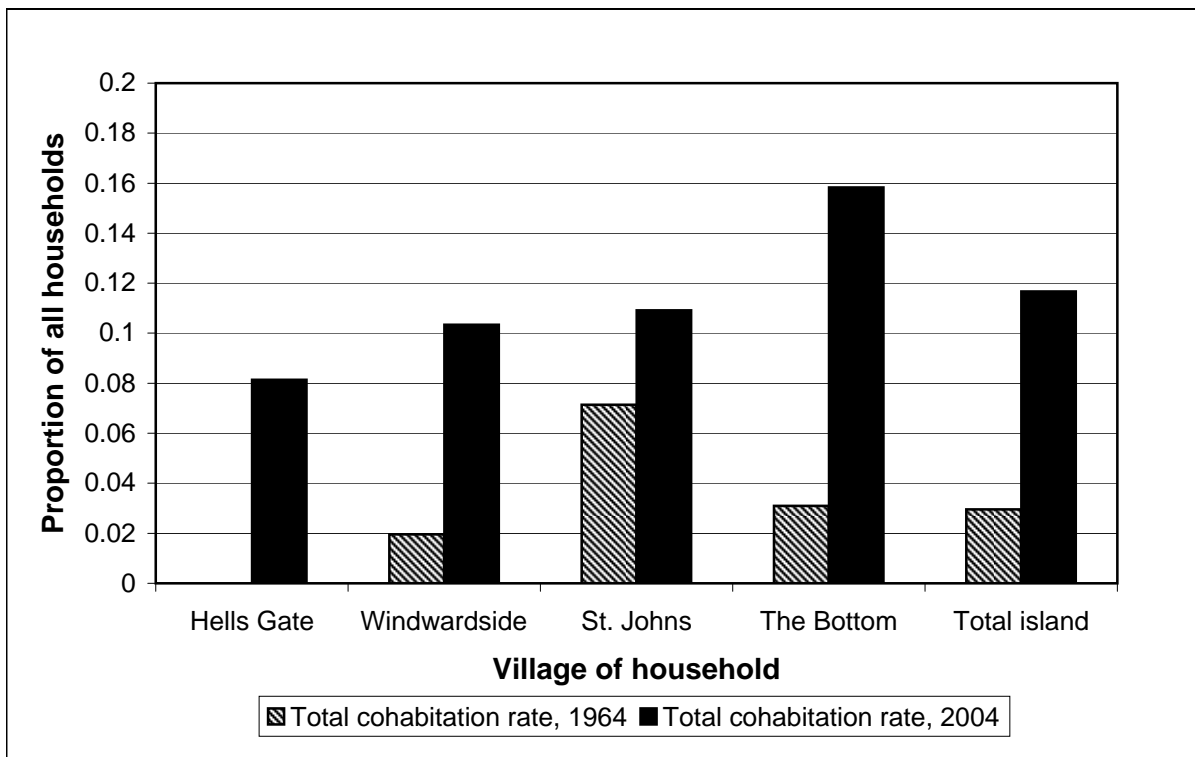
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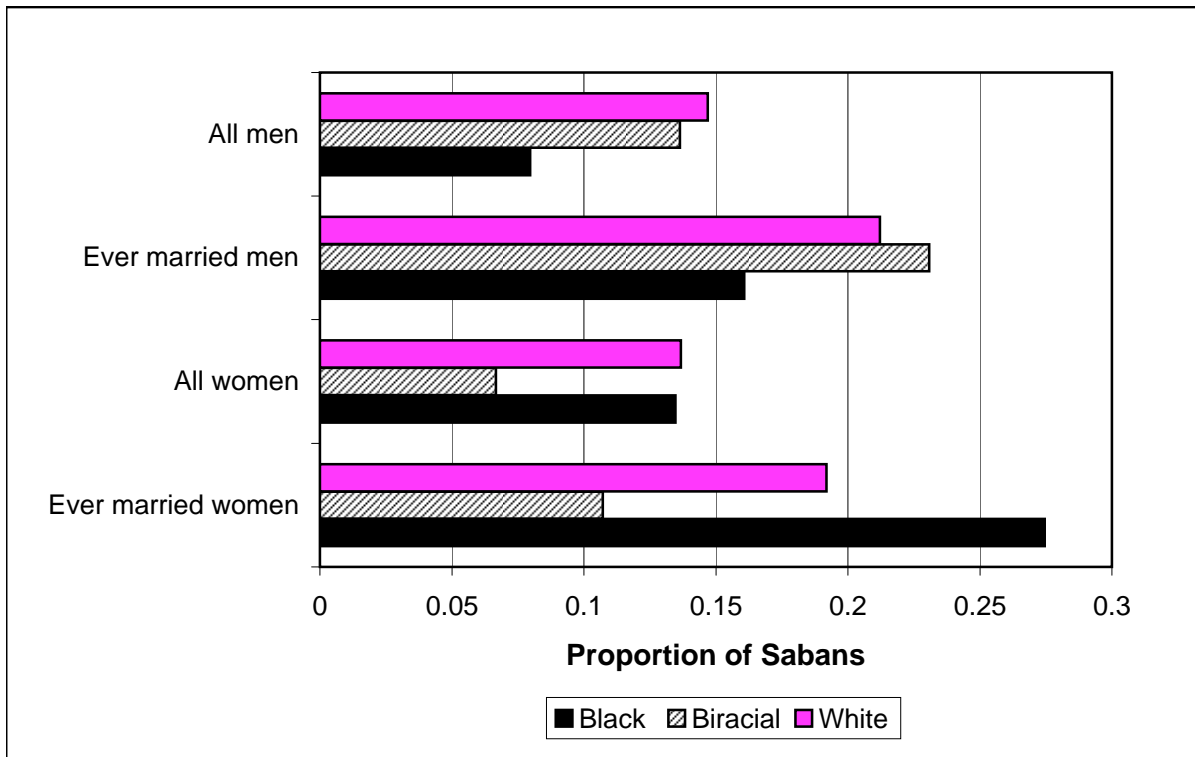
Figure 9.9: Proportion of divorced Sabans on island: 2004
(All men/women=proportion of divorcees in total population of men/women; ever married men/women=proportion of divorcees in total population of ever married men/women)

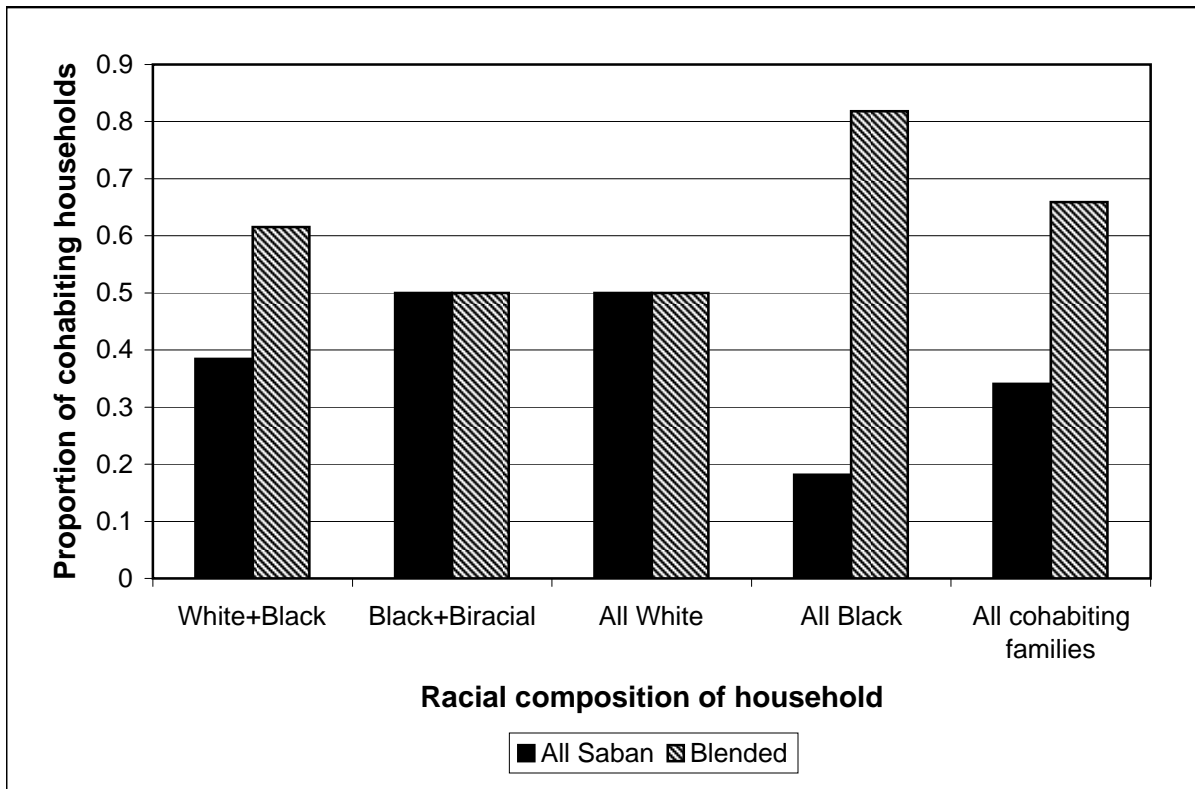**Figure 9.10: Proportion of cohabiting households: 1964,2004**

Figure 9.11: Cohabiting relationships by racial composition of household and blended nationality vs. all-Saban families
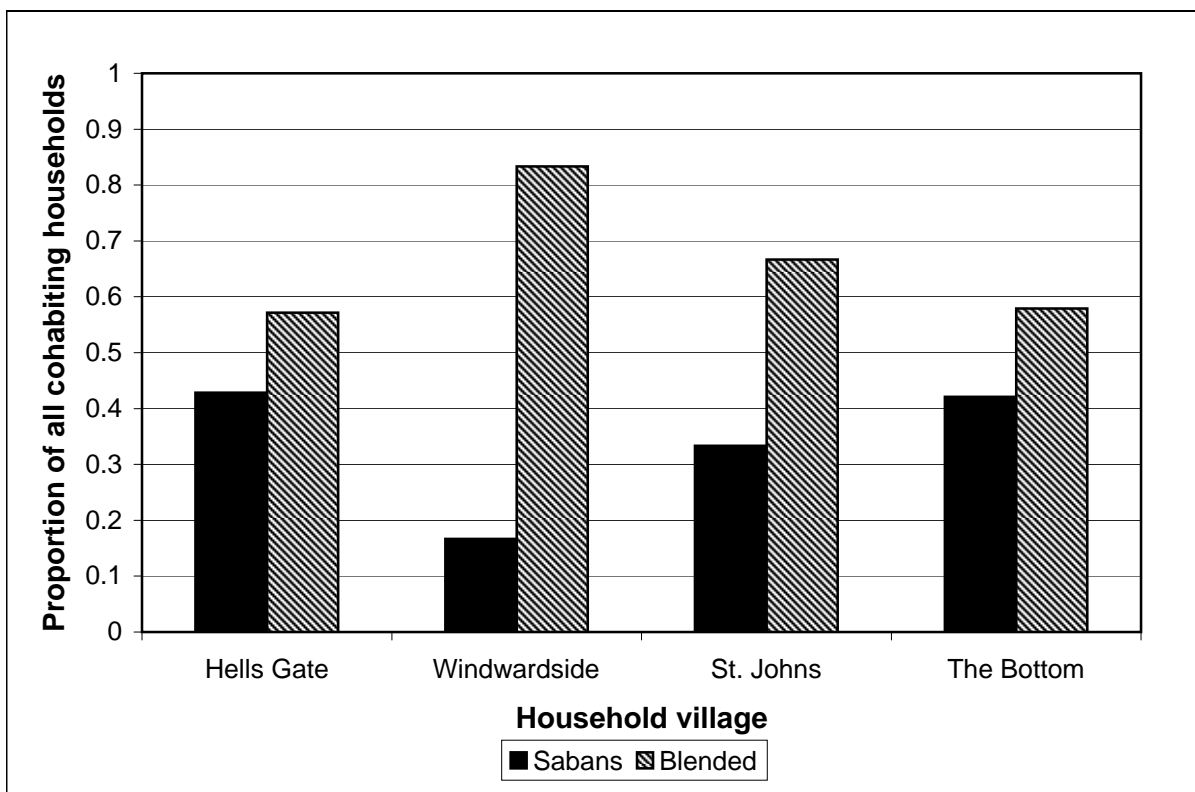

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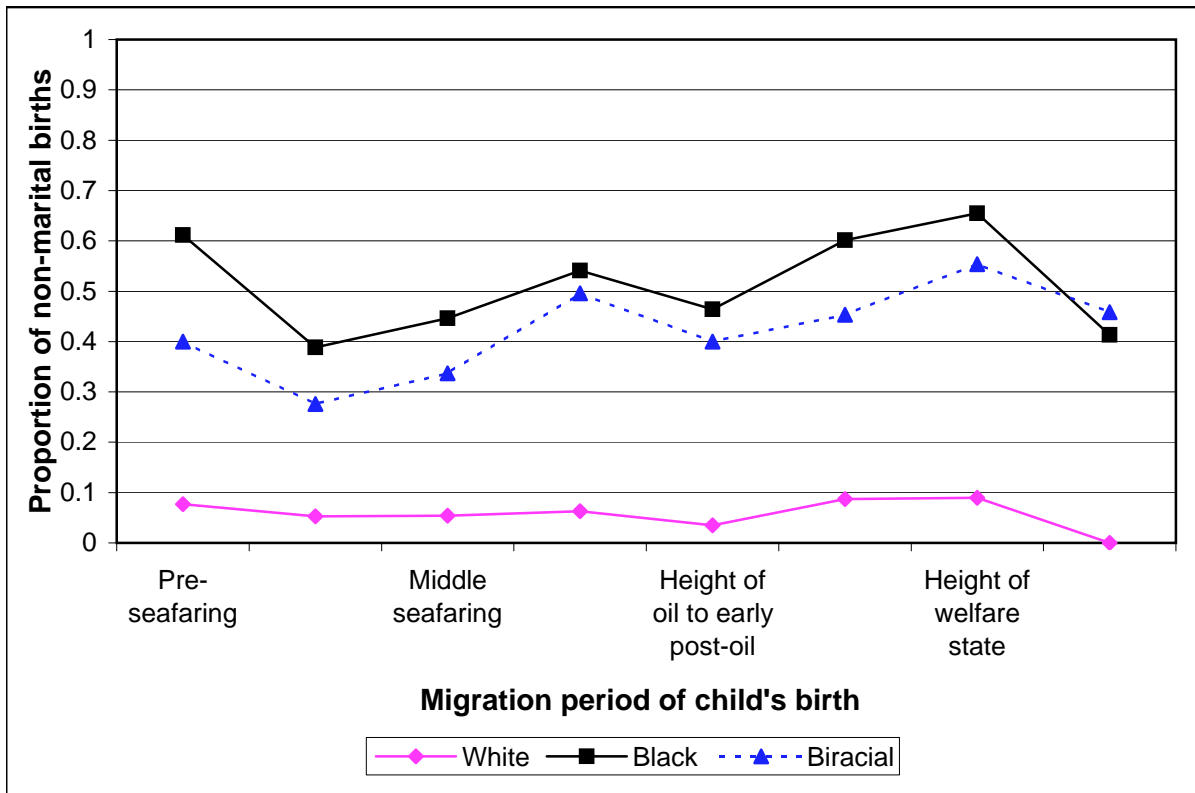
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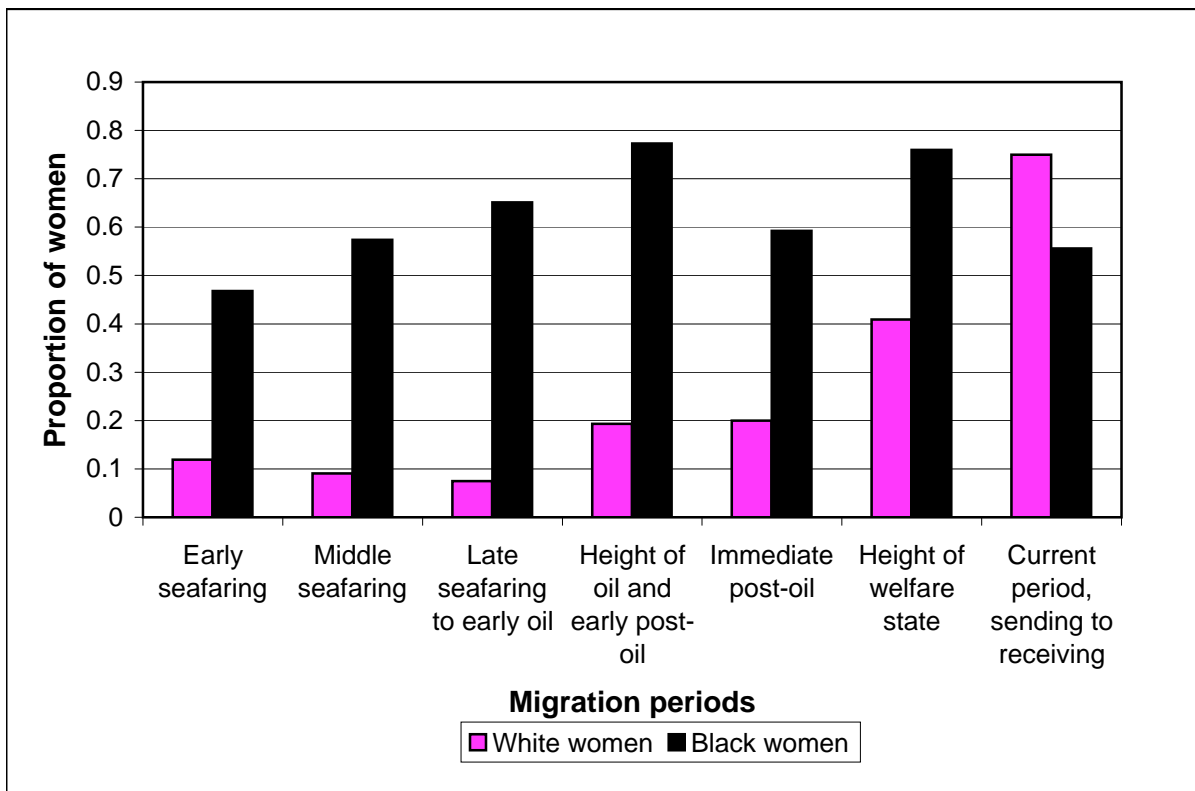

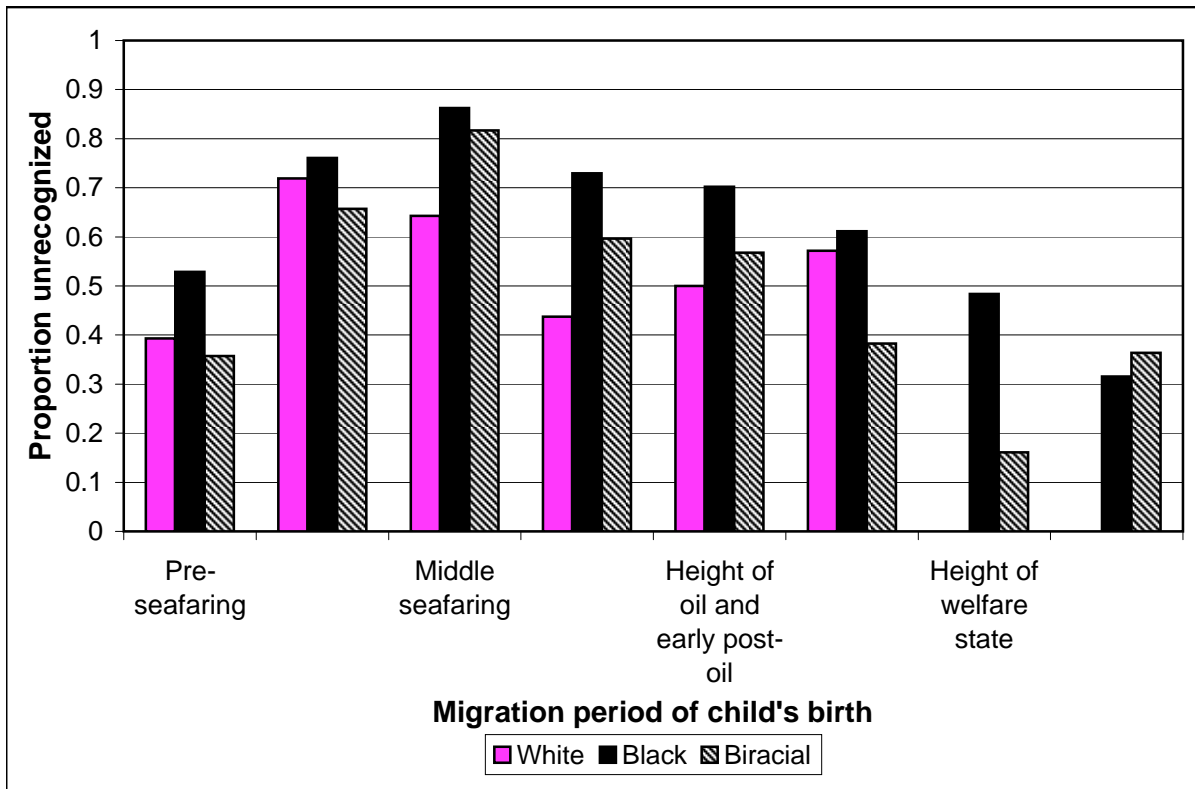**Figure 9.14: Proportion of childbearing women having non-marital births: Total population**

Figure 9.15: Proportion of non-marital children unrecognized

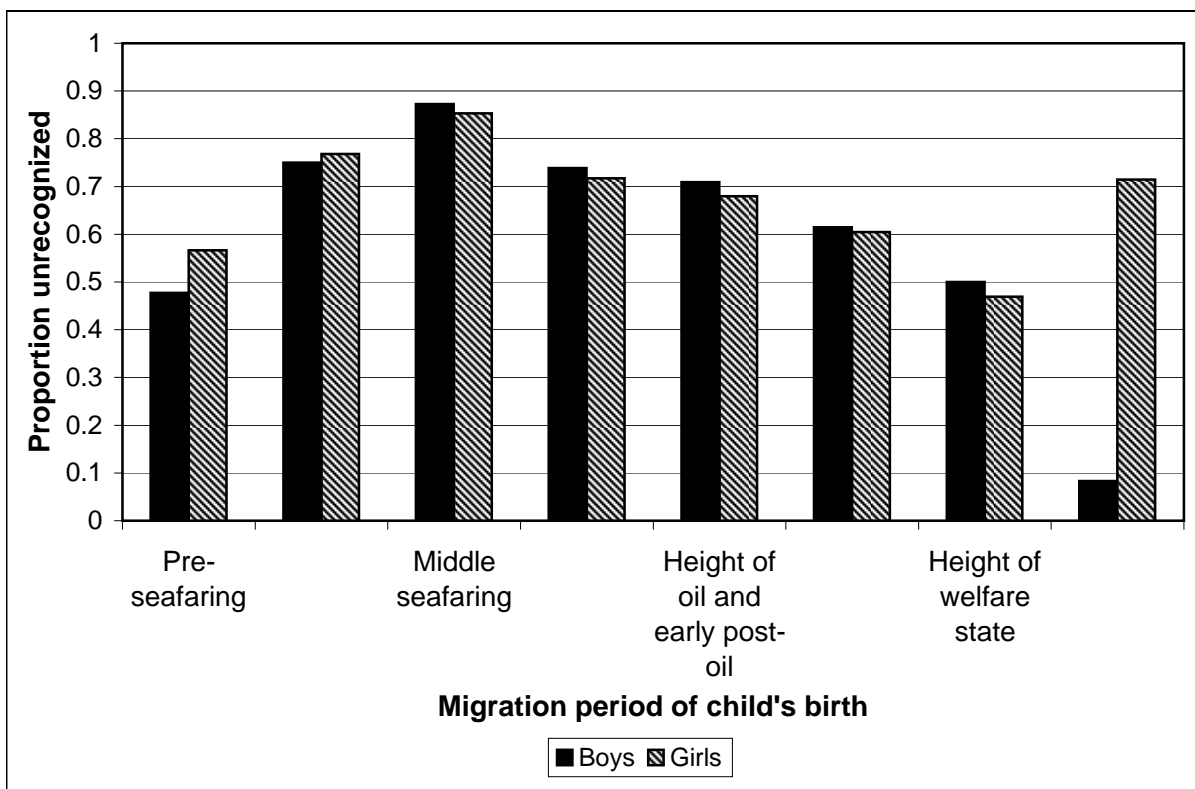

Figure 9.16: Proportion of non-marital boys and girls unrecognized: Black

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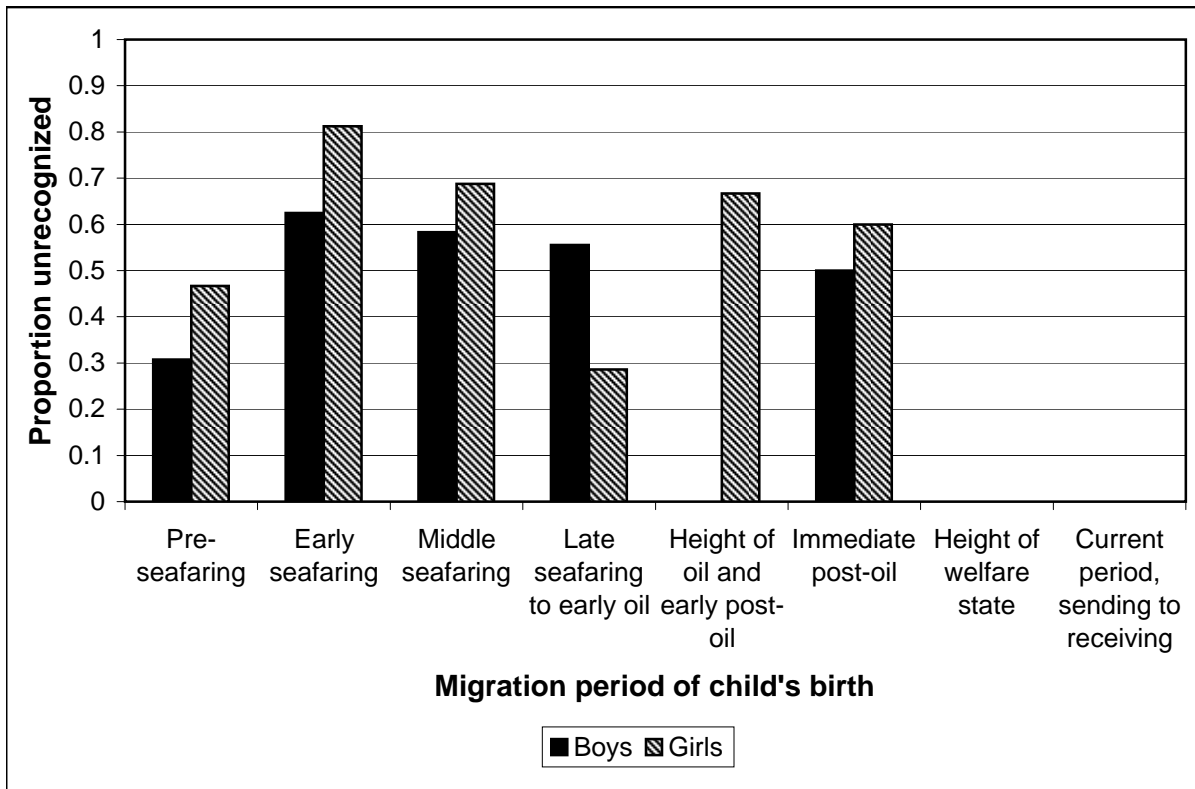
Figure 9.17: Proportion of non-marital boys and girls unrecognized: White
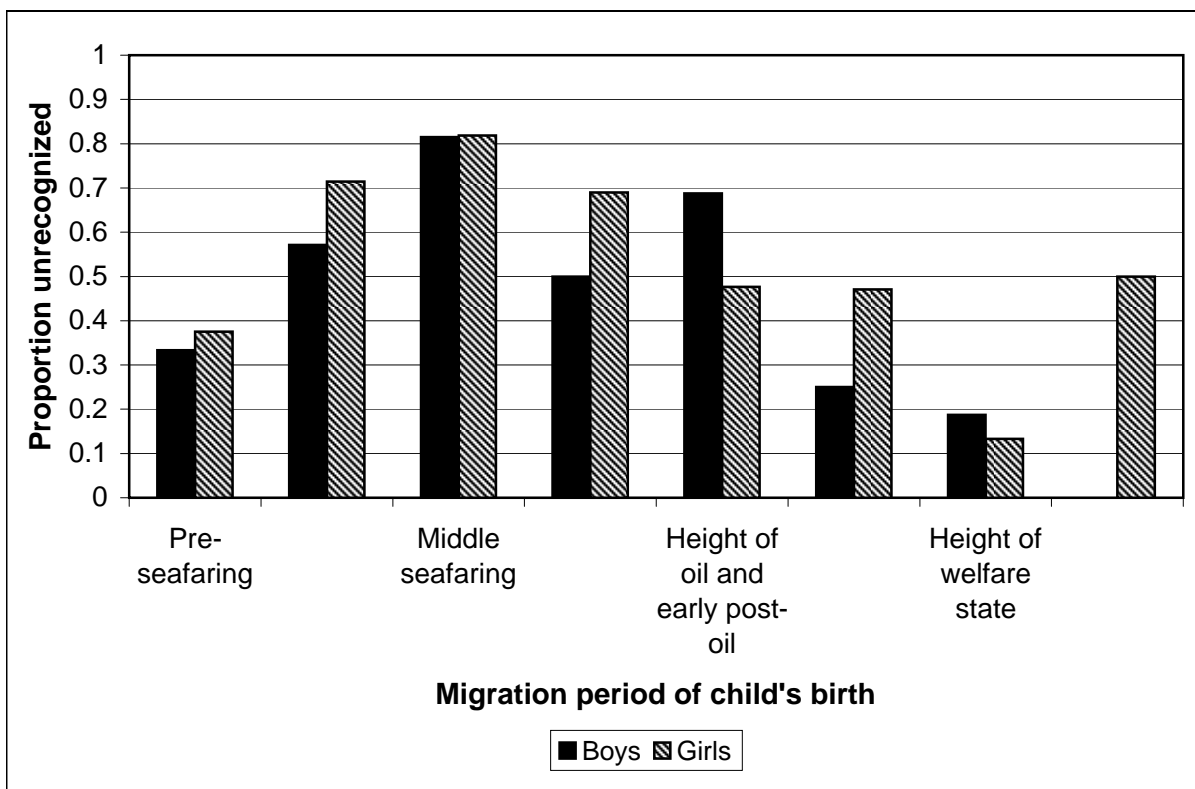
Figure 9.18: Proportion of non-marital boys and girls unrecognized: Biracial
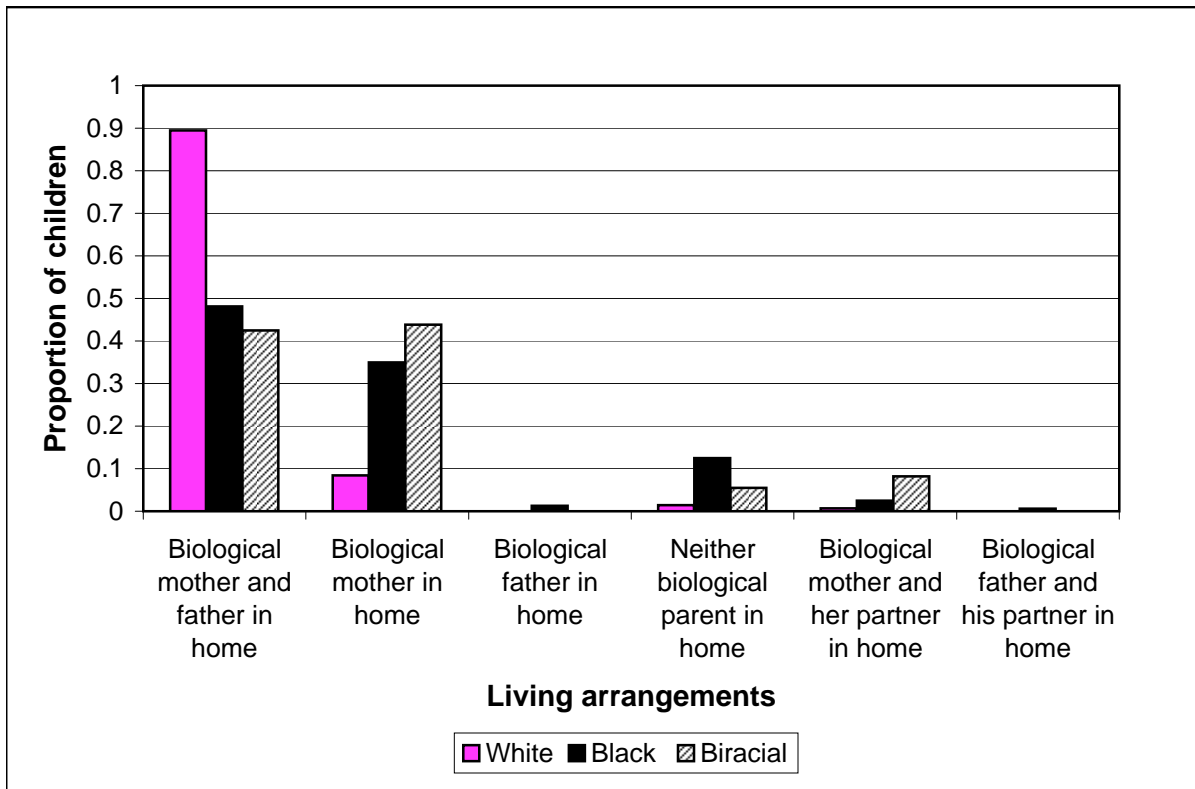
Figure 9.19: Living arrangements for Saban children, 1964
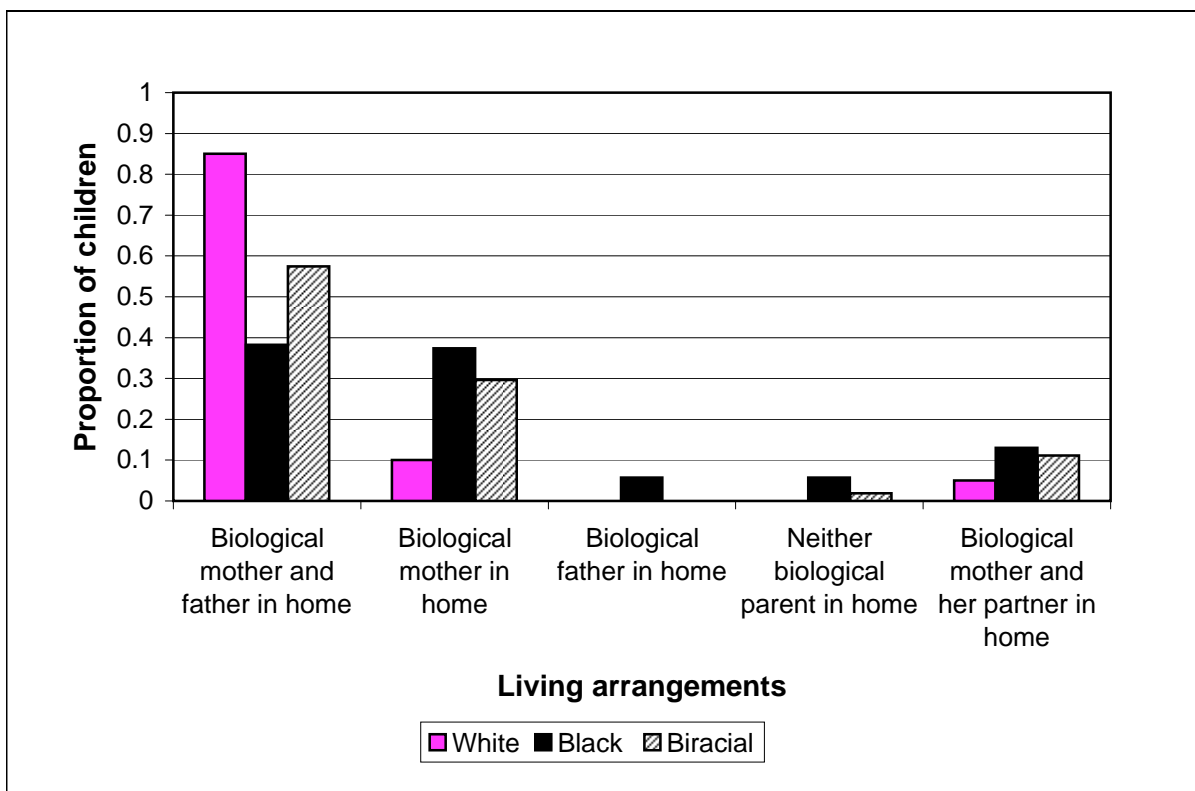
Figure 9.20: Living arrangements for Saban children, 2004
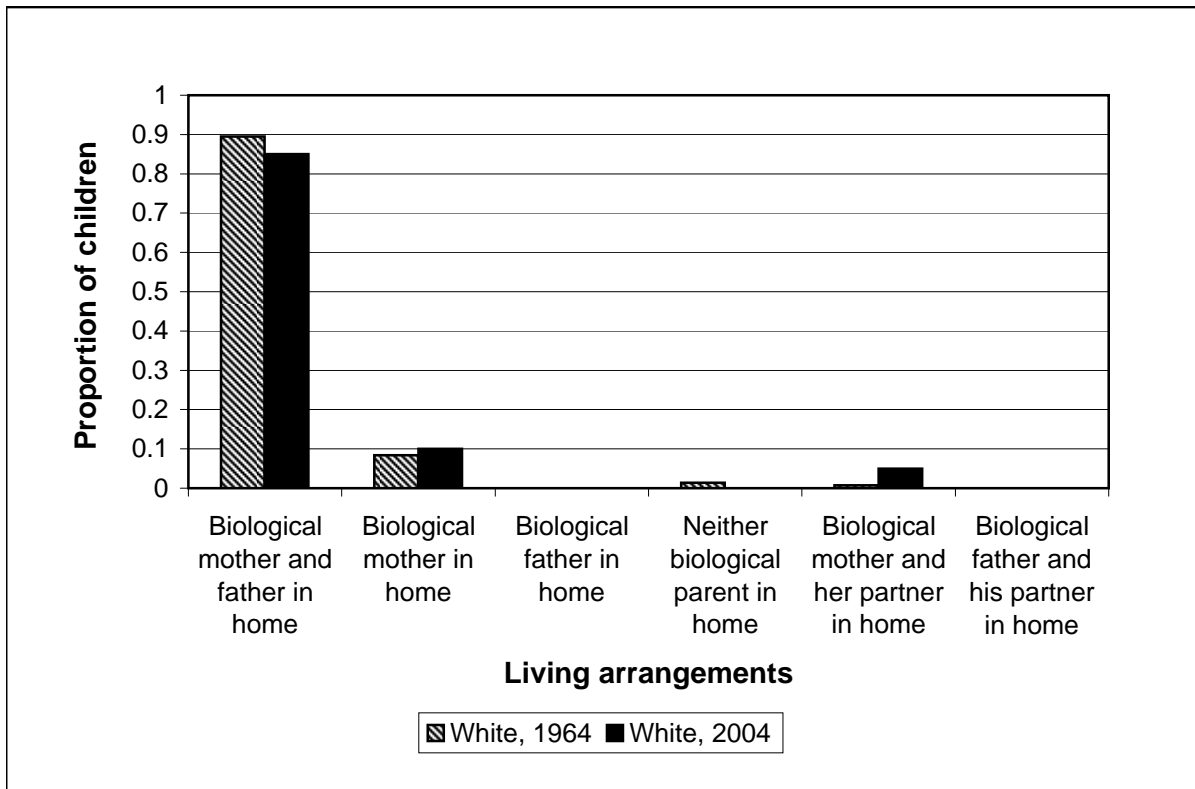
Figure 9.21: Living arrangements for white Saban children: 1964, 2004
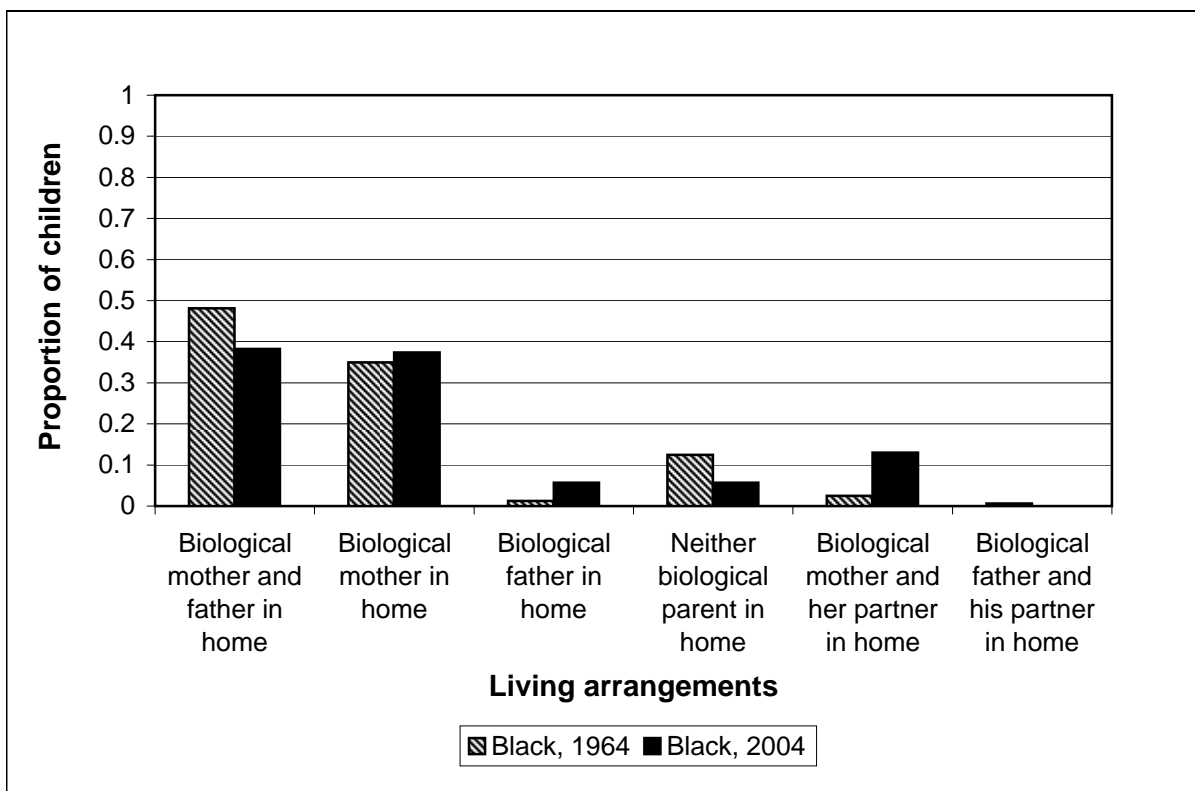
Figure 9.22: Living arrangements for black Saban children: 1964, 2004
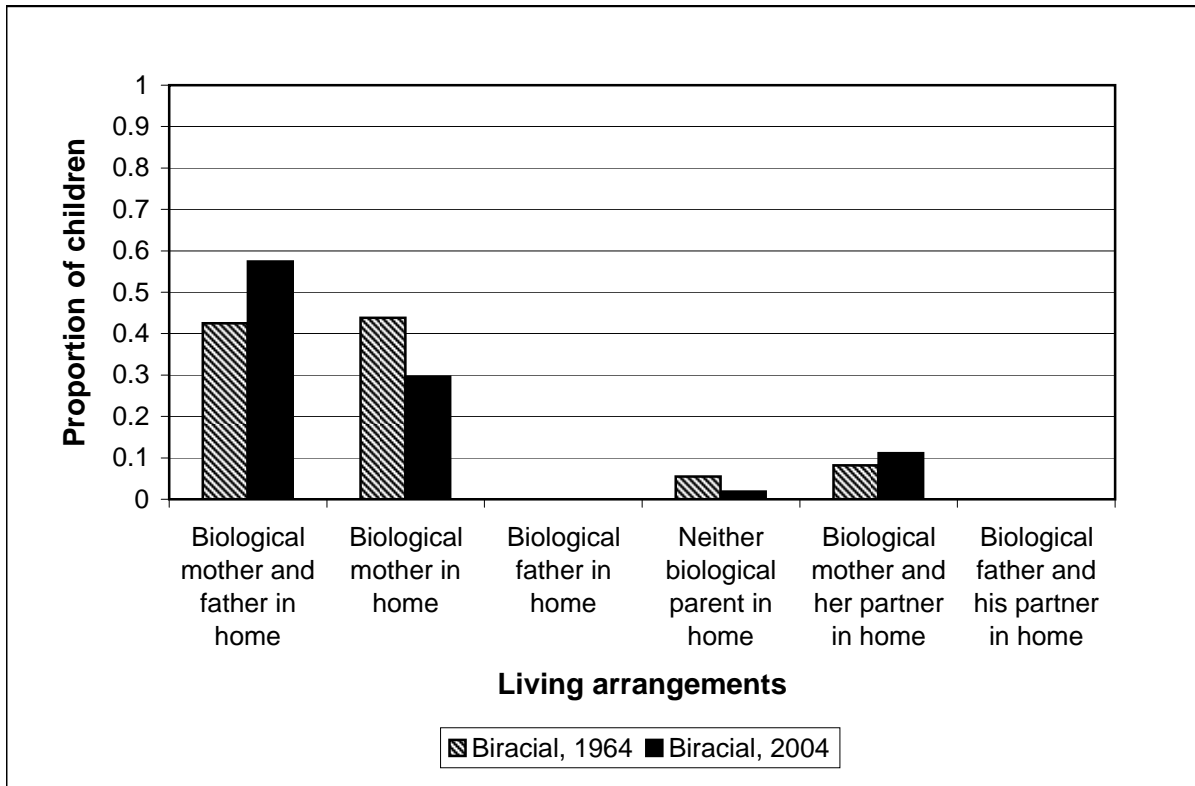
Figure 9.23: Living arrangements for biracial Saban children: 1964, 2004
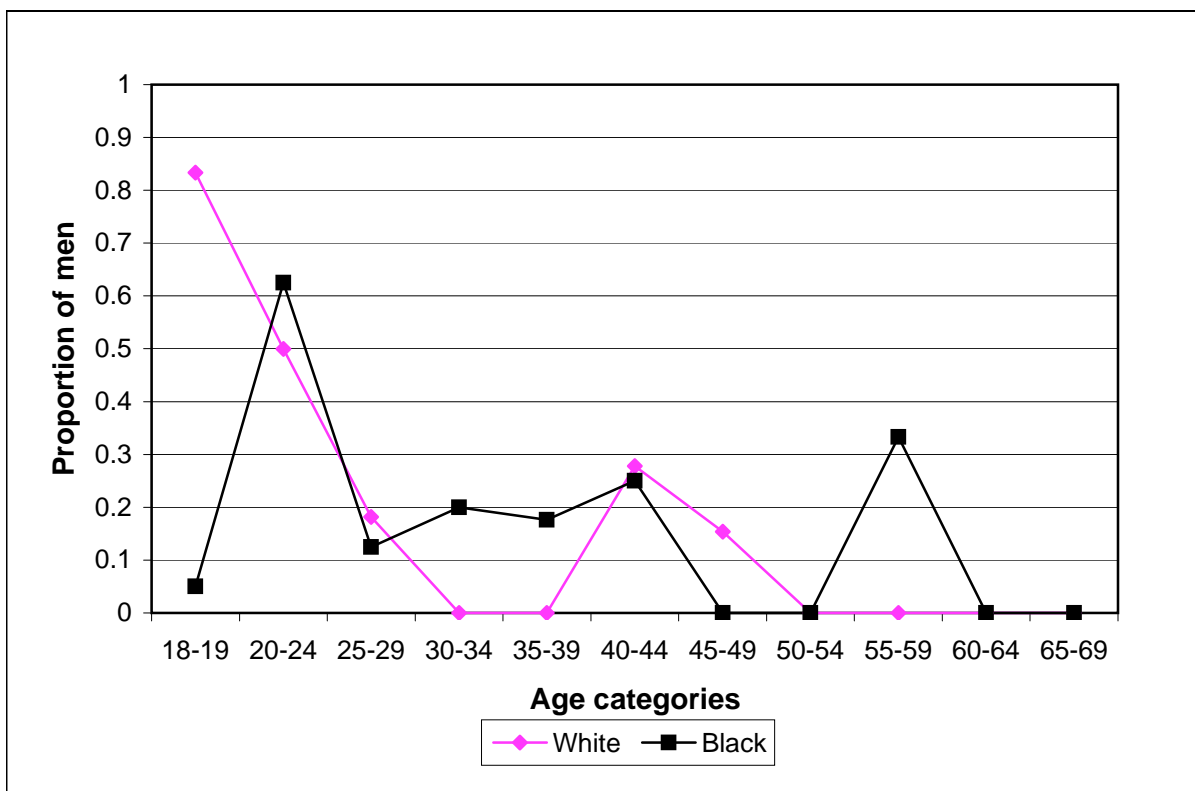
Figure 9.24: Proportion of adult Saban men living in natal homes, 2004
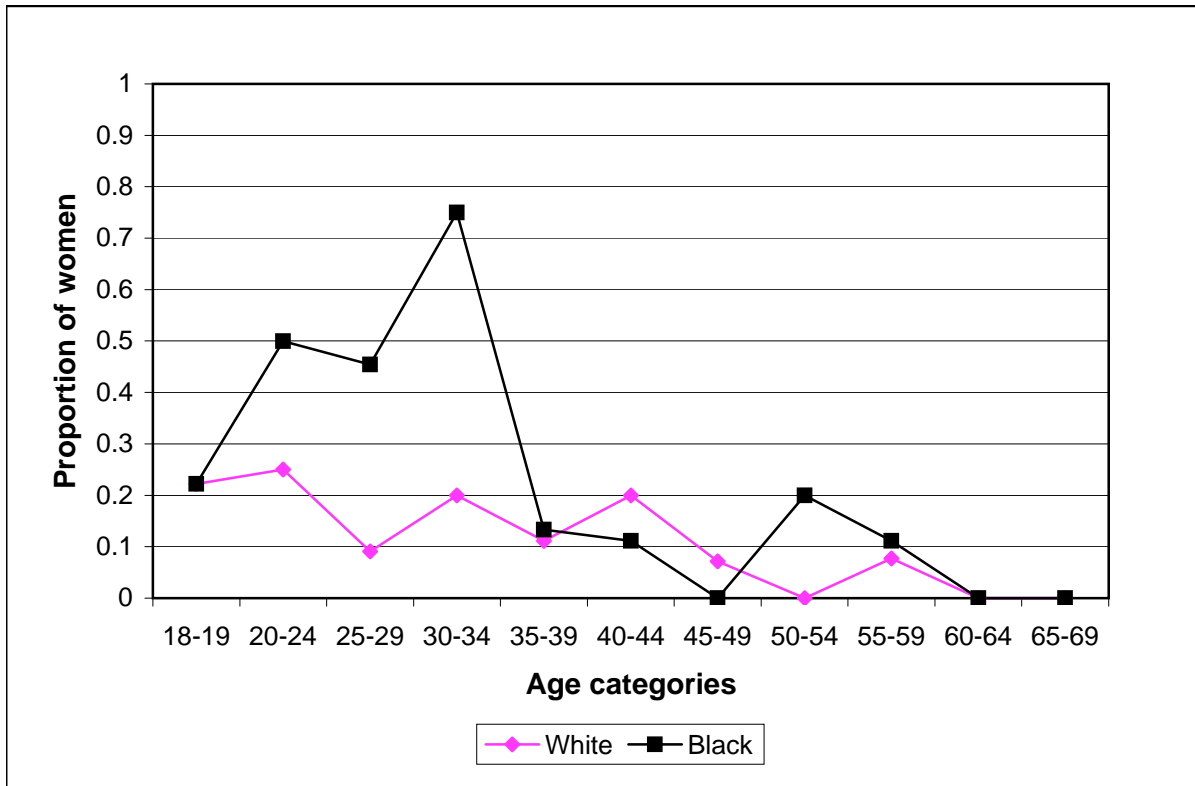
Figure 9.25: Proportion of adult Saban women living by natal homes, 2004
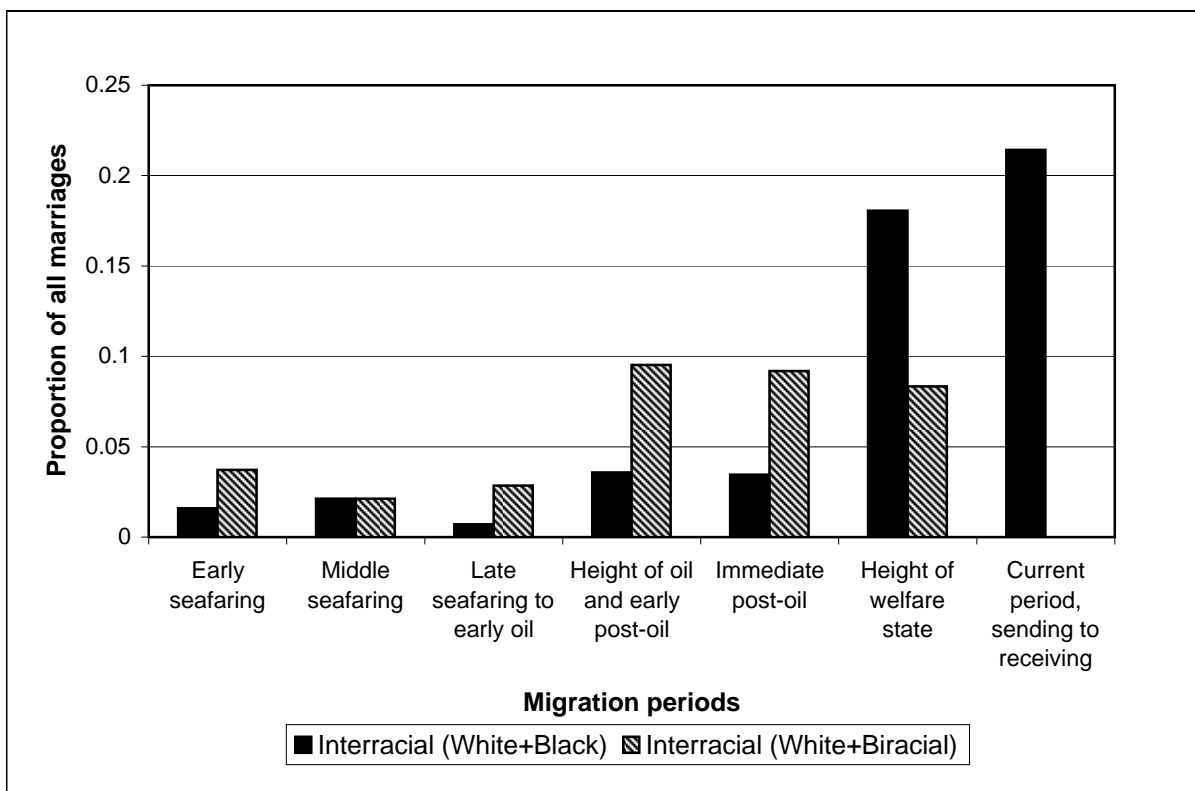
Figure 9.26: Interracial marriages by birth cohort: Women
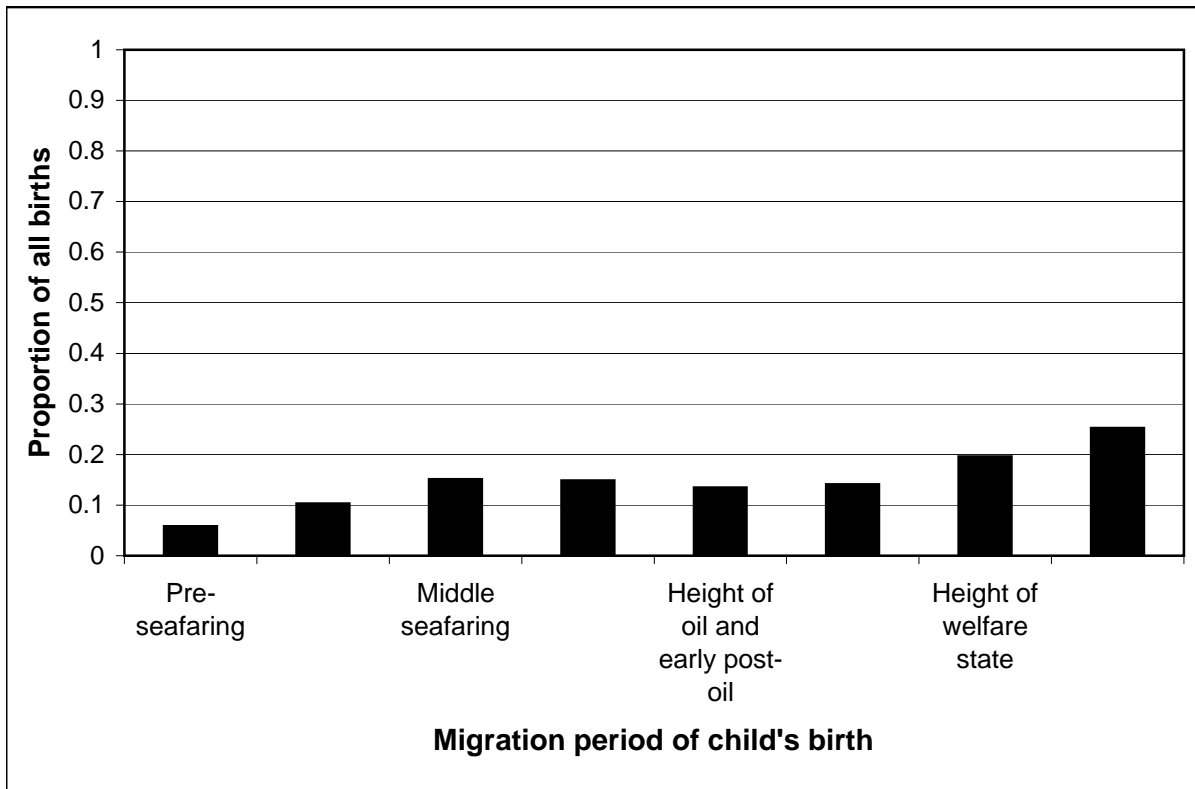
Figure 9.27: Biracial children by birth cohort
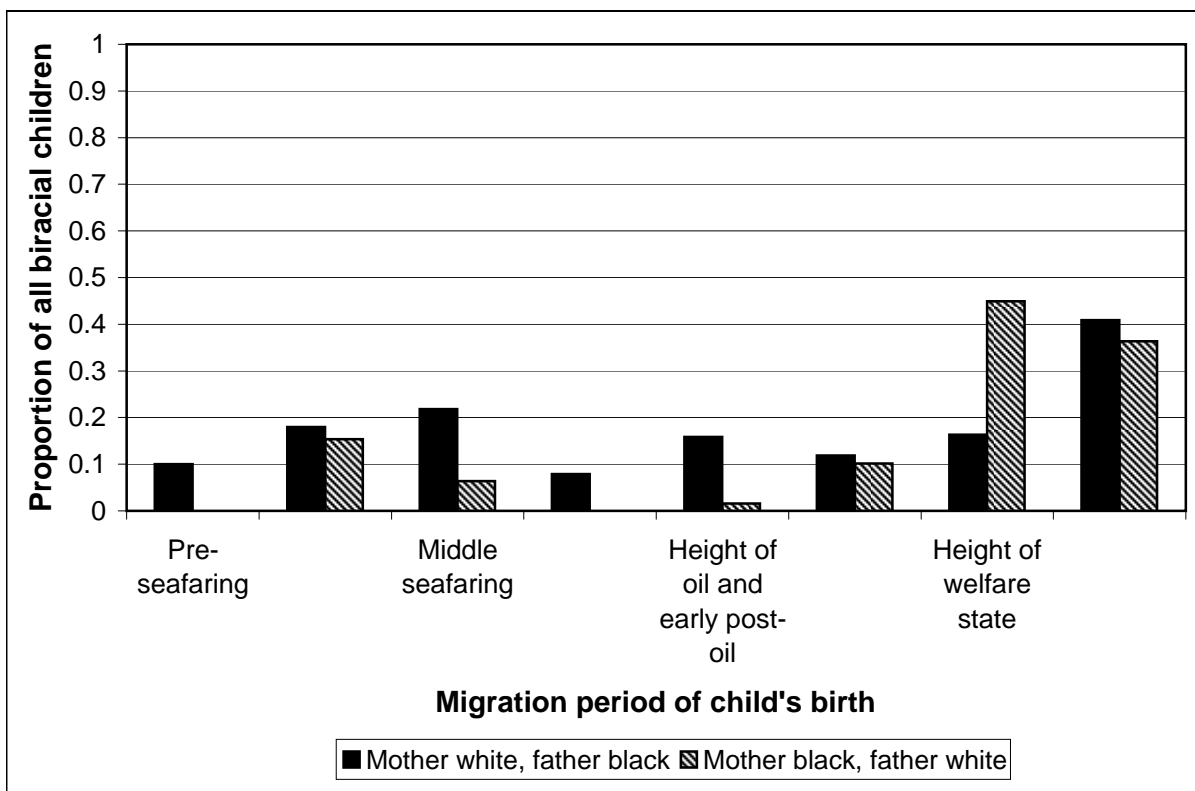
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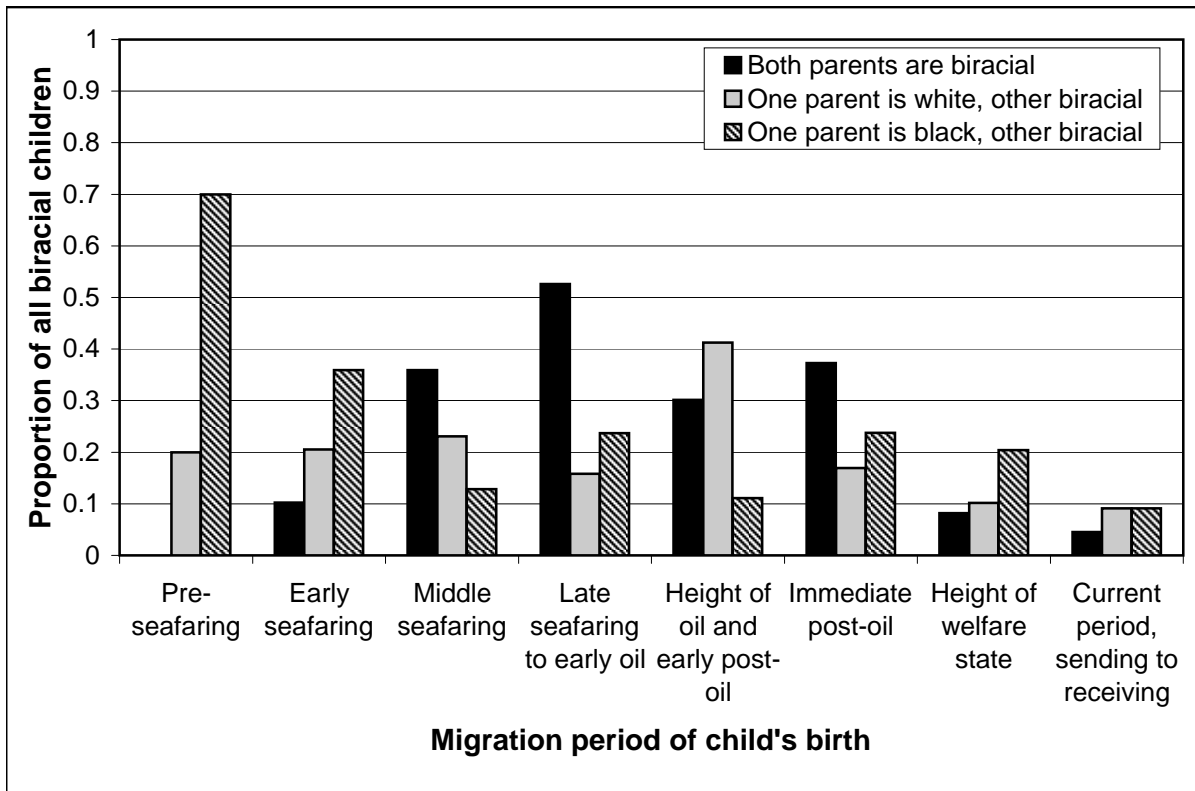
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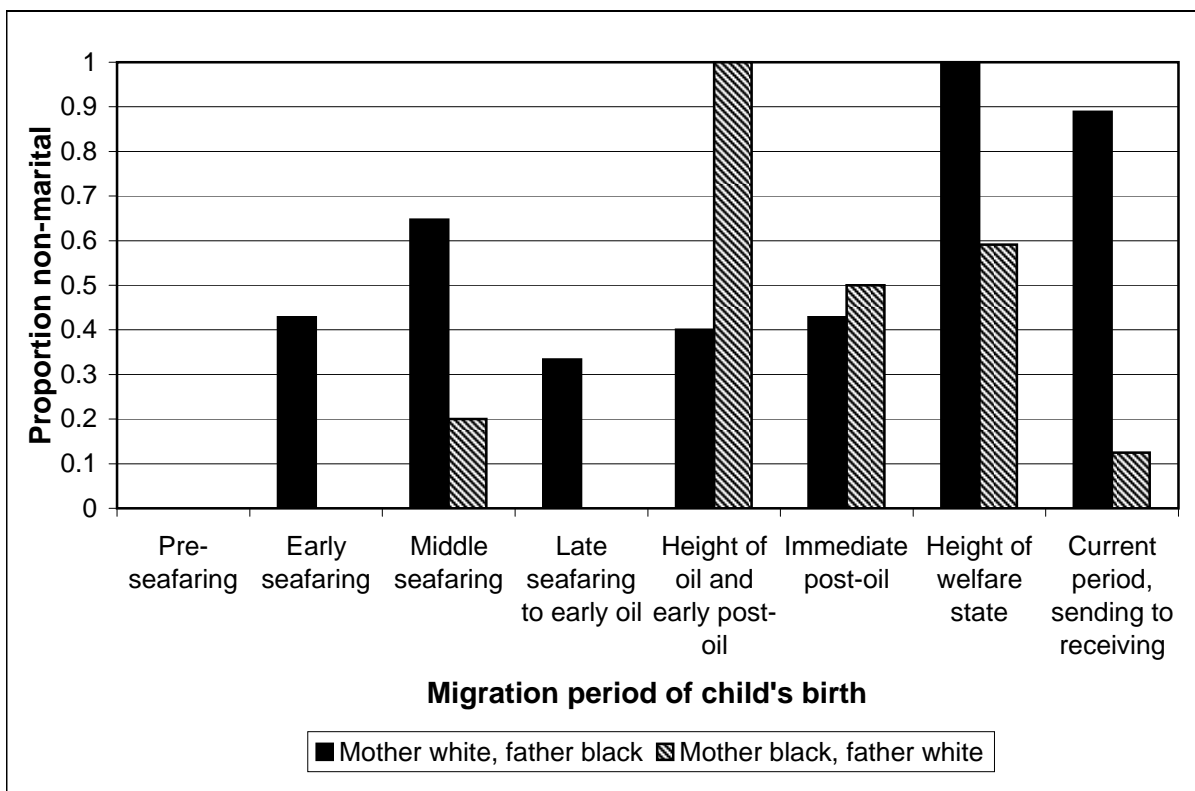
Figure 9.30: Proportion of non-marital biracial children from primary interracial unions
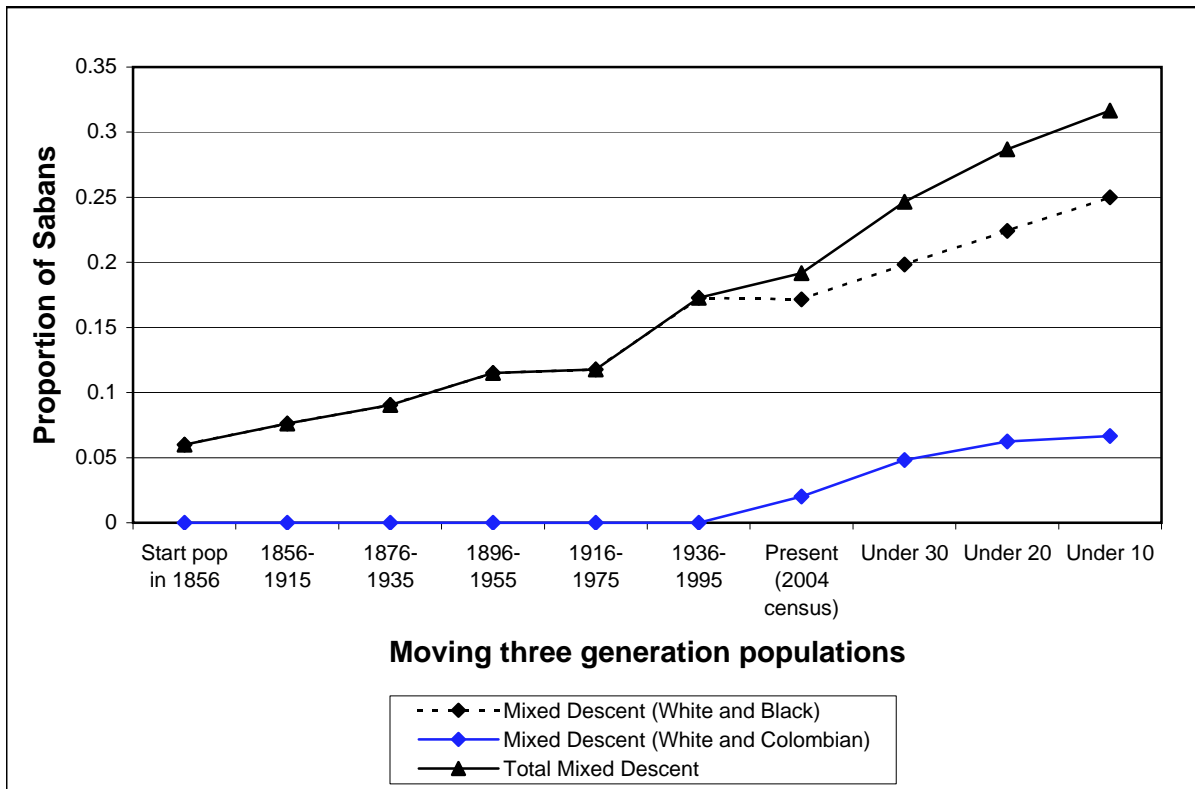
Figure 9.31: Biracial people as a proportion of the total population
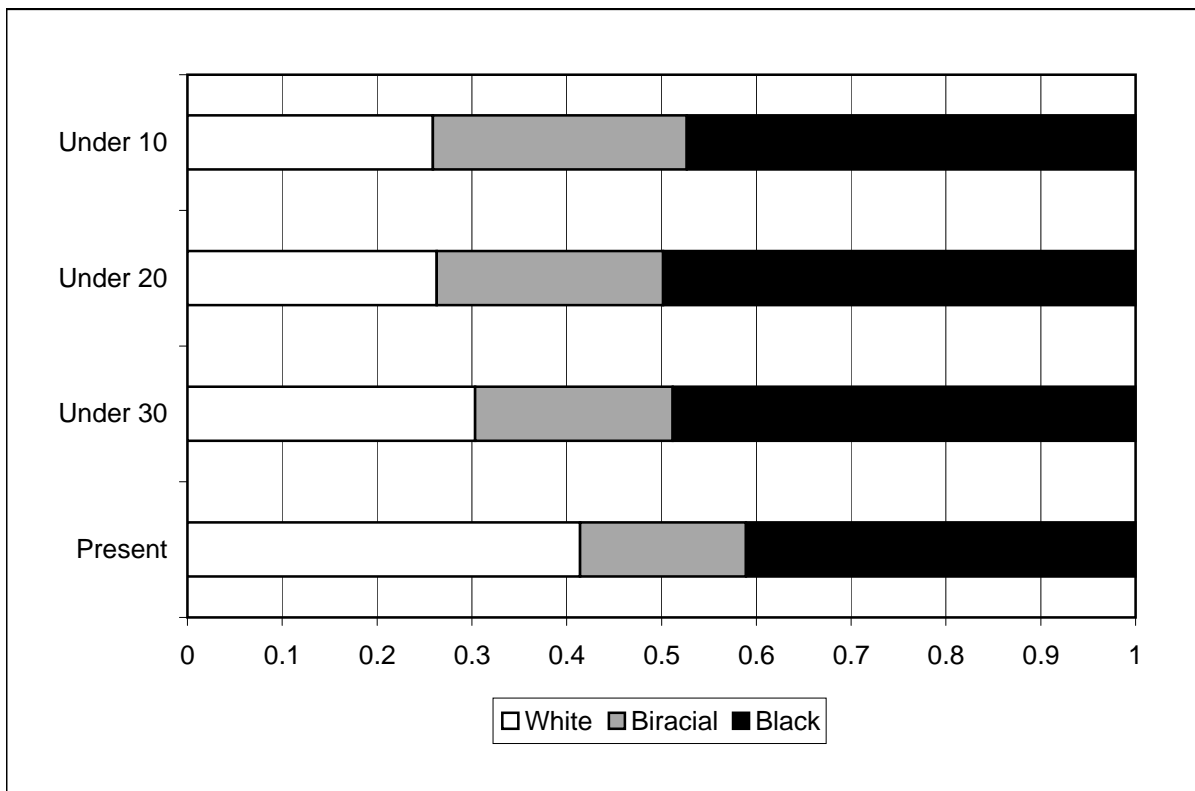
Figure 9.32: Proportion of white, black, and biracial people by age
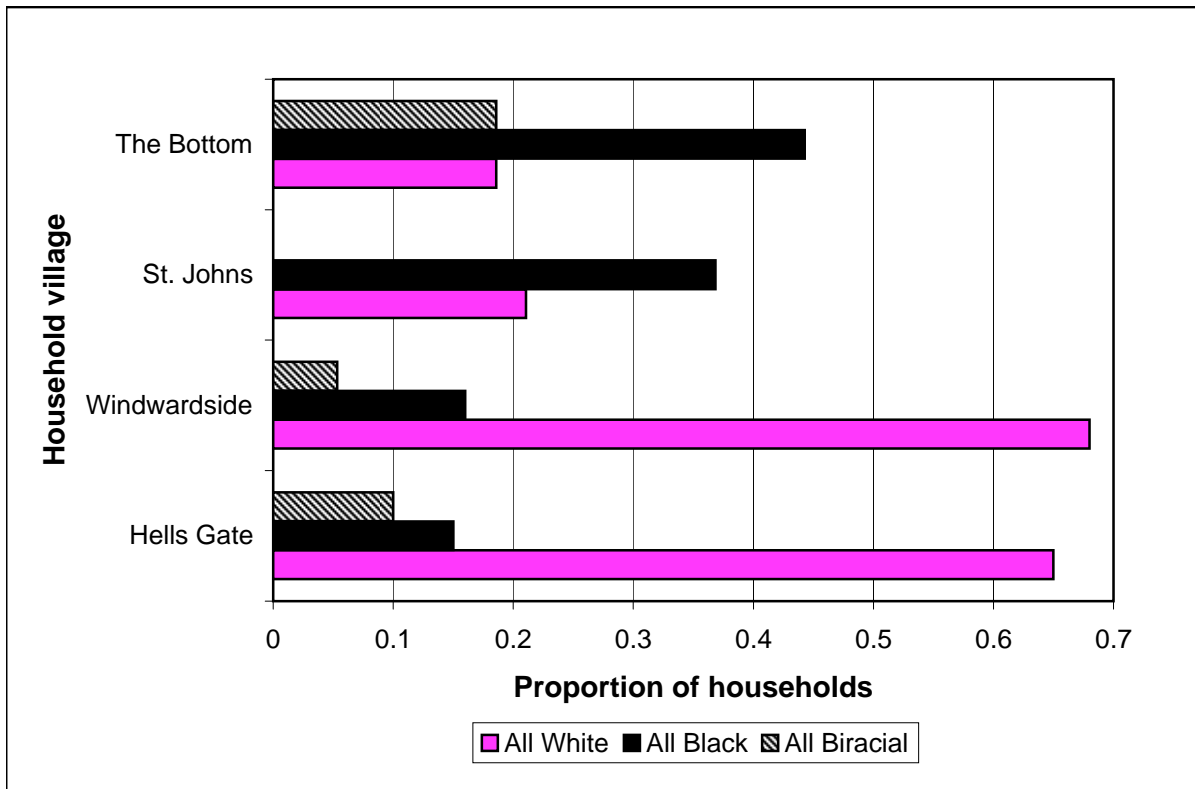
Figure 9.33: Proportion of racially homogenous households: 1964
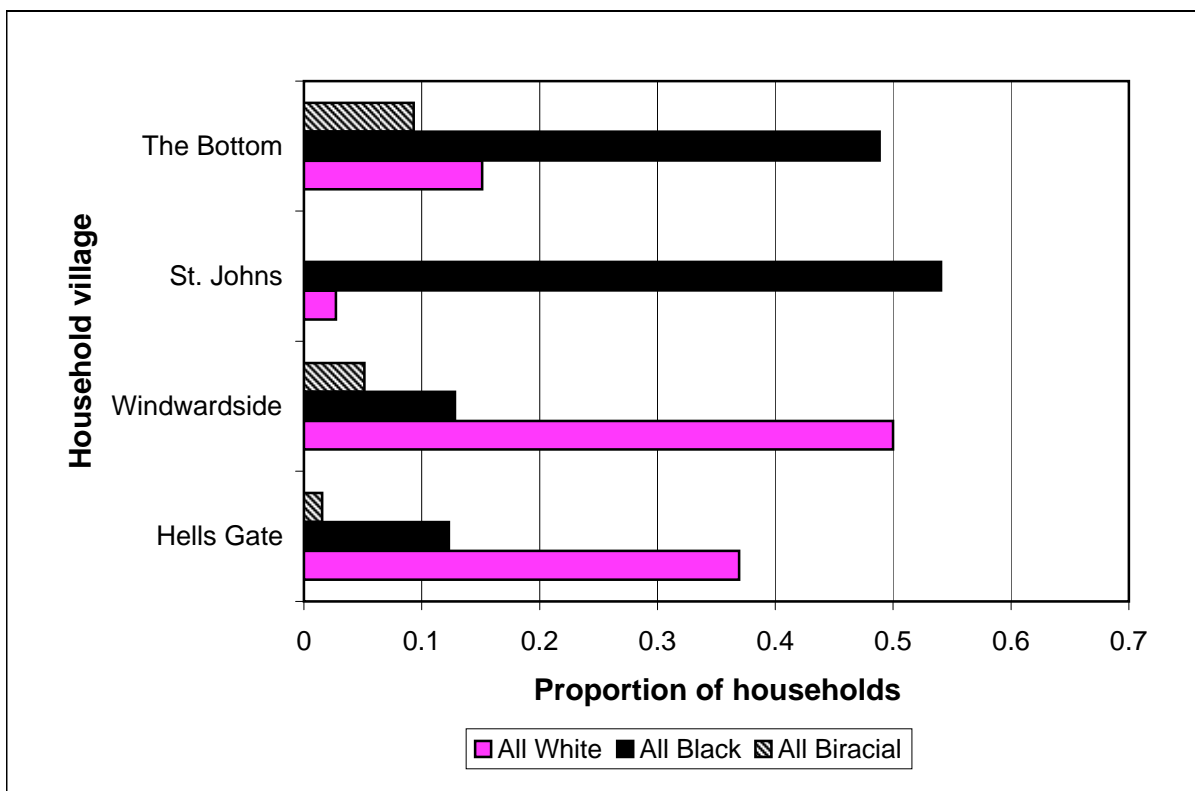
Figure 9.34: Proportion of racially homogenous households: 2004
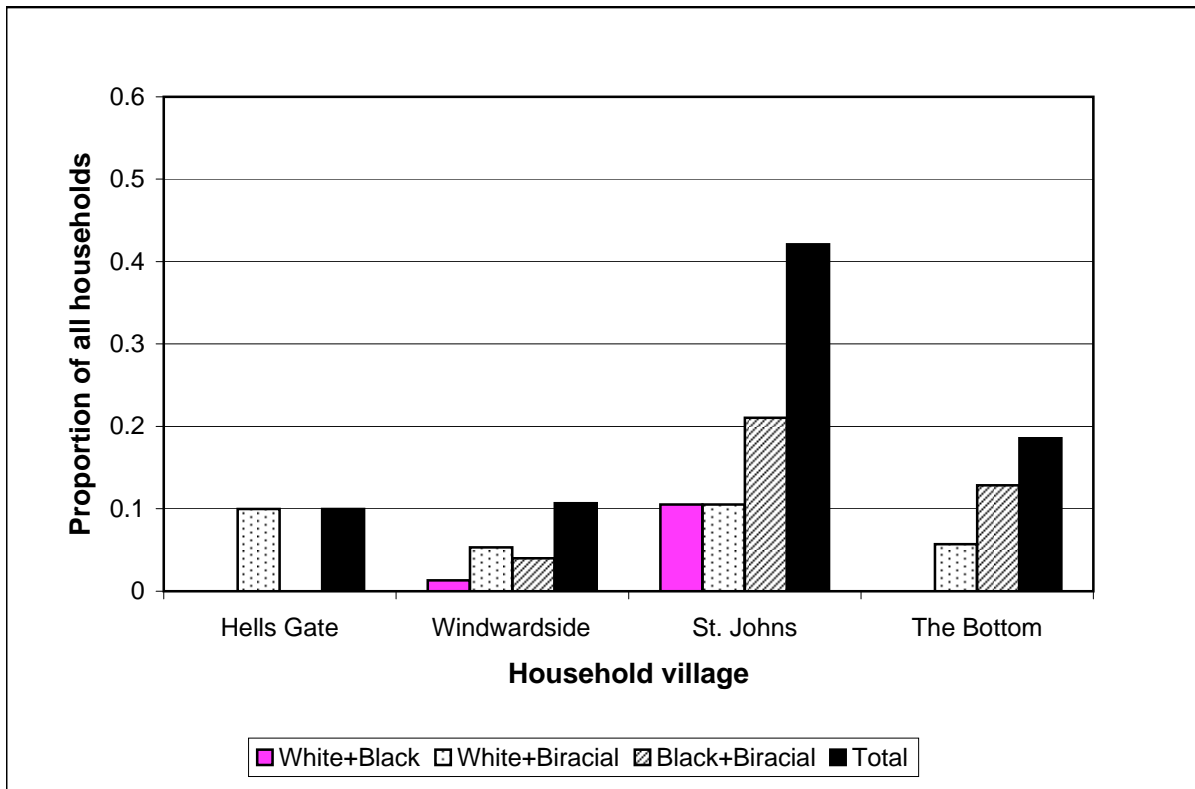
Figure 9.35: Interracial families by village and type: 1964
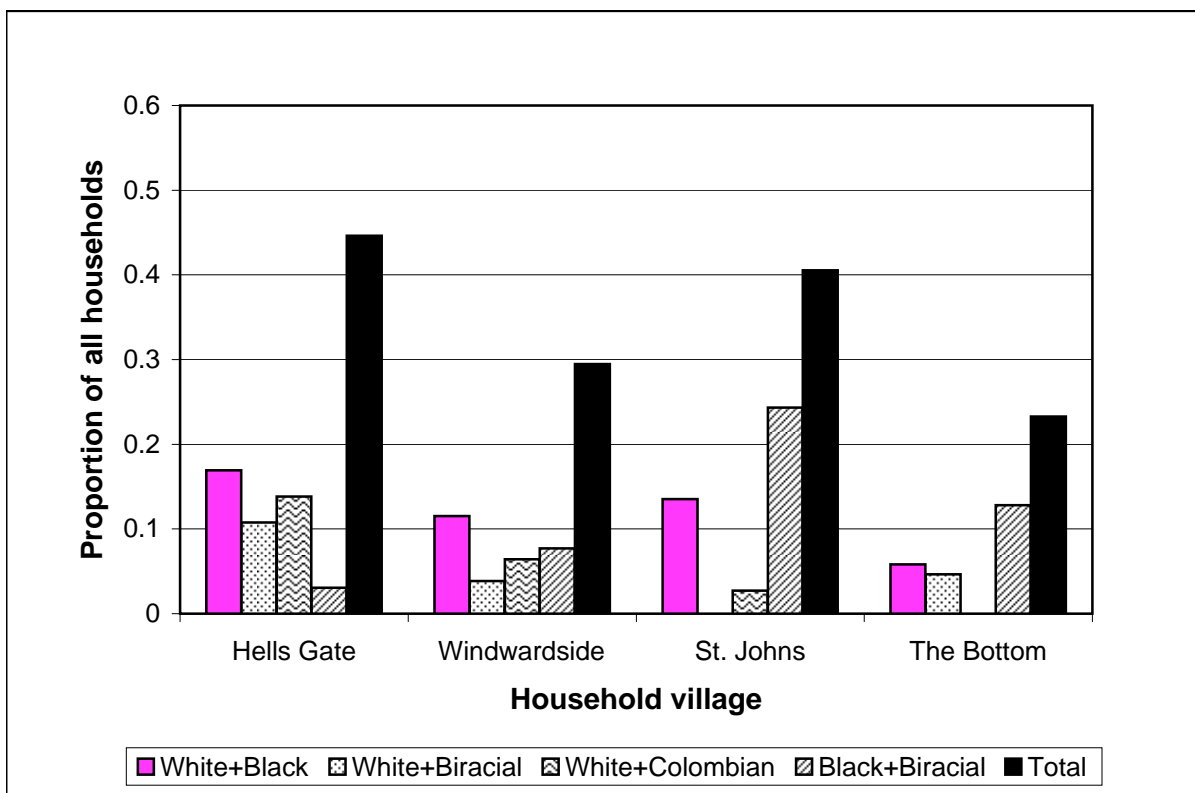
Figure 9.36: Interracial families by village and type: 2004

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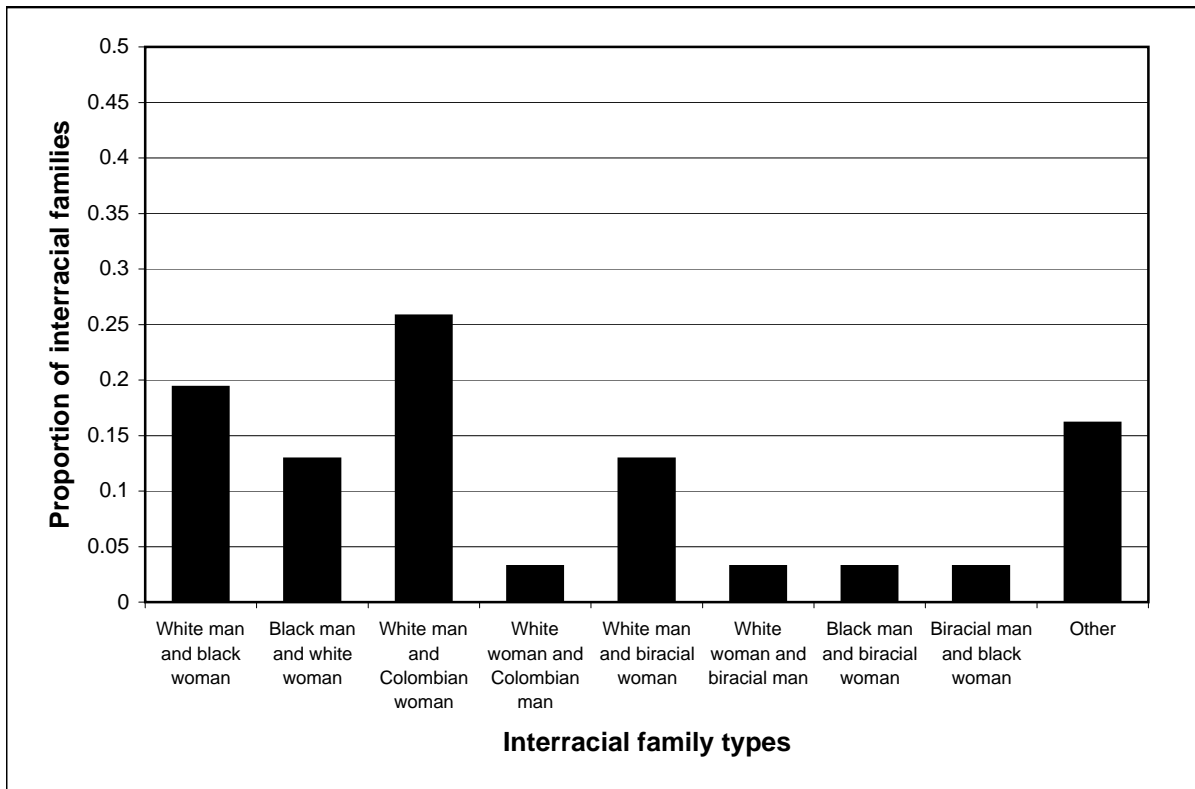
Figure 9.37: Distribution of interracial family types: Hells Gate, 2004
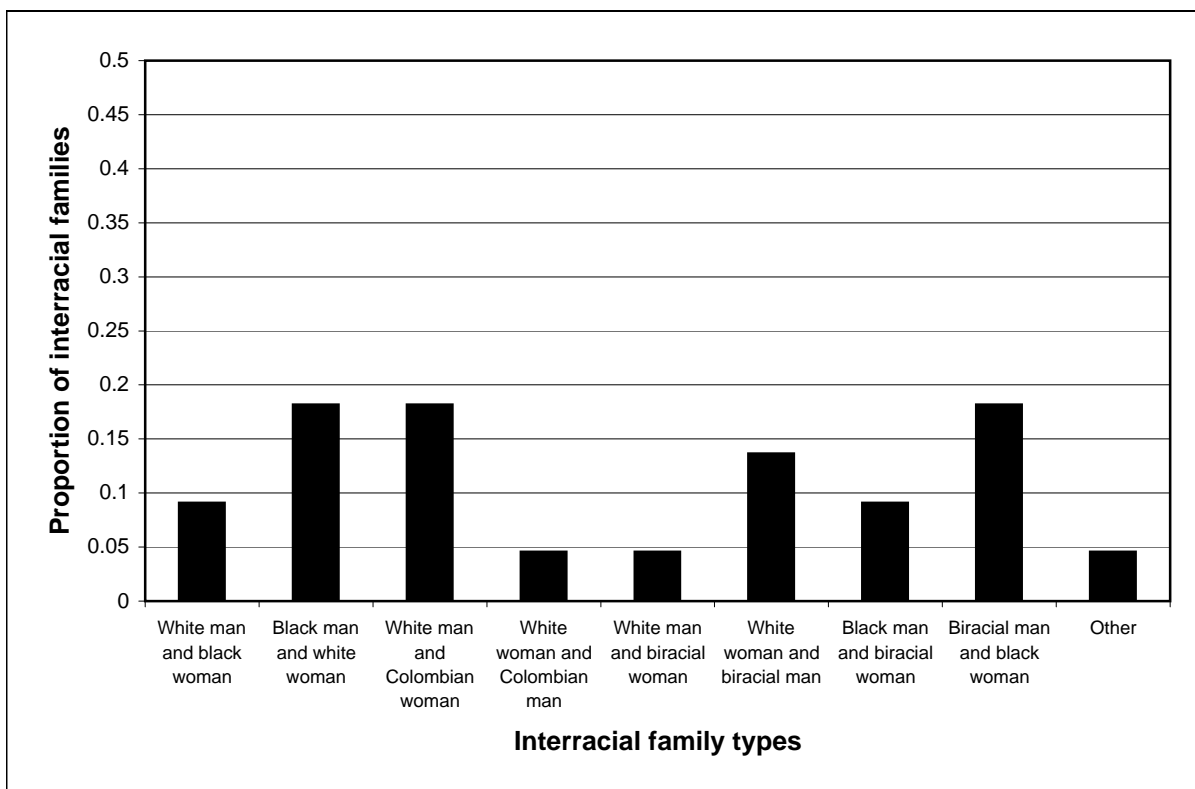
Figure 9.38: Distribution of interracial family types: Windwardside, 2004
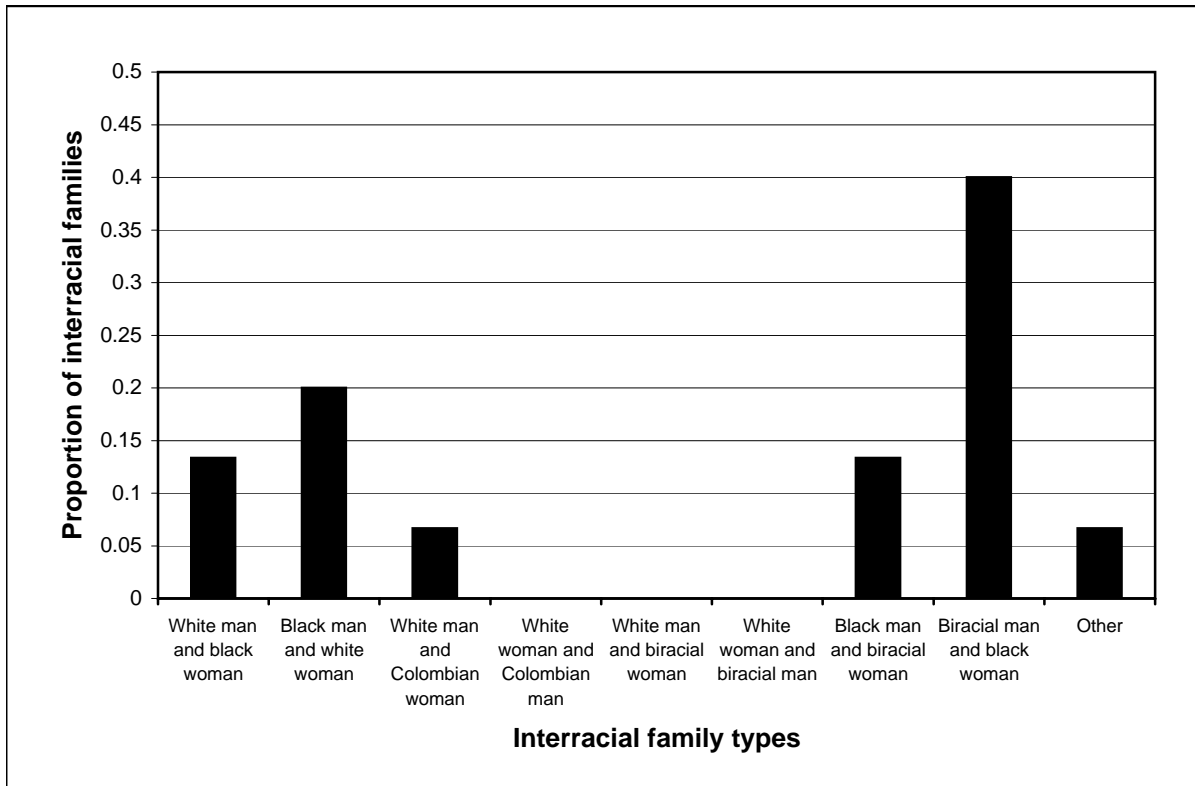
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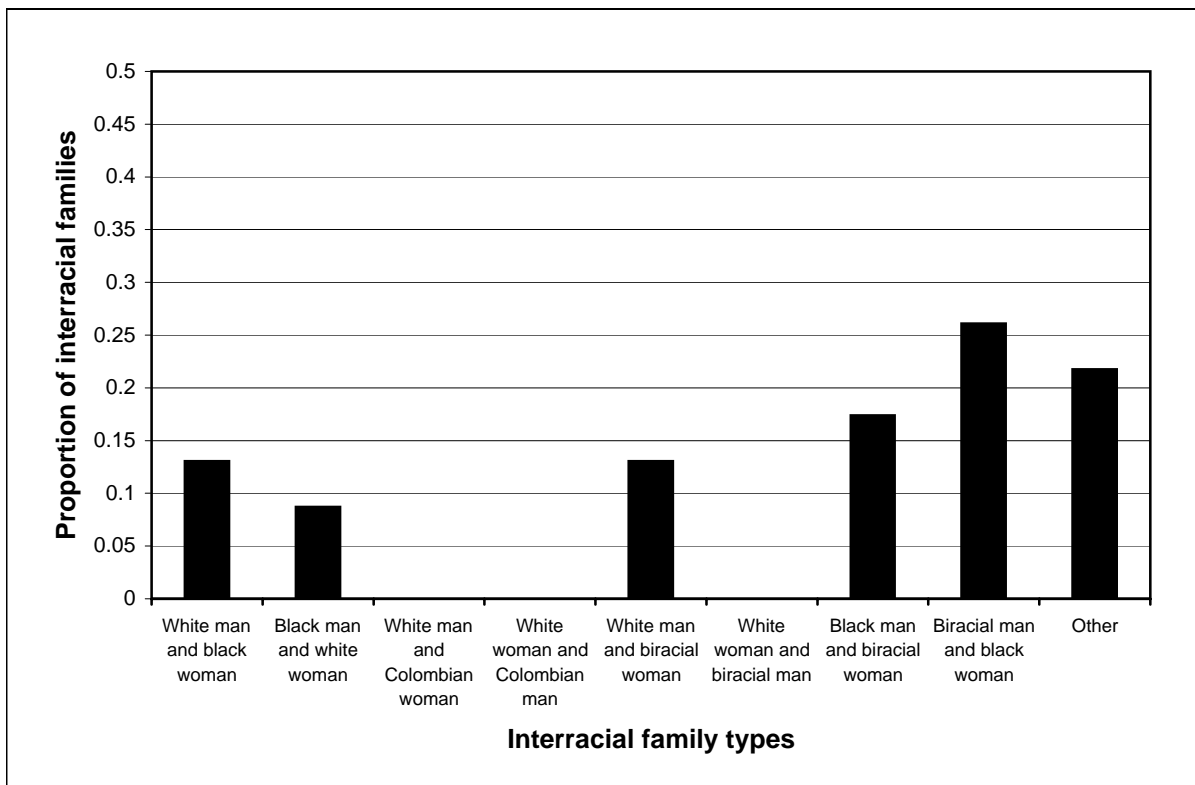
Figure 9.40: Distribution of interracial family types: The Bottom, 2004
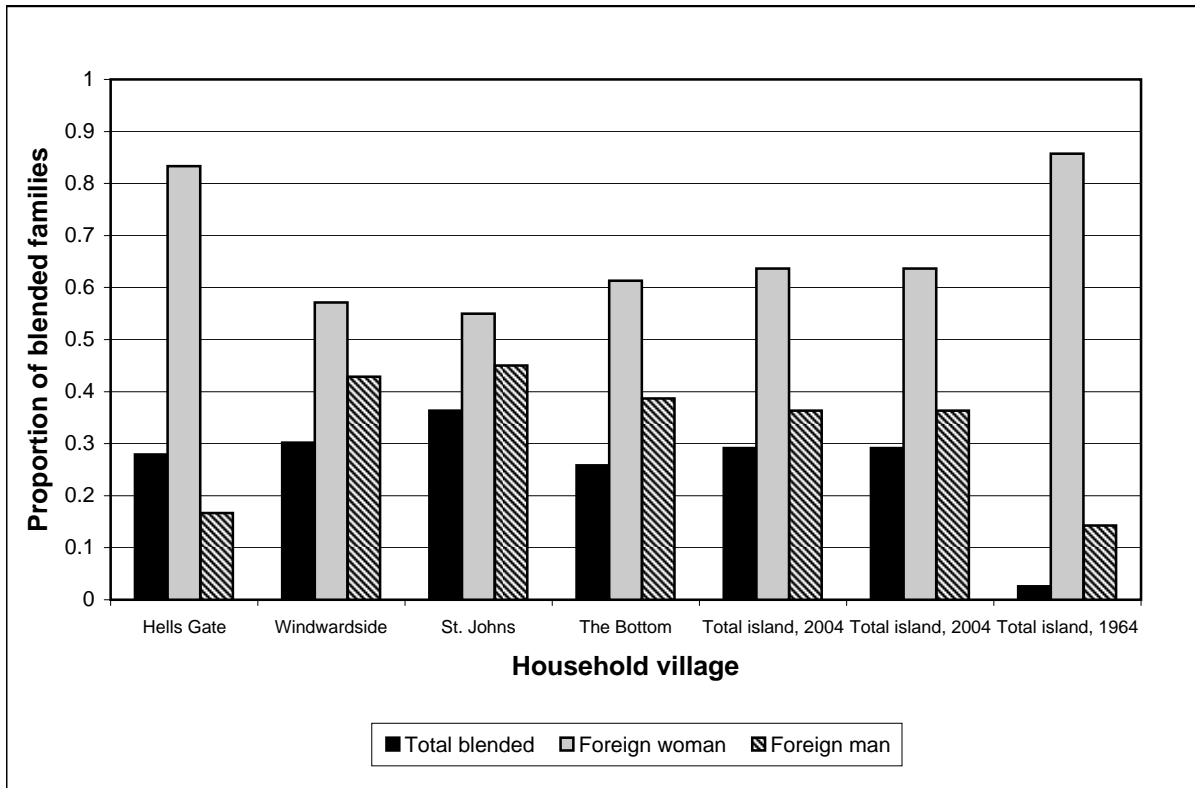
Figure 9.41: Blended households by village: 1964, 2004
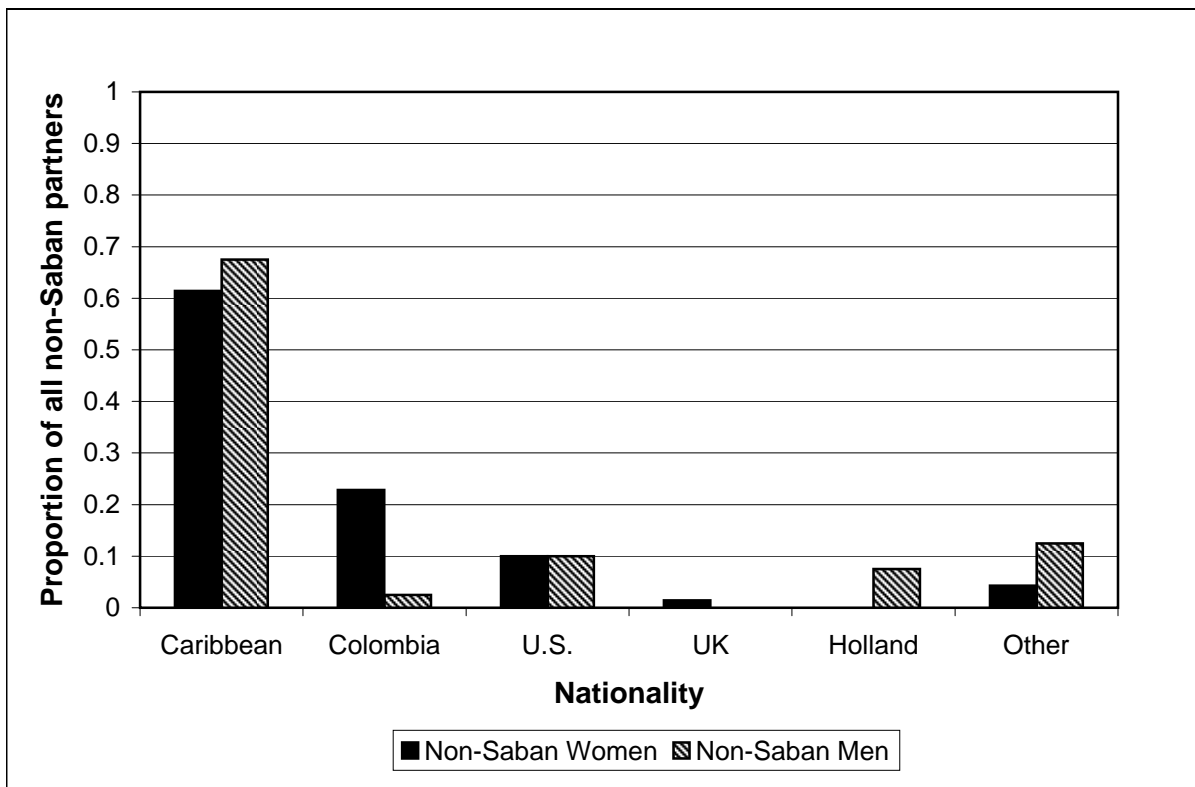
Figure 9.42: Geographical distribution of non-Saban partners
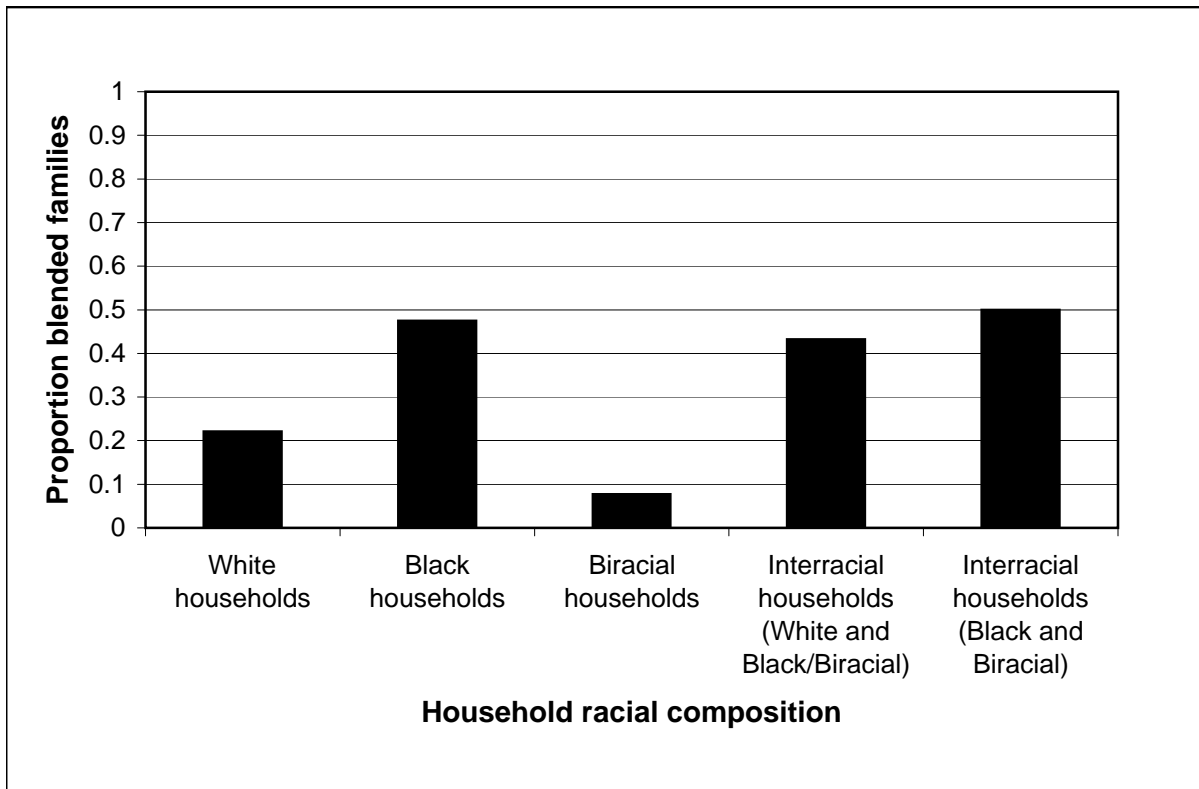
Figure 9.43: Blended families by racial composition of household
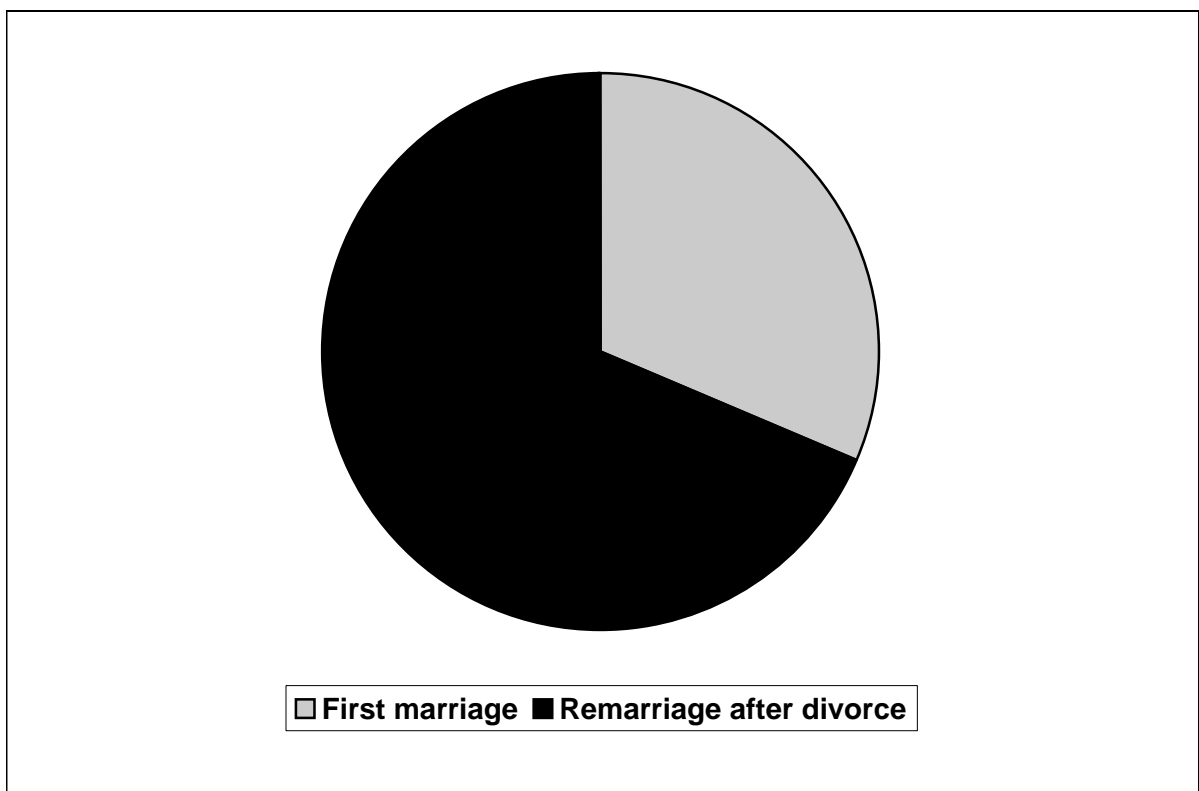
Figure 9.44: Colombian marriages: Marital history of husbands
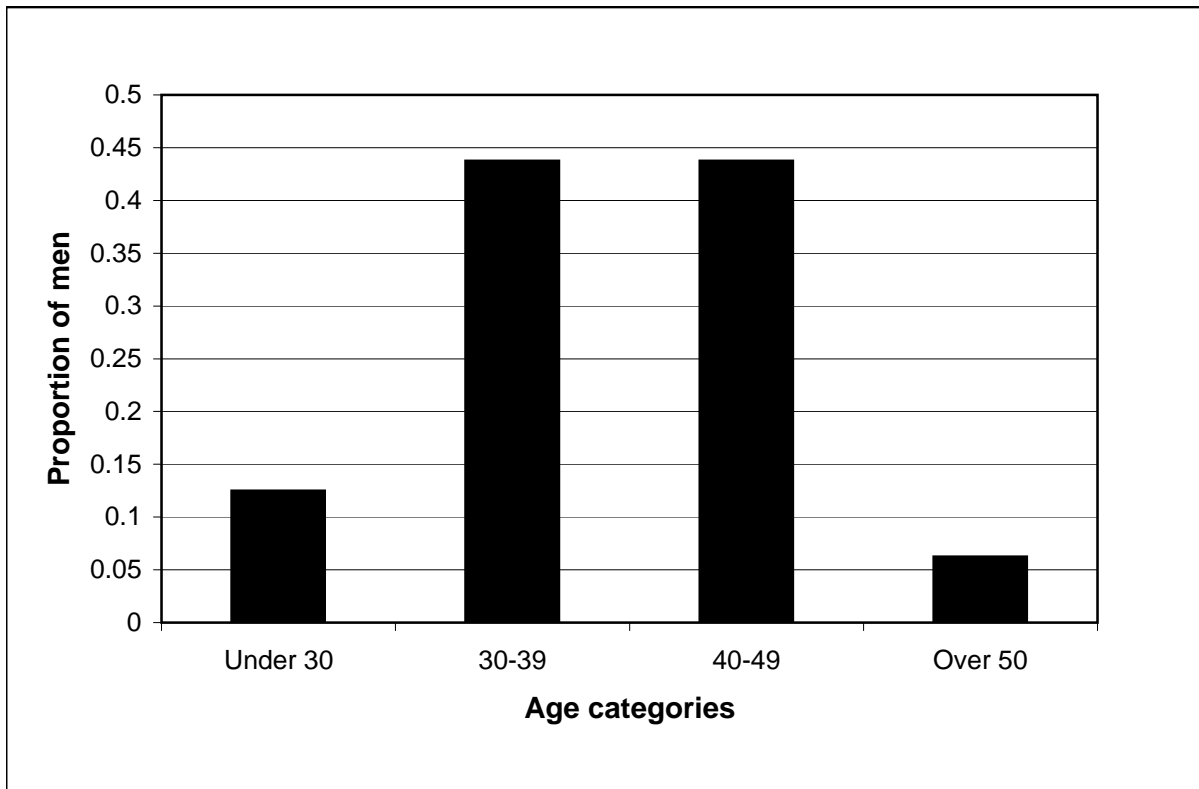
Figure 9.45: Colombian marriages: Age at marriage for husband
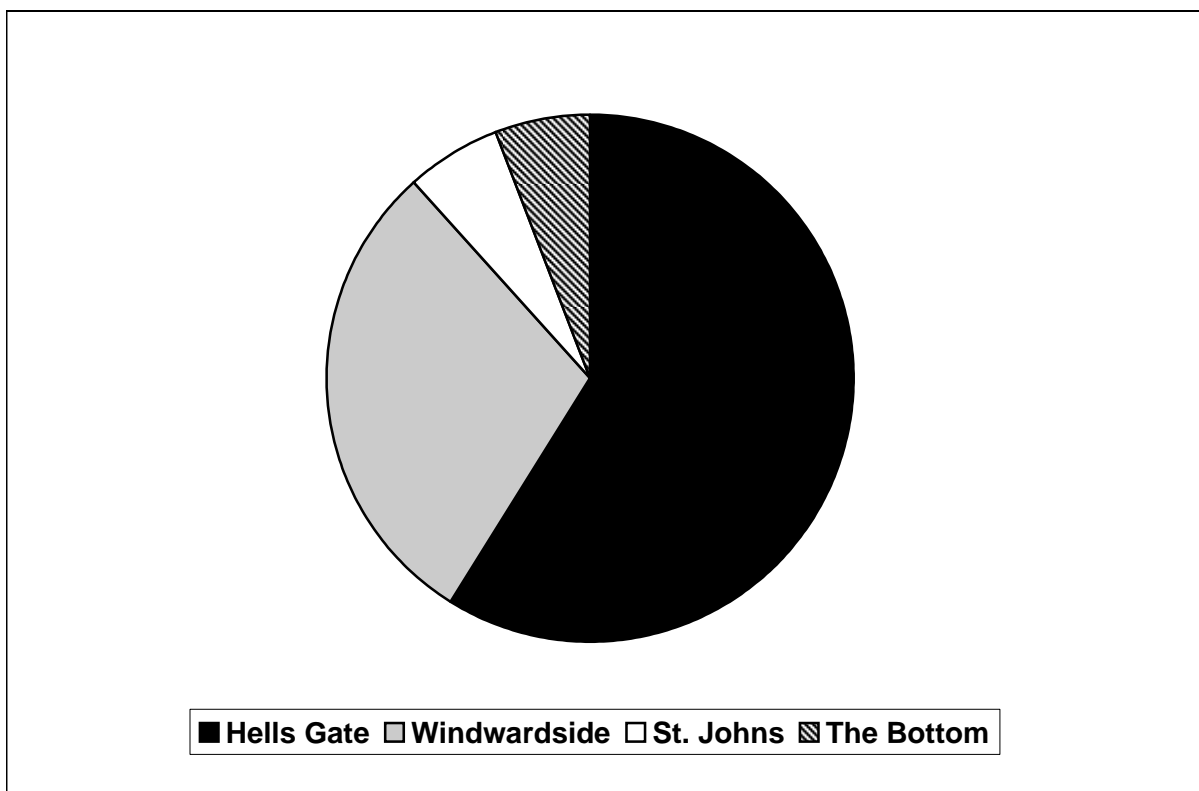
Figure 9.46: Distribution of Colombian marriages by village

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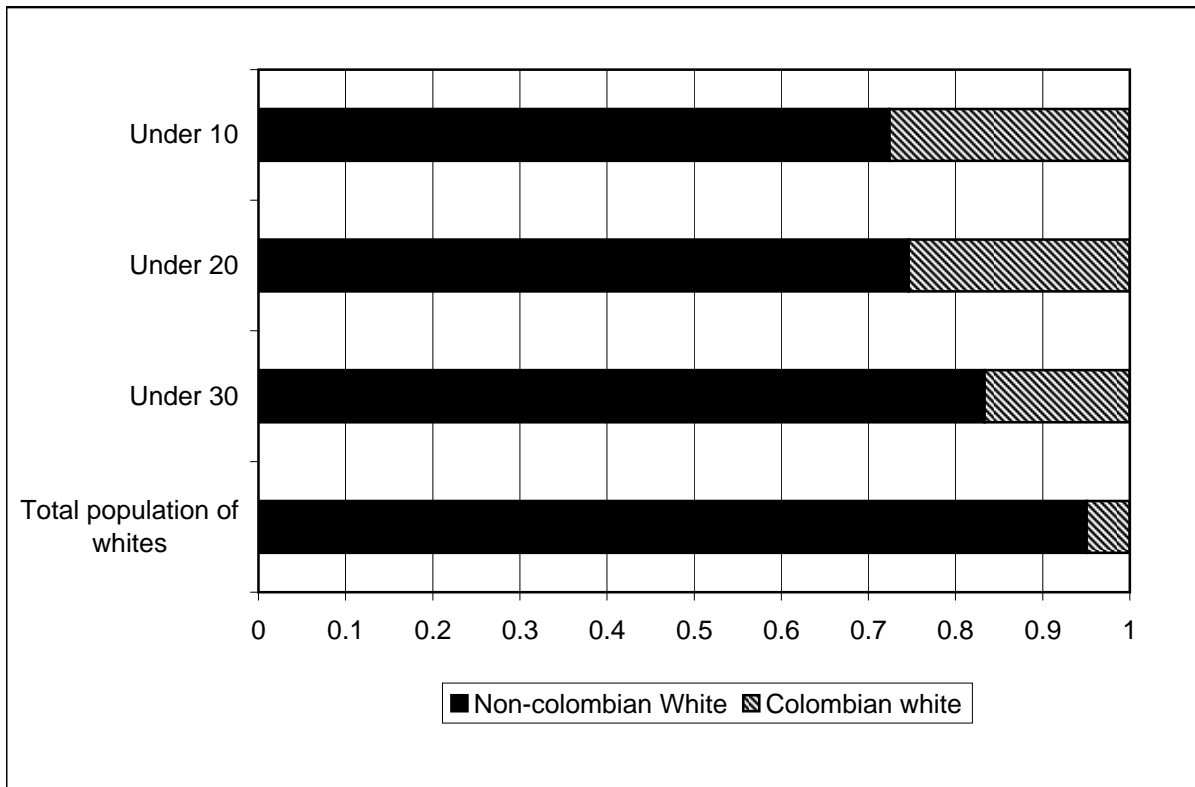
Figure 9.47: Proportion of children with mixed Colombian and white Saban heritage in the total white population
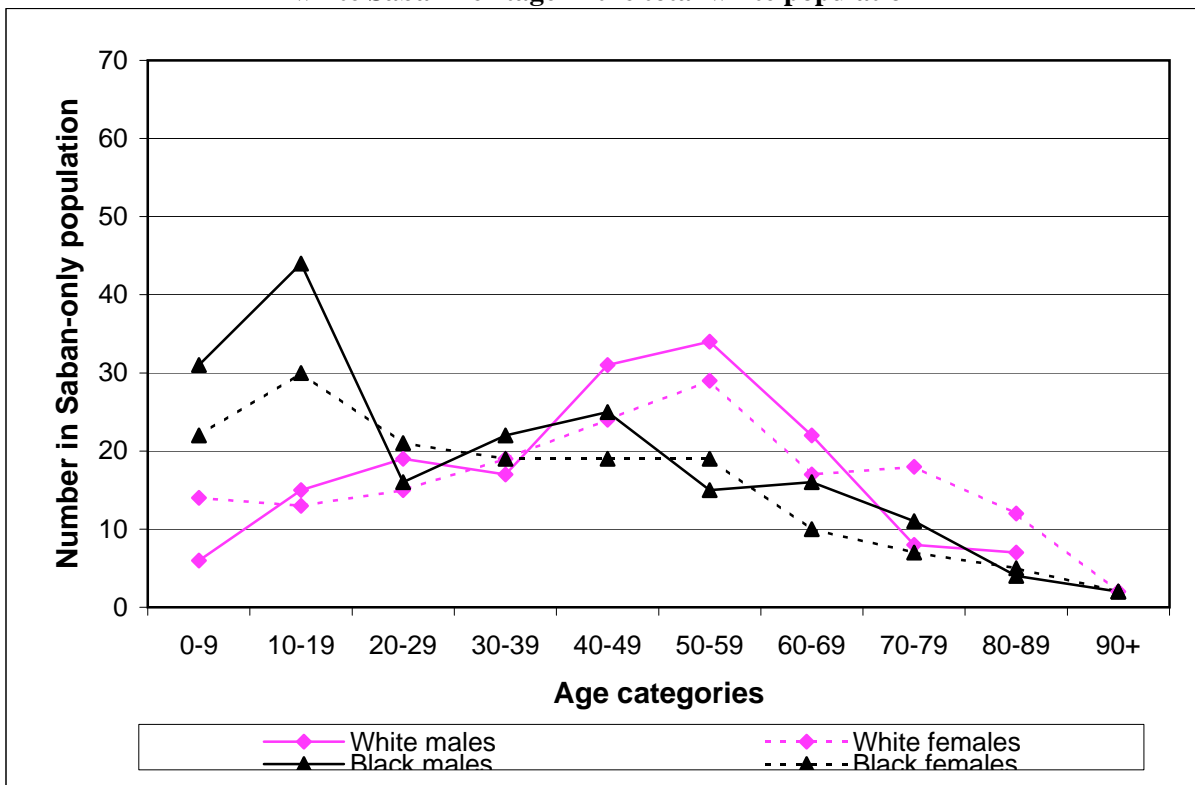
Figure 9.48: Number of Sabans on-island by age and race
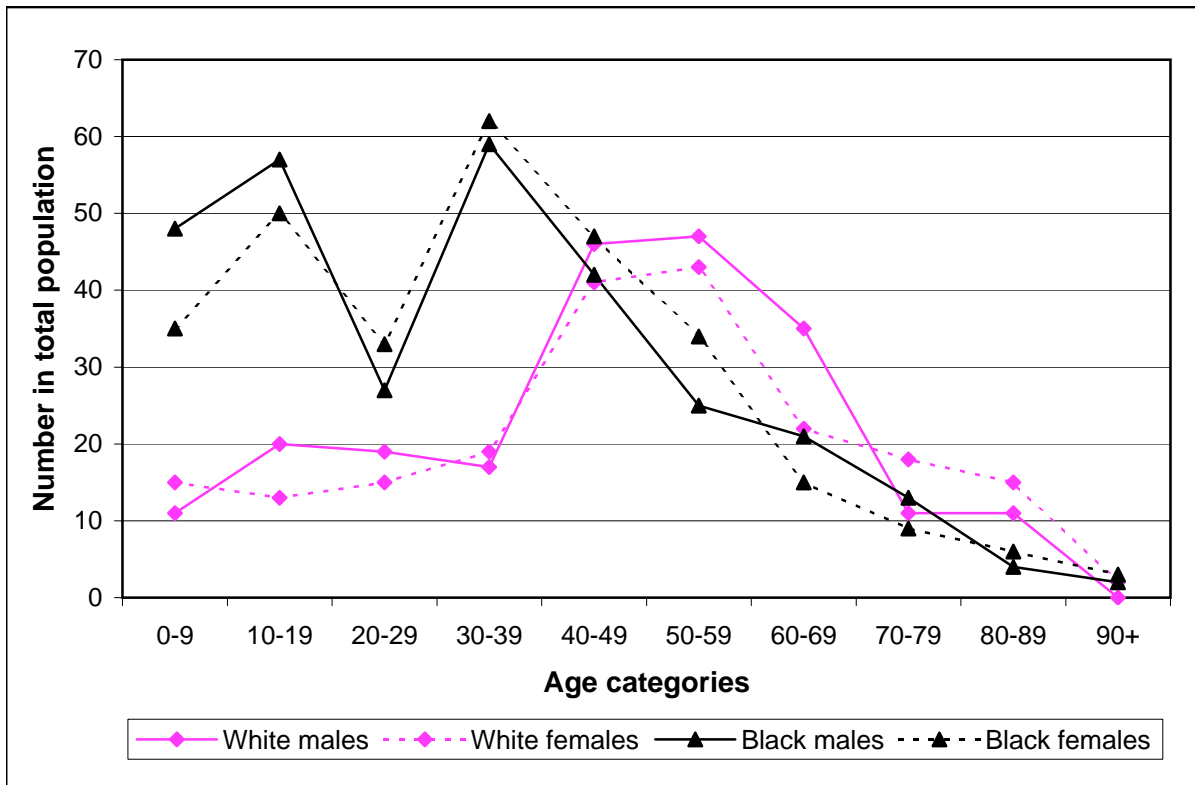
Figure 9.49: Number of total population (Sabans and non-Sabans) on-island by age and race
Medical School students are excluded as potential long-term partners as there have
been no long-term relationships or marriages between SUSM students
and the local Saban population

CHAPTER 10

TIES THAT BIND AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE: CONTRIBUTIONS OF SABAN FAMILY RESEARCH TO VARIED ACADEMIC DEBATES AND TO THE NEEDS AND DESIRES OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

> Maybe if you have to make a book, pass the message on that we are enlightened women
> and let them see that we are the ones who have to build up our society.
>
> --a concerned Saban woman

As I sat in the dining room of an older Saban women, she relayed some of her experiences growing up on island and reflected on all of the changes that she had witnessed in her community over the years. In moving her mind over the contours of her own history, she paused for a moment and then summed up her experiences in a few simple words: "If you have happiness, then that's a lot to have in this life". This simple fact rings true and lies at the heart of all human experience. As Sabans connect with each other through their childhood families and those that they build as adults, they actively search for this elusive state of being. They hope for the strength to create lasting peace in their homes and the wisdom to navigate the inevitable bumps along the way. These struggles come into focus when Sabans find themselves torn between the pressures of adhering to traditional family formation practices and the lure of diffusely defined "freedoms" associated with more flexible "modern" family forms. By analyzing demographic trends and listening closely to a range of Saban women who shared their perspectives on family life it was possible not only to see how certain family formation practices emerged historically but to see the complex socioeconomic interactions between Sabans and non-Sabans, and among Sabans themselves, that shifted the cultural meanings and acceptability of certain family forms over time. In this final chapter, the results of this research will be boiled down to their key contributions to the wider literature on Diaspora and Transnationalism,

Caribbean families, and globalization as viewed through the lens of family life. After addressing the scholarly contributions of the project, this chapter will close by outlining a program of future family-oriented research on Saba and by revealing some of the hopes that Saban women hold for the ways that anthropological research might help open much needed discussions about family life in their communities and on the island as a whole.

Contributions to Diaspora and Transnationalism research: Methodological approaches and theoretical concepts

Connecting Diaspora theory with anthropological methodology

Diasporic experience is, by definition, a blending of historical experience with current social, political, economic, and cultural conditions, and the forms and flows of Saban family life are one product of these complex interactions. Engaging in research that uses Diaspora as a central organizing theme requires scholars to take history seriously and to look not only at how social, cultural, economic, and political processes unfold in both the short and long term but also how past individual and collective experience structures contemporary forms of the phenomena in question. The need to incorporate history into anthropological projects has long been recognized although there is no consensus on what data sources are most effectively mined in the service of historically-oriented anthropological research, or how deeply anthropologists should mine historical data to understand contemporary social problems. Although ideas about history, the historical materials used, and the time-depth of historical-anthropological projects rightfully vary from project to project, many projects still tend to focus in on the past few decades as the relevant frame of analysis and this is particularly true of most globalization scholarship that sites the "novelties" of our current age in post-WWII shifts in the global economy partially generated through the rapid development and expansion of complex communications and transportation systems (Harvey, 1989). However, the propensity to characterize post-WWII transformations as "new" rather than as part of longer historical trajectories fails to take into account the fact that these emergent technologies and global political-economic structures necessarily operate in social environments that were crafted through their own unique histories and

that these histories continue to exert influence in the present tense. Although this particular critique is not new, it is worth restating loudly and often as it reissues the challenge to incorporate history as more than window dressing in anthropological scholarship.

The unique methodological contribution of this research lies, instead, in the ways that it engages with the work of anthropologists who also devoted large parts of their professional and personal lives to understanding aspects of Saban culture and the cross-disciplinary methods used to understand the complexities of Saban family life. Rather than relegating the large corpus of past work to a "prior research" section or using it strictly as a way to structure contemporary research questions designed to add-on to and in most cases "correct and complicate" past characterizations of island life, this project both incorporated past scholars' understandings about Sabans as a point of reference for understanding stabilities and changes in island life over time and tapped into the various sources of "raw data" that multiple waves of research generated over the past 50 years as a font of independent information ripe for reanalysis. Connecting to this long history of research broadened the kinds of questions that I could ask about the historical formations of Saban movement and family building practices by vastly increasing the sources of data available for study and allowed me to reflect not only on the long arch of Saban history but also on the history of anthropological research on this tiny island, the biases and blindnesses of past anthropologists and the representations of Saban life they produced, the amazing depth of understanding about Saban life that they created despite these limitations, and the analytical possibilities opened through accessing the treasure of published and unpublished information they generated during their own time on Saba. Based on these experiences, I would strongly encourage anthropologists to look towards past research not simply as something to critique and/or inspire but as a potential source of independent data that can be restructured and reanalyzed to answer questions posed in contemporary anthropological projects. Attempts to incorporate information amassed through past projects will add much needed time-depth to projects begging for long-term historical analysis, will allow modern researchers access to more data than could possibly be generated by a lone anthropologist or even a small team of

anthropologists, will prevent the ad-hoc marginalization of past anthropological research as intellectually flawed and unworthy of engagement, and will encourage anthropologists who are currently active in the field to really think about collecting and archiving their data in a way that could facilitate future use. By shifting research agendas to incorporate various archives of anthropological information, we can not only honor the history of the people that we work with in the field by stretching the time-depth and richness of our analyses but also the history of our own intellectual traditions within anthropology and those who have contributed greatly to our distinct field of academic inquiry.

The body of research presented in this text triangulated around the complex interconnections between movement and family life by mobilizing all available data generated by past and present fieldwork on Saba and by deploying a range of quantitative and qualitative techniques drawn from different academic disciplines. Vital statistics, household censuses, life histories, ethnographic sketches, semi-structured and informal interviewing, and participant observation were all important components of the varied analyses in this volume and, in combination, allowed for the development of more complex questions and answers than would otherwise have been possible. The vast network of sociodemographic analyses pieced together a complicated picture of Saban migration and family building behavior while textual analysis of qualitative interview and life-history data revealed a range of experiences and motivations that helped explain the emergence and diverse meanings of those demographic trends. Combining the records of what Sabans do or have done with the records of what they think and say about these individual and community behaviors and experiences not only bolstered resulting interpretations but also expanded the range of questions that could even be posed. The decision to focus in on interview and life history data instead of data generated through participant-observation is also methodologically grounded as it reflects a greater desire to provide Saban men and women a space to express themselves fully on issues of migration and family life and the belief that anthropological work should centralize and privilege the varied and often contradictory perspectives of community members rather than participant-observation anecdotes that rest, instead,

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on the incisiveness of the ethnographer's watchful eye. While both kinds of qualitative information carry their own value and are fruitfully used in combination, the highlighting of life histories and interview data in this text was a deliberate methodological choice and the richness of the resulting multi-vocal text underscores the value of producing ethnographies that not only pay close attention to what people say about their own lives and the lives of others but that also carefully stitch together points of similarity and difference among individuals in order to create these richly textured understandings of local lives. Of course, there is bias in what people are willing to talk about within the context of life history or other interviews, how openly people will talk about difficult issues, and discrepancies between what people think/say and what they do. However, the stratified random samples that structured data collection in the latest wave of research and the broad cross-section of Saban society represented in Crane's life histories minimized these kinds of biases by allowing for qualitative analyses that compared and contrasted diverse perspectives shared by a wide range of Saban men and women that criss-crossed the social axes of age, race, gender, and class. Relating overlaps and divergences in the perspectives shared by Sabans, particularly Saban women, to complex demographic trends gives a more complete picture of the range of opinions and behaviors that surround family life on-island.

While it would be unwise to accept the perspectives shared by Sabans as "fact" without reservation or thoughtful evaluation, it is clear that Sabans shared what they felt were important aspects of Saban family and community life and I feel strongly that their trust, openness, and commitment should be rewarded by producing a text that analytically centralizes their own unique voices. Who is more qualified to speak to life on Saba, after all, someone born and raised on-island or an outsider who is slowly, if earnestly, feeling her way through an unfamiliar culture? This is the age-old question in anthropology, and certainly one not easily resolved, but the methodological decision to use the words and experiences of Sabans as the primary qualitative data in this volume is grounded in the belief that we should listen closely to the ways that Sabans feel about their own conditions of life rather than engage in "observational" tropes and resulting "expert" interpretations

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that are often unrecognizable to the people they purport to represent. Sticking to Saban narratives and understandings minimizes this kind of interpretive bias and, despite its shortcomings, is a valid and useful way to describe complex lives that should be showcased in more anthropological work. In this way, anthropologists can fulfill the role of conduit for indigenous expression, however active, biased, deaf, dumb, or blind that conduit may be, rather than becoming the main attraction through clever and academically impressive theoretical abstraction that has little or no potential to "give back" to the community, either through the production of intelligible local histories or through the generation of research that can spark public dialogues about pertinent community issues. Although Sabans will likely disagree with and complicate a lot of what is said in this text, I think that they will enjoy having so many of their own perspectives shine through this work and that that, alone, will make it feel more like it is "theirs" than "mine" despite its flaws, misunderstandings, and oversights. Focus on the perspectives shared by Sabans also connects Diaspora theory to anthropological method because it mobilizes the core belief that understanding Diaspora entails understanding the real world human experiences that create and give meaning to every day life. Privileging life history and interview data puts this central theoretical principle into action and allows Saban voices to rise as primary textual foci rather than intermittent snippets pulled to advance this or that theoretical premise.

Exploring Diaspora and Transnationalism concepts through Saban experience

Although transformations and continuities within Saban families are part of a greater set of sociodemographic processes unfolding in the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe, the scale and scope of this project remained local and asked how these global processes extended into the lives, minds, and families of people living on a tiny rock in the middle of the Caribbean Sea. Interrogating experiences on the local level revealed both that cultural meanings of changing family forms remain distinctly Saban and that family forms are continually reevaluated, accepted, or rejected based on Saban cultural principles. However, this investigation also revealed that external and internal non-local influences are important in nudging Sabans towards accepting new family formation processes

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and that non-local influences do penetrate the core of Saban culture in subtle and more dramatic ways. Diasporic interactions allow Sabans to define their own uniqueness by referencing differences in others and, at the same time, to increase the similarities between Saban family forms and the rest of the "Western" world through adoption of social practices that are often deemed to be emblems of modernity.

These opposing poles of established cultural tradition and flexible modernity enter the debate about Saban families in many ways and are very apparent in discussions about socially appropriate gendered behavior within families, communities, and in the workplace. Discussions about the institution of marriage and the responsibilities of motherhood and fatherhood are often split between vociferous assertions about the continuing value of traditional marriage, where men are economic providers and women are homemakers, and the rising chorus of voices that points out how the dangers of power inequalities associated with male economic domination, the fact that many men do not fulfill their traditional roles as providers anymore, the increased capacity of women to find adequate employment, and the constant threat of relationship dissolution through infidelity intersect to reduce the attractiveness of marriage in the eyes of many Saban men and women. Divorce provides some men and women with the option of vacating unhappy marriages and, although most Sabans still frown on divorce and are adamant that couples should try to work through marital problems, divorced people are now a significant minority on island and are constant reminders both of the instabilities in many Saban relationships and the fact that there is an alternative to remaining in a miserable marital situation. In listening to older people talk about divorce, it becomes clear that the rise of divorce intersects with a growing awareness of divorce generated both by Sabans' travels abroad and by community interactions with locals and non-locals who brought knowledge about divorce into the island itself. Similarly, cohabitation is an alternative family building strategy that has always existed on Saba but that is now reemerging as a flexible modern family arrangement that is sensitive to the volatility of some Saban relationships. Cohabitation is a prime example of how external influences can amplify existing cultural practices because living together, rather than

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marrying, has been popularized both by Sabans who have brought this lifeway back to the island as a "marker of modernity" after living abroad or who have entered relationships with non-local partners who come from societies where cohabitation is an accepted social norm. A serious questioning about the gender expectations enacted in many marriages, the increasing prevalence of divorce, the alternative of cohabitation, and historical fluctuations in patterns of non-marital childbearing combined to diversify Saban experiences of family life over the past 50 years. This dialectic between tradition and innovation and the local and the foreign shows the constant give and take between the impulse to stick to historical traditions that emerged through past permutations of this dialectic and the impulse to experiment with new social innovations as the historical processes of forming Saban families continue to unfold.

Looking at Saban families from the historical perspectives of local people who have been and continue to be intimately connected to the wider world contributes to the literature on Diaspora and Transnationalism by carefully considering how social interactions between locals and non-locals form the basis for social action within the context of families. Specifically, Diaspora theorists insist that human life is experiential and that the people we meet, the conversations we hold, and the relationships we build all impact not only the ways that we see the world but the ways that we act within it. Presence, absence, and interaction all play a role in these dramas and make their mark on the mental maps of individuals and communities that take shape within Diasporic contexts. Beginning from the days of seafaring migration, through the height of oil industry migration, to the challenge of moving from a sending to a receiving country in the global economy, it is readily apparent that Saban families and migration processes have been shaped by a range of social, cultural, economic, and political experiences formed within this Saban Diaspora. As an example, a pattern of early and sustained male absenteeism through labor migration helped to create a very rigid moral and sexual code for female behavior on island, a code that was most vigorously enforced by the white community, and to confine white women's paid economic activities to those that could be conducted exclusively within the domestic sphere. Conversely, anecdotal evidence presented in the preceding

chapters suggests that many adventurous seafaring men did not experience the effects of living in relationship and domestic-sphere lock-down for years at a time and, married or not, quite regularly engaged in sexual affairs while living away from home and participated in a range of extra-domestic economic pursuits on- and off-island. The reverberations of cultural norms developed in the past continue to shape aspects of Saban relationships today and are clearly related to the continuing sexual bravado that characterizes part of male Saban culture, the enduring patience exhibited by some Saban women who suffer the abuses of philandering men, and the tensions that arise when women, particularly white women, move out of their traditional roles within the home and into the world of paid employment where interactions with other men are required and the opportunity for sexual impropriety, or the hint of impropriety, abounds.

Another example of how Diasporic histories structure contemporary experiences lies in the on-going insecurity that many black Sabans feel when considering the possibilities of migrating and the difficult, often racially-biased, socioeconomic environments that they enter when leaving home. From the early days of seafaring migration through the present day, migration opportunities have always been more confined for black Sabans, usually to other Caribbean locales and, more recently, to Holland, and the economic benefits of migrating have always been more tenuous when compared to most white Sabans. However, these lingering doubts and insecurities did not prevent massive out-migration throughout the 20th century which suggests a dire, and perhaps deteriorating, local economy, a desire to elevate socioeconomic status above what was possible through on-island life, especially for single mothers, and the belief that these goals of economic advancement could be achieved despite the daunting odds. By comparison, unlike black Sabans, white Sabans have always been strongly connected to the United States and, although there was certainly variation in how successful white Sabans became living abroad, the ability to access centers of economic power gave the white community an economic leg-up on many of their black friends and neighbors. A steady stream of white Sabans entered the racially-stratified world of the American workplace or of her corporate interests abroad and found advancement not only through hard work but also through the

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privileges of whiteness. Slow acquisition of intergenerational wealth through migration and control of local economic opportunities through investment and political favor in the white community created some of these enduring socioeconomic disparities between the experiences of white and black Sabans as generations of young men and women continually faced the decision either to build their lives on-island or to leave for foreign shores. Historical memories and prior personal experiences of economic difficulties on-and off-island folded into the contemporary struggles that black Sabans faced in each successive labor and migration regime and not only created the feeling that the road to economic stability would be difficult but also drove home the reality that family and friends might have little in the way of resources to help you if you failed. Conversely, the feelings of privilege and inevitable achievement built-up over a long history of off-island accomplishment helped more white Sabans leave with the sense that they could and would succeed and the knowledge that, even if they failed, their family would likely have enough wealth and property to help them build a comfortable on-island life. Of course, there are gradations of these experiences across the black and white population, and there are many stories of shining economic success in the black community and abject economic failure in the white community, but the long history of divergent Diasporic labor experiences continues to pass down lessons learned that exert their own influences on patterns of migration and family life regardless of the realities of current socioeconomic conditions. These aspects of Saban history, along with many others, re-emerge and subside and are set in constant dialogue with new trends that surface from contemporary interactions within the Saban Diaspora.

The specific interests of Diasporic identification (Gordon and Anderson, 1998), Diasporic resources (Nassey-Brown, 1998), and gender as a constitutive element of Diasporic and Transnational experience (Donato et al.., 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006; Pessar and Mahler, 2003) are also illuminated as central components of this analysis and advance our understanding of Saban migration and family building processes both in the past and in the present. As Sabans began to connect with the outside world through seafaring, oil-refinery, and post-oil migration, the dense networks of family living abroad and the flow of information that these networks

facilitated were structured by experiences of race and racial hierarchies both on- and off-island. In the early years of seafaring migration, white Sabans began to form tight connections with the United States as American shores absorbed both migrants from the white community and the bulk of the female-centered drawn-threadwork trade that sustained life on Saba during difficult economic times. Movement of many white Saban men and women into American lives and the stream of information about political happenings, consumer products, and other social ideologies that flowed from the United States into the white community on Saba helped to create an enduring bond between the white Saban population and their powerful northern neighbors. As one white woman put it, white Sabans are "Americans with Dutch passports" and it is clear that sentiments like this, though not universally shared, reflect these deep historical ties. As white Sabans became closely integrated into the lifeways and mentalities of American culture, it is equally clear that they were connecting with a social space that was not only dominated numerically by people of European descent but that also developed through a long history of racial discrimination that valued whiteness and sought to ostracize black people and other minorities from sources of social, economic, and political power. A common bond of whiteness and a sense of social superiority founded on hierarchical race-thinking was one important aspect of this growing relationship between white Sabans and the U.S. The increasingly vociferous assertions of white superiority in the oil and early post-oil periods that, interestingly, emerged just as population dynamics created a majority black population on island, emanated, at least in part, from the attitudes white Sabans saw expressed in everyday life in The States and growing local fears of what the transition from a majority white to a majority black population might mean for white Sabans. Conversely, when white Sabans ventured out into most of the rest of the Caribbean, they found themselves living in social environments that were dominated by black Caribbean people and had to adjust to life as a minority population, even though whiteness still conveyed power and privilege in many places. Instead of signifying racialized social status through being a majority population with concentrated levels of socioeconomic power, white Sabans came to know themselves as a minority population in a black-majority Caribbean space and connected both with the diversity of

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Caribbean life and with the experience of being a privileged, and often resented, minority group. Representations of whiteness in Caribbean contexts were and are multi-layered but, for many Caribbean people of color, white Caribbean people represented the remnants of an elite colonial planter class that continued to exert influence, although waning, on some of the larger islands, and of modern colonial relationships that became increasingly tense throughout the 20th century. Although bonding through whiteness did not eliminate clear class distinctions among white Caribbean people, it served to set white Sabans and white Caribbeans apart as separate and often unequal members of the wider Caribbean community and this, coupled with experiences of white majority domination and racial repression in the United States combined to heighten the sense of privilege and superiority among many, but not all, white Sabans as they traveled off-island or received information from their mobile family members living abroad.

As migration took hold of the black community on Saba, black Sabans formed social networks and paths of information exchange largely within the Caribbean and moved in social environments where black people were numerically dominant although often socioeconomically marginalized. Living as seasonal migrants cutting cane in Santo Domingo or as sailors traveling around the southern Caribbean, black Sabans came to know the Caribbean as a black social space and came to recognize both similarities and differences in the experiences of black people from all over the region. Despite continued socioeconomic struggles, black Sabans began to find camaraderie with other black Caribbean people and began to understand their common if diverse histories of forced dispersal and colonial subjugation. Evidence for this increasing level of black Caribbean consciousness among black Sabans was offered by one black woman as she described the assumptions that she made when watching people deplane at the local airport:

> …if I am on the airport standing and I see a set of people come from the plane I have a black man coming and a white man coming. If I see a black man coming, I automatically feel that he must be from the Caribbean. He must be coming from St. Maarten or somewhere. Not until I stand and talk to him then I hear him speaking Dutch [would I think that he's a Dutchman], but still, although he's speaking Dutch I'm saying to myself, well, he went to Holland and he studied Dutch. But I can see a white man coming and I'm going to say, well, he's an American or he's from Holland. I'm not going to say

well, you know, he's from St. Maarten.

Being Caribbean came to be strongly identified with being black while being American or European came to be strongly identified with being white despite the fact that Saban society has been either majority white or evenly split between white and black people over the long course of its unique history. Developing the belief that an essential part of Caribbeanness is blackness is one important outcome of black Saban movement into the wider Caribbean world and not only bonds black Sabans to the broader regional history of black Caribbean people but also marginalizes the diverse histories of white Caribbean people and, sometimes, relegates them to the faceless status of "oppressors" that presided over brutal colonial regimes. While many white Sabans internalized certain forms of hierarchical race-thinking from their experiences in The States and in other Caribbean territories, many black Sabans were exposed to regional social movements that centered on an ethic of racial equality and solidarity, like the many struggles to free Caribbean islands from colonial control, as well as to media that carried news and opinions about the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the United States. Recasting the social status of white Sabans as part of this historical trajectory of racialized colonial oppression both in the Caribbean and in the United States gave black Sabans, and like-minded white Sabans, both the language and the motivation to challenge ideas of white superiority on-island and to work towards creating an atmosphere of acceptance and racial equality at home.

As these diametrically opposed ideologies circulated in the local community, clashes arose between white Sabans who cleaved to American and white Caribbean ideologies that supported the ascendancy of whiteness, on the one hand, and black and white Sabans who drew on American and Caribbean ideologies of racial equality and Civil Rights on the other. Although these moments of tension occurred in smaller interactions during the course of daily life and in larger public incidents, the most famous confrontation developed as black Sabans criticized and ultimately forced the dismantling of the local white-only Lido Club in the heart of white-majority Windwardside. One black woman recalled her bemused reaction to the situation like this:

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Who is they? Half was uneducated. Who is they? I mean they didn't say okay, yous
discriminating and you say you want only white people. But they never said white
people with a certain standard but anything could go there after you was white. So when
you reach there, you ain't reaching no place. Huh? You just getting no place with it and
after a while people sort of rebelled and automatically then they give in.

The creation of The Lido Club and the responses to it are bound up with the divergent histories of

movement, social experience, and Diasporic identification in the black and white communities and

can only be properly read and understood within this long term historical context. White Sabans, on

the whole, came to identify with the history of European migration to the New World, the racialized

colonial relationships that those movements evoked, and the meanings and power of being white in

large societies that were highly structured by race-based social inequalities. Insecurities about the

transformation of Saba into a black-majority island created the desire to maintain a social space

reserved for those who shared the perceived privilege of whiteness both as an expression of

superiority over and separateness from their black peers. The relationship between these fears and the

impulse to create a space like The Lido Club in the 1960s cannot be understood outside the broader

stream of history and, specifically, to the contemporary fears expressed by many white Americans as

they resisted the push towards dismantling the separate and unequal system of segregation in the

United States. Meanwhile many black Sabans came to know themselves as part of a shared common

black Caribbean history of enslavement, socioeconomic marginalization, and survival despite the

odds and became aware of, and in some cases engaged with, social movements founded on ideologies

of racial equality, human dignity, and human rights. Entanglement in this broader history both

opened black Sabans' eyes to injustices within their own society and gave them the ideological tools

to challenge overt expressions of racism back home. Of course, many white Sabans also became

immersed in the rhetorics of diverse social justice movements and became strong allies in the fight to

eliminate racism and racial discrimination in their local communities. Despite the parallels between

Civil Rights movements in the United States, anti-colonial struggles in the Caribbean, and the

movement towards racial equality on Saba, it is important to stress that Sabans never engaged with

these issues through institutional or widespread interpersonal violence. The lack of violence

generated by these otherwise tense social situations suggests that the long history of camaraderie and neighborliness in this small place mitigated against blind hatred, open aggression, and dehumanization of "the other" that characterized racialized clashes in many other places. Although the closeness of the Saban community clearly intervened to shape the tenor of on-island social movements, the sketch of migration and social experiences offered above and the struggles over The Lido Club demonstrate how the divergent histories of migration and social interaction in the black and white communities ultimately led to different forms of Diasporic identification and different sets of Diasporic resources found among black and white Sabans that, in turn, became part and parcel of community life throughout Saban history. Although the forms of these identifications have changed over time, particularly in the age of mass-media and increasing media-molded consumer desires, they continue to influence Saban life in myriad ways as Sabans from the black and white communities draw on their own Diasporic resources and those of their family, friends, and neighbors to make sense of island life and to actively formulate and reformulate what it means to be "black" or "white" in Saban society.

In sorting through current debates about interracial dating, marriage, and childbearing, it is clear that aspects of family life, family formation processes, and Diasporic identification through varying Diasporic resources also became deeply intertwined with how Sabans drew boundaries between and within the black and white communities over time and how Sabans learned to negotiate the Diasporically-shaped gendered dynamics of power in their family lives. While some of the white-community outrage at the recent increase in young white women having children with black men outside of marriage is related to long-standing ideas about white superiority and/or the necessity of maintaining separation between "the races", much of the social discourse firmly grounds disapproval in the ways that these situations arise, the kinds of family life that they tend to generate, and the restrictions on movement and educational attainment that they place on young white women who might otherwise have studied abroad and entered high-status careers. Over time, non-marital childbearing on Saba became associated with family formation processes in the black community and

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became part of the package of traits and experiences that came to define the difference between "being black" and "being white" in Saban society. Not only did it become a signifier of race, but it also became a marker of status that created class divisions within the black community itself with non-marital childbearing and long-term single motherhood becoming a marker of socioeconomic marginalization and disadvantage even among black women. The entry of a substantial number of young white women into interracial non-marital childbearing relationships and, usually, into long-term single motherhood ruptures long-standing social divisions between black and white, rich and poor, and charts a life course of educational limitation and economic struggle for younger white women that is very unsettling for their families and for the white community more generally.

Although the meanings and experiences of non-marital childbearing changed over time for both black and white women, having children outside of marriage came to symbolize both being poor and being black until quite recently and embodied a set of gender relationships that were antithetical to the idealized notions of male-dominated nuclear family life in the white community. At the same time that non-marital childbearing rose to the dominant form of starting a family in the black community, many black women were making their way as independent wage-earners on the oil-islands of Aruba and Curacao and, through their movements, came to know the Caribbean as a predominately black space where non-marital childbearing forms were commonplace. As black Saban men and women moved through these new social environments, their perspectives on family life necessarily changed and non-marital family forms grew from these shifting attitudes about the relationships between childbearing and marriage as well as the economic circumstances that demanded mobility and time to accrue resources that might, one day, facilitate marriage. Through these experiences, non-marital childbearing became identified as a broadly shared experience of black family life both on-island and in the black Caribbean and, furthermore, came to be recognized as a defining feature of black families that diverged from the experiences of most white families. As one white woman put it:

Black families take it different than the white families. If a white girl here finds herself

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> pregnant before marriage, and especially if she finds herself pregnant for a black person, it becomes a real depressing situation within that family. Everybody's depressed. The parents are crying. They're to the doctor. It's a whole different ballgame. But if a black girl gets pregnant, people just shrug this off as if "oh, so she's pregnant". You don't hear people making a big deal about it because probably her mother was in the same situation, her grandmother also. You have lots of these families here on the island and they deal the best they can with these children and they get their families to help them, but it's a bigger deal in the white families.

Over time, non-marital childbearing became one prominent aspect of black Saban Diasporic identity that emerged both though the intergenerational transmission and amplification of non-marital family traditions that existed before the onset of sustained migration and, later, through the steady migration-related convergence of black Saban family experiences with the non-marital family-building practices that dominated the rest of the black Caribbean world. However, it is important to stress this aspect of black Diasporic identification was always mitigated by class divisions that shaped the family experiences of black Saban women who continued to have children only after marriage, those who had children but later married, and those who had children but never married. Marriage and marital childbearing often signified a relatively high level of socioeconomic achievement, eventual marriage provided couples a way to transition into this social status after accruing sufficient wealth, and life-long single motherhood was usually a marker of continued socioeconomic marginalization in the black community. Meanwhile, white Saban attitudes towards the relationships between marriage and childbearing remained unchanged throughout most of their Diasporic history as the social worlds of white Sabans on- and off island continued to posit marriage as the only legitimate basis of family life. A biracial woman expressed the intersections of race and class in the experience of non-marital childbearing by asserting that:

> Some people now, you know, if you get pregnant if your of a certain last name or of a certain class, your family, you know, your family doesn't want a family embarrassment so, if you're pregnant, you have to get married because that's the way it's supposed to be. And it's usually in the white. Their son or daughter gets someone pregnant and they have to marry. A larger percentage is that in the white, or it's just less in the black, maybe not even at all.

In this way, maintenance of nuclear marriage-before-childbearing families, irrespective of socioeconomic status, became one way for white Sabans to define racialized difference, especially in

situations where economic differentiation was not pronounced. Diasporic identification with "whiteness", "blackness", and class status in the black community merged with variations in family building trends over time and became not only a key way that white Sabans identified themselves as inheritors and protectors of the European nuclear-family tradition and as different from many of their black peers who had children outside of marriage but also as a way for black Sabans both to identify with the shared Caribbean experience of non-marital childbearing in African-descended communities and to maintain class differences among women who followed different marital and non-marital childbearing forms.

Fluctuations in the practice of non-marital childbearing in the black community both changed the meaning of non-marital childbearing over time and destabilized the traditional gendered relationship of breadwinner and homemaker enacted in most marital homes while the persistence of marriage as the foundation of family life reinforced traditional gender norms for a longer period of time in the white community. Black women who found themselves raising children in the absence of male partners, husbands or otherwise, set about the difficult task of providing for their families and developed an I-can-do-it-on-my own attitude that can be read both as an incipient form of women's empowerment on-island and as a false bravado that masked the socioeconomic marginalization and grinding poverty that often accompanied these situations. However, over time, and particularly as economic opportunities for women improved, more and more black women did come to find that they could make it on their own both on- and off-island even if this self-reliance stemmed from deep pain inflicted by the emotional and economic absence of their children's fathers. Although long-term marital relationships now comprise a significant minority of black Saban experiences, non-marital forms came to dominate family life in the black community in the oil and post-oil periods and more black women, married and single, began to express a sense of independence and autonomy rooted in the knowledge that they, too, could make it on their own if the men in their lives failed to live up to their financial and emotional responsibilities. These widespread sentiments are echoed in the

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following perspective shared by a black woman who reflected on non-marital childbearing in her community:

> A black woman, they don't think about marriage because they can raise their children. They can make ends meet. Now the women, they are moving up in the world. They're getting better jobs so they can support their child and they don't need a father to help support them. If they want to, they can, but they are not dependent on the father no more to support the child.

In white families, men retained most of the social privileges of being "head of the household" and "primary breadwinner" and, simultaneously, did not easily relinquish the expectation that their wives would move primarily in the domestic sphere as family caretakers or that they would sequester themselves in the home to ward off charges of sexual impropriety. As more white Saban women completed their educations abroad, particularly in the United States, the gender norms embedded in traditional white marital relationships were opened for critique and renegotiation as ideologies about gender equality slowly seeped into Saban society. Although many younger white and black women have either successfully negotiated marital relationships where domestic burdens are shared and where they are free to enter the workplace as they desire, others have opted for pursuing careers and relationships in off-island social environments that are further along in this transition towards gender equality while yet others have opted into traditional relationships on-island and either settled into their traditional homemaker roles or struggle to balance work outside the home with the continuing expectation that wives will take care of all domestic responsibilities. Although the marital and family experiences of white Saban women have diversified as a result of changing ideas about how men and women should contribute to the family both inside and outside the home, most of the changes and stabilities of family life in the white community still rest on the central roles that men play in their families and are not articulated outside of the belief that mothers and fathers should live together and raise their children in long-term, preferably marital, partnerships. Although the status of men in white families has, in many cases, changed from unquestioned family patriarch to equal partner, particularly in younger couples, there is no sense that white women could raise children better on their own than in the context of marriage or that single motherhood is an expression of powerful womanhood.

However, white Saban women do tend to delineate the differences between "good" and "bad" marriages and assert that men, women, and children are generally better-off living in "good marriages" even if "bad marriages" are in need of dissolution for the sake of all involved. Even though many divorced white women do find the inner strength to move on from failed relationships and the courage to make happy and stable lives for themselves and their children, they still tend to value "good" marital relationships and express sorrow that they could not provide this idealized family life for their children. These attitudes are also present among many black Saban women but there is usually less concern over whether or not they can make it on their own after divorce and, in some cases, less social guilt carried by the mother and less social disapproval expressed by family members and friends over the fact that a marital relationship has ended.

Historically shaped divergences in the gendered expectations in family life, forged through varying experiences within the Saban Diaspora, come into high relief when white women engage in relationships with black men and this is especially true when white women have biracial children outside the context of marriage. Emotional reactions to the breach in the physical separation between white women and black men are partially interpretable as both an expression of racism on the part of outside observers and as an act of defiance on the part of the couple whose very existence challenges racialized hierarchical thinking. However, much of the criticism of interracial non-marital childbearing is articulated with reference to differences in the gendered expectations of family life in the black and white communities and both black and white Sabans express a mixture of approval and disapproval over this emerging demographic trend. Many black women are shocked by the ability of white women to "hang-in there" and support their children's fathers despite repeated psychological and economic neglect while many white women fear that black men involved in these relationships will never fulfill their expected roles as family providers and that they will never develop any real interest in emotionally or financially investing in these relationships over the long-haul. These subtle but important race-based differences in the ways that women formulate their critiques are embodied in the following perspectives shared by a black and a white woman, respectively:

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I'm going to be honest with you, you're not going to lie around and do nothing with a black woman. So, I don't know if it's the necessity of a white woman having a black man is so important that they would tolerate it while a black woman, knowing that she will get the next black guy and knowing that there is always another man there, I don't know. The white women are really holding on to them. Based on what I have seen so far. I ask myself, why? When I see girls, young girls, white, I mean good looking girls in a situation like that I ask myself what, why are you doing this? Why are you doing it? Why are you accepting it?

and:

The few people that have tried it [black man white woman relationships], it has never worked. The black male is abusive, very often. They beat up these women once they get there with them, black men. They leave them. They cheat on them all the time. They get children with other women. They are not macho, part of them, if you don't have a couple of children outside your relationship with the person you are with…[and young white women with black men] will get a child to find out just a couple of months later that this man didn't want them to begin with. He has already moved on to the next woman…He's not going to marry you anyway. That is not going to happen. He is just going to have a fling with you and leave you which is most of the cases here.

By sharing these perspectives, black and white Saban women are expressing deep-seated differences in the ways that they approach family life as more black women insist that they would not tolerate similar behaviors in their partners and tend to blame the women for accepting the situation while more white women focus, instead, on the failure of some black men in these relationships to live up to the roles of family patriarch and provider, however equal, that still characterize most white marital relationships. In a very real way, for white Sabans, the absence of marriage is interpreted as a lack of willingness to assume the responsibilities of being a man in Saban society and is in direct conflict with the ways that most people in the white community conceptualize family life and the responsibilities than men and women take on when they decide to enter childbearing relationships. This is not to say that black men and women don't have similar complaints about the ways that these couples structure their lives, particularly when they feel that the men are taking economic advantage of women who have well-paid jobs, only that non-marital family patterns have existed for a longer time in the black community and that black men and women have a longer history of negotiating these relationships in their own lives and in the lives of their families and friends. While more black women carry an internalized sense that they can, in fact, do it on their own in the absence of male partners who can't or won't commit to family life, more white women are programmed to sacrifice

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endlessly to hold together a failing relationship in an attempt to recreate some semblance of a nuclear family that is still positioned as the "ideal" in the white Saban community. Although Saban perspectives on non-marital black-man/white-woman childbearing relationships are diverse and lie along a spectrum of the basic attitudes given above, it is clear that they are part of larger racialized and gendered processes of Diasporic identification in Saban society, that different processes of Saban Diasporic identification have been and continue to be constructed and reconstructed by drawing on the variable pools of Diasporic resources available in the black and white communities, and that processes of Diasporic identification readily incorporated aspects of family life as important Diasporic resources that helped mark sameness and difference in Saban society.

Contributions to Caribbean family research: Capturing diversity, recognizing similarity

Capturing the diversity of family forms and family perspectives on Saba

The sheer variety of family types and family formation processes on Saba explodes any notions about identifying a universally representative "Caribbean family" or defining any set of mutually shared socioeconomic experiences that produce common effects in all sections of any given Caribbean society. Instead, Caribbean families are formed through the combined effects of many different social experiences that may allow for the development of certain commonalities or differences among socially defined groups of people even within the same general socioeconomic trajectory. Although Sabans have shared their tiny island with each other for generations, proximity never trumped the effects of race, class, geography, and historical experience when it came to migration and family formation processes. Until very recently, the white community stuck to a rigid social script of marriage before childbearing while the black population became much more flexible and dynamic in their approach to forming families and marriage, although valued in the black community, diminished over time as a prerequisite for having children. These distinct modes of building families took on elements of both race and class as whiteness and high socioeconomic status were identified with the practice of marital childbearing and blackness and lower socioeconomic

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status with the non-marital childbearing. However, many people from the black population also followed a social script of marriage before childbearing and, in some cases, this was used as a way to mark class divisions within the black community itself. Historical variations in family formation processes in the black community indicate that there was no single experience of a stereotypical "black family" although the movement towards non-marital childbearing over the past 150 years, whether coupled with later marriage or not, represents the acceleration and domination of this family formation practice over the marriage-first alternative that retained a slight majority in the decades following Emancipation in 1863. Overall, though, historical variations in family formation processes in the black community stand in contrast to the rigidities of white family formation processes over most of Saban history. The occasional deviations from a pattern of marriage before childbearing in the white community were met with a great deal of hostility and this social condemnation was even more acute if a married or unmarried white woman had a child for a black man.   This dominant social script is now in the process of changing in the white community and, as indicated above, movements towards non-marital interracial childbearing have created a flurry of social discussions in both the white and black communities on island.

Although this work does not make any claims as to prime movers in the development of these parallel family formation processes, the steady growth of non-marital childbearing in the black community during oil-refinery days and over most of the post-oil period suggests that the socioeconomic conditions at that time promoted non-marital childbearing, both with and without eventual marriage, and that cultural prohibitions against having children outside of marriage had significantly weakened. Like their white peers, many people from the better-off black families left the island at this time and, although some later returned with variable degrees of wealth, the remaining population was, for the most part, from the poorer segments of black society that had always been more flexible in their perspectives on the necessity of marriage in family life and more prone to have children outside the context of marriage. Expansion of this segment of the population necessarily expanded the practice of non-marital childbearing in the black community while increased

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direct and indirect exposure to non-marital family forms in other Caribbean societies tended to

elevated the acceptability of non-marital childbearing over time. For those better off black women

who stayed, many could not find a suitable partner and never married to pass on their marital family

traditions to the next generation or stretched their marriage-first beliefs to encompass the practice of

marrying within the first few years of starting a family. Interestingly, many of the better off white

Sabans also left to participate in the oil-industries on Aruba and Curacao, as they had done in earlier

seafaring days, but the poor economic conditions of life in the remaining, largely agrarian, white

majority populations of Hells Gate and Windwardside or the minority white populations in The

Bottom and St. Johns did not produce significant changes in family formation practices at this time.

In fact, almost all people from the white population adhered to their long-held family formation

traditions that centered on marriage as the foundation of family life. Those that could marry did

marry and had their own children and those that could not marry remained life long celibates,

caretakers of their aging parents, and family helpers for their married kin. This fact makes pure

economic arguments about the development of various family formation practices suspect because

similarly bad economic conditions did not produce similar family formation patterns in the black and

white Saban communities and this, alone, reinserts history and culture into the equation of family

research as equally influential elements for understanding family life. Of course, many white families

did have access to land that could sustain life for their families and felt that farming was a dignified

means of subsistence while fewer black people owned their own plots and some felt that working the

land was imbued with the lingering stigma of slavery. Higher rates of departure among black Sabans

in the oil refinery days undoubtedly had the potential to disrupt more relationships than in the

comparatively stationary white community and stemmed from the on-going difficult economic

environments that black Sabans faced in their home villages, the lure of economic reward that

migration might bring, and the growing sense of relative deprivation on-island. Similarly, political

favoritism in the post-oil period allowed more white families to access government money through

employment or direct subsidy while comparatively restricted access in the black population kept

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migration rates and the likelihood of relationship instability high. In the end, it was the confluence of all these economic, political, social, and cultural factors that created the historical trajectories of Saban families and no one factor can be easily reduced to the other.

As economic conditions improved on island through government subsidies, government employment, and the development of the private sector tourist economy and as less-educated Sabans of limited financial means found themselves with few, if any, opportunities to migrate for work, the proportion of non-marital births in the black community grew from around 60% in the immediate post-oil period to almost 70% at the height of the welfare state before dropping to around 40% between 1996-2004. The recent drop in the relative proportion of marital to non-marital births in the black community is interesting in that it may signal a movement back towards marriage as a building-block of family life and/or the adoption of effective birth control practices to delay or terminate childbearing for women who already have one or more non-marital children. Despite this tantalizing suggestion of an emerging trend in the black community, the bulk of the evidence from the post-oil period shows a movement away from marriage as a prerequisite for childbearing across Saban society, even in the white community, as 20% of resident white women in the immediate post-oil period, 40% at the height of the welfare state, and 75% now under the age of 30 had children without being married. When looking at the 1956-1995 post-oil family trends, both period and cohort effects are evident as most children born into non-marital situations recycle this pattern in their own lives and more women from marital situations, both black and white, now move into non-marital relationships in their adult lives. Improving economic conditions, especially over the last 20 years, have not reversed the tide of non-marital childbearing in either the black or white communities on Saba, which suggests that social and cultural factors are influencing both the spread and maintenance of non-marital childbearing traditions across Saban society. In a situation where the majority of potential partners do not value marriage as a basis of family life, or simply have no personal experience related to marriage, it is not surprising that many women from marital homes are left with the option either to remain single or to abandon their own childhood family formation histories and enter non-marital

childbearing relationships. The dearth of available partners who come from marital homes, the historically developed cultural attitude that single mothers can make it on their own, and the economic reality that women can now access the local labor market more effectively than in the past combine to account for a lot of this recent explosion in non-marital childbearing in both the white and black communities.

Relationship instabilities, as a partial result of mass migration, leveled off somewhat in the past few decades but the intergenerational effects of seafaring, oil-refinery, and early post-oil times continue to manifest themselves in the form of strained interpersonal relationships between men and women who grew up in single parent homes where mothers worked to support their families and where fathers remained largely detached from the business of family life. Male economic and emotional absenteeism is an on-going problem in both the black and white communities but its effects are particularly striking in the black population and among all divorced women regardless of race. Arguments that assert male economic marginalization, particularly black male economic marginalization, as the reason for the absence of many men in contemporary family life are generally unconvincing in the case of Saba because unskilled manual labor tends to be readily available and pays as much if not more than the office or government jobs held by Saban women, particularly black women, who are often left as sole economic providers for their children. While some adult men live in their natal homes and contribute to their parent's households, others choose to live alone rather than with their partners and their children or choose to live with other women, who they may or may not have children with, and divert substantial economic resources to sustain these parallel lives. Refusal to contribute meaningfully to the economic support of children is almost never the outcome of having no money to give but, instead, is a sign of male power and privilege in Saban society that allows many men to abandon their paternal responsibilities with few or no overt social consequences. While struggles to fulfill the provider role likely fragmented many families through migration and subsequent economic failure of men in the past, male absenteeism on Saba has now morphed into a marker of male privilege and power not enjoyed by women, single or divorced, who have to work

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twice as hard to keep their children clothed, fed, and emotionally well-adjusted in the absence of significant social and economic aid from their fathers. Family experiences in the past, particularly those that devolved almost all socioeconomic responsibility for family life onto women, are projected into the present irrespective of the changing structure of economic opportunities on-island. In particular, most black men do not face the severe economic restrictions that they did in former days and are now endowed with the ability to contribute regularly to the maintenance of their children even if they no longer have a romantic relationship, marital or otherwise, with their children's mother. If it was simply a matter of economic scarcity and, specifically, the economic marginalization of black men, one might also expect to see on-island fathers making up for financial shortcomings by investing in the emotional health and development of their children. According to many Saban women, this is not the case which suggests that other factors are at play and that withholding economic *and* emotional resources is bound up both with the historical development of family life on-island and the gendered dynamics of power that now exist within Saban families. However, it is important to stress that marriage or the alternative of cohabitation do not guarantee that men will fill their traditional provider roles, much less help in other ways, and many women, black and white, are leery of entering marriage because of the equivocal socioeconomic benefits that being married now bestows on wives. Even in marital and non-marital relationships where the father lives in the home and contributes financially, children are still deemed to be women's work in most black and white households irrespective of the fact that many women now work outside of the home and are essentially putting in double shifts as wage-laborers outside the home and as mothers/partners inside the home.

Myopic economic arguments also fail to adequately explain the recent rise in non-marital interracial childbearing among young white women over the past 30 years or the shifting experiences of non-marital childbearing across time. Despite the availability of scholarships to further education and the generally improved economic environment on island, a small but significant minority of young white women have been having non-marital children with black partners over recent decades.

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Many women in the white population are mystified by this trend because they feel that these young lives are "ruined" by early childbearing with men who are unlikely to step into the responsibilities of fatherhood. The schism between the dominant white vision of family life that centers on marriage, the nuclear family, and a strong central role for men in family life and the realities of male absenteeism and single motherhood in the black community is laid bare in these young interracial relationships and, although some of the disgruntlement from the white community is clearly related to racist ideologies, the bulk of it comes from the ruptures between expectations of family life in the white community and family life as it evolves in these situations. Rather than citing economic conditions as the reason why white women are now having biracial children outside of marriage, it is clear that the social environment on Saba is now giving rise to cross-over effects between the divergent family formation histories in the black and white communities. In a social environment where potential partners in the white community are scarce due to high levels of relatedness amongst local whites and a general disinterest that emanates from the non-local white community when it comes to forming long-term committed relationships with Sabans, more white Saban women are gravitating towards forming relationships with local and non-local black men who often have very different ideas about family life and their roles as partners and fathers. Sabans assert that marriage almost never results from these relationships, that paternal involvement with children tends to be low, and that much of the responsibility for raising children devolves onto the mother and her immediate family. Relationships between white women and black men cause much more of a stir than relationships between white men and black women precisely because of the fact that the former relationships tend to take on family formation practices that have become dominant in the black community while the latter are more frequently constructed within the bounds of marriage or, at a minimum, with substantial and sustained socioeconomic involvement from fathers and paternal kin that tends to be more common in the white community. In both situations, men have the majority of the power to determine the shape of family life which, again, shows the influence that men still hold in Saban society and in the context of their own families.

Despite the continuing power of men to accept or reject the burdens of family life, the meaning of non-marital childbearing changed over time and has become fused with a widespread belief in women's empowerment through labor and motherhood. Black women have been on the front lines of these changes since they have had childhood and adult experiences with non-marital childbearing for a much longer time than most women from the white community. As black women took on the challenge of single motherhood in the past, they developed a collective I-can-do-it-on-my-own ethic that still permeates their discussions of family life and male absenteeism today. In the past, working outside of the home became a necessary requirement for survival in black female-headed families and this labor became an equivocal marker both of black women's economic empowerment outside of their relationships with men and of black women's social and economic marginalization in Saban society as a whole. Of course, white women also worked for payment in cash or kind but usually did so within the confines of the home and almost always with the pretext that their men were the primary providers even if this wasn't altogether true. Black women were much more visible as primary economic providers for their children and, through their labor, came to feel that they could do it alone without the assistance of a man. This attitude was then passed down in single-mother households and tended to send the message that girls should prepare for life without a consistent male presence and that boys would continue to have no clearly defined roles or responsibilities in their non-natal family lives. Without alternative role models of male/female relationships, these intergenerationally transmitted attitudes perpetuated the cycle of single-mother fatherless families and spread this ethos across large sectors of the black Saban population. As the economic opportunities for women expanded, the economic struggles of single motherhood lessened over time as did the stigma of having children outside of marriage but the mentality that developed during difficult economic times in the past continues to reemerge and reshape itself in the present. Now, many black Saban women and a growing number of white women assert their roles as single mothers as evidence for the empowerment of women on the island as a whole and, as one black woman put it "it has been proven that we can do things on our own and sometimes much better".

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While the economic position of unmarried mothers has undoubtedly improved over time and added to the cultural belief that women can successfully run their families in the absence of men, appeal to this cultural logic both submerges the continuing economic struggles of single motherhood and continues to tacitly absolve men of their paternal responsibilities. In many ways, the position of power as family matriarch is one of powerlessness in most other realms of island life. Even when women block recognition of non-marital children or exercise control over paternal visitation, these acts are small power-plays that form around the larger issue of male socioeconomic power in Saban society and men's ability to vacate the responsibilities of fatherhood as they see fit. Although single motherhood has changed in meaning over time, it is still imbued with gendered power dynamics that tend to favor the needs, wants, and desires of men over those of their women and children. In some ways, it is a case of the more things change, the more they stay the same but, overall, these trends show how historically developed patterns of behavior and resultant attitudes can become a self-sustaining force irrespective of actual improvements in or deterioration of economic conditions.

As a final contribution to the general scholarly discussion of Caribbean families, this research attempts to work against literatures that exclusively target the "problems" of faceless poor black female-headed families by including race and gender-sensitive analyses of a range of historically constituted family forms on Saba. While a substantial part of this work does define clear differences in and experiences of white and black families, it does so without losing sight of variation in family building practices that exist within and between the white and black communities or the plethora of opinions that Saban women have about family building trends. While the experience of single motherhood outside the context of marriage dominates life for many black women, it is not a universal or universally homogenous experience or one restricted to only to the black community. Conversations with black women clearly show a range of perspectives on family forms and diversity in the ways that black women built and experienced their families over time. The same is true for the white community where family building traditions are still strongly connected to marriage but where

many white women disagree about the meanings of marriage in modern life or about alternative family formation strategies like divorce and cohabitation.

In moving beyond "black" and "white" families, this research also tackles issues surrounding interracial unions and biracial people within the contexts of race, racism, and family building traditions on island. Again, opinions about and experiences of crossing the racial divide in the context of family formation were wide-ranging although most felt that the mixing of these traditionally separated communities was now inevitable and that "soon there won't be a freckle to be found on Saba". Negative opinions about and avoidance of interracial relationships were not exclusively attributable to racist ideologies, except, perhaps in the cases where white men deliberately sought out "white" Colombian brides, but, rather, were often related to differing attitudes about how and when families should form in young people's lives. Positive feelings were similarly diverse and many Sabans hoped that growth in interracial unions and the biracial population would help to heal some of the racial divisions on island and bring the black and white communities closer together.

Issues of race in family life also often intersected with the formation of blended families where one partner is of Saban descent and the other is from off-island. Black families and interracial families were more likely to be blended and this reflects variations in the proportions of black and white migrants to the island, the reasons for their stay, and the nature of the relationships that they cultivate with the local population. Black migrants tend to be labor migrants who blend into their host communities with relative ease and white migrants are either Medical School students, ex-pat retirees, or ecotourism entrepreneurs who tend to remain unto themselves to a higher degree. Because of these differences, black migrants from the Caribbean are becoming heavily integrated into Saban family life and, like interracial unions and biracial people, many Sabans hope that these inter-ethnic unions will help to ameliorate simmering tensions between local and non-local people in the social and economic life of the island. Railing against immigrants is much more problematic if immigrants are your partners, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, in-laws, or grandparents. Family, then, becomes a site for working through other broader social tensions and issues surrounding family life generate

cultural dialogues that identify, discuss, and may ultimately help to heal community divisions based on race, ethnicity, and nationality in Saban society.

In summary, this deeply historicized analysis of Saban family life over the past 150 years shows how Saban families formed through the intersections of race, gender, class and the social attitudes and family traditions that emerged from this crucible of social similarities and difference. There is no singular black or white, male or female experience that predetermines family life now or in the past even though certain continuities and divergences have been and continue to be shaped by these shifting social axes. The relational aspects of this analysis and attention to variation in attitudes and in thought make it impossible reify the study of families into assumed experiences of race, gender, and class or to dwell on "family problems" outside of their historical context. Furthermore, this work gives central importance to the ways that Saban women articulate their own experience and their diverse perspectives on family formation practices in their own communities. Their concerns and opinions shaped the analysis of Saban family life and directed the course of research towards family-related areas that they felt needed the most attention. Maintaining flexibility in field research meant that research questions were not over-determined by a desire to target specific "social problems" that were identified before consulting Saban women themselves. In this way both the topics and the data gathered reflect the concerns raised by local women and the various analyses deliberately give their thoughts and feelings center stage in the discussion of Saban family life in the past and in the present. Instead of seeking out evidence to support specific theories of family formation practices in the Caribbean or targeting the experiences of "problematic" families, this community-oriented approach gathered as much information about Saban family life a possible from as many women as possible and then used these data to identify a constellation of perspectives that grew around certain family-related themes like divorce, non-marital childbearing, or marriage. This shift in research orientation may seem subtle, but it is important because it gives local women first crack at defining the terms of this family-related discussion and creates a firm foundation for refining later research around topics of interest in the community itself.

Recognizing sameness: Are we witnessing a globalization of family life?

Globalization scholars constantly debate whether the processes bundled together under the rubric of "globalization" are homogenizing the world to conform with an imagined western McCulture or whether the interactions between the global and the local offer opportunities for the margins to talk back to the purveyors of MTV and Hollywood Blockbusters (Appadurai, 1996; Friedman, 2000; Hannerz, 1992, 1996; Inda and Rosaldo, 2002). Anthropology, in particular, has been keen to resist ideas about cultural homogenization and many anthropologists have shown how different groups of people outside the mainstream of Western power have creatively deployed certain aspects of global culture, like film and other media technologies, without abandoning the core of their own cultural traditions (Inda and Rosaldo, 2002). In some cases, innovations gleaned from globalizing processes have even helped to maintain, enhance, and export culture from places deemed marginal by people residing in The West. On the whole, anthropologists have used their work to complicate and criticize the tendency of some globalization scholars to view the situation from a privileged ivory-tower position without really doing the hard work to see what is actually going on the ground either in their own backyards or in disparate places across an imagined unifying globe.

As part of this critique, anthropologists have questioned the concepts of culture deployed in this kind of thinking and the all-or-nothing tone assumed by some globalization writers. They not only question the nature of "global culture" as an accurate reflection of the complexities of life in a diverse "West" but also take pains to show how romanticized notions of "native" culture play into the tendency to bemoan the death of cultural diversity brought about by the steamroller of global forces that "Others" are unable to resist. Instead, the flexibility and historicity of culture are highlighted as key elements in a global drama where local people are confronted with new ideas, technologies, and ways of life that they then either reject or incorporate, fully or partially, into their daily lives. Of course, many of these exchanges are done on an unequal playing field that devalues the local and the native and elevates the modern and the global through diverse rhetorics that tend to advance Western and/or corporate interests. This reality reveals that the give and take of these globalizing processes

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exists within an historically crafted array of power dynamics that tends, predictably, to continue to marginalize the margins but can, in certain instances, allow the margins to turn these relationships on their head and to shape the thoughts and actions of people living in usually far-away centers of global power. As part of understanding these complexities, anthropologists resist the temptation to assume how these processes integrate into local societies and have successfully shown a diverse array of responses to and experiences of these kinds of interactions on the local level.

Changes in Saban family forms should be read as part of these globalization dynamics and historicized interpretations of Saban family life over the past 150 years revealed many of the processes of cultural homogenization, diversification, and persistence that energize people on all sides of the globalization debate. In looking at the trajectories of Saban families over time, it is impossible to overlook the similarities that exist between changes in family life on this small island and changes that are apparent in family life across the Western world. Divorce, cohabitation, the declining value of marriage, and increased non-marital childbearing are all features of modern family life in the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe and the intense social interactions that Sabans have had with people from these places has left an undeniable mark on the ways that islanders conceive of family in their own lives and in the lives of others. However, the debates that surround alternative family forms and their acceptance or rejection by individuals or by communities are always articulated within the framework of Saban cultural values. Whether perspectives on and experiences of Saban family life are used as evidence for the continuing value and necessity of traditional family forms, as a weapon against Sabans who cling to "old-timeish" ways, or as a means to find some sort of middle ground between the two, Sabans can only talk about these issues in the context of their own personal and cultural experience.

Listening carefully to Saban discussions about divorce, marriage, and cohabitation reminds us that sameness on the surface is not always sameness at deeper levels and that similar movement in sociodemographic trends should not be interpreted as shared social experience or consensus about the meanings of those experiences. Divorce is one example where a convergence in trends between Saba

and the rest of The West does not tell us much about the cultural norms surrounding divorce or the experience of divorced people in Saban society. For example, the rise in divorce on Saba should not be confused with adoption of an "American" or "European" lifestyle because many Sabans still reject divorce as a positive development in island life and take pains to draw a clear line around divorce in the Netherlands Antilles that must be based on extreme extenuating circumstances, like prolonged physical or emotional abuse, and the prevalence of "no fault" divorce in the U.S. and Europe that, in their opinion, relinquishes couples from the responsibilities of working on otherwise salvageable relationships. The former is accepted as an unfortunate part of life while the latter is vehemently rejected as something that would produce only negative effects in Saban family life. In making this argument, a social divide is drawn between Sabans who value marriage and people from other places who dissolve their marital unions through vague appeals to irreconcilable differences.

In the case of non-marital childbearing, it is the West that is coming to mirror historical patterns of non-marital childbearing in the black community on Saba as rates of non-marital fertility are up in the white population of the United States and, especially, across northern Europe. However, communities across the globe developed patterns of non-marital childbearing in different ways and, although the meaning of non-marital childbearing has shifted over time, both on Saba and in other places, who you are and where you live still shape the experiences of unwed mothers today as much as they did in the past. For example, having a child outside of marriage is a very different experience for an Irish Catholic girl living in Galway, a Swedish mother supported by generous State-run social programs, a young college student at UNC, or a professional Saban woman who works at the Government Building in The Bottom. Convergence of demographic trends certainly tells us something about changing social environments shared over large geographical areas and, in the case of elevated non-marital fertility in the U.S. and Europe, is partially linked to the increasing ability of women to act as primary economic providers for their families.

Despite appeals to some shared social characteristics, making ad hoc claims about social experience based on demographic similarities is as problematic as a globalization scholar who sees a

woman in South Africa drink a Coke and then leaps to the conclusion that she has abandoned her own

culture to take up "western" ways. It is true that Saban families, like families elsewhere, have been

influenced by wider sociodemographic trends but, instead of assuming that this means that Sabans

have abandoned their own ways, this body of research shows that, instead, they are constantly

evaluating the positives and negatives of changing the ways they build families and that they do so

within their own cultural logic that has developed over a long period of time. The question "Do

processes of globalization impact Saban families?" then becomes not one rife with trepidation and

hand-wringing about the assumed loss of Saban culture but one that really queries the relationships

between the global and the local in the formation of Saban families across time and highlights the

complex negotiations between past and present, tradition and modernity, that surround and give

meaning to a diversity of Saban family forms now extant on island.

Despite geographic diversity and localized meanings of family life, it is equally important to

understand how the convergence of Saban family forms with the non-marital traditions found

throughout the black Caribbean and the high levels of divorce that typify American and European

family experiences has impacted men, women, and children on-island. In practice, these family

trends have both increased the proportion of Saban women who act as the primary or sole providers

for their families and supported, if not expanded, the propensity of men to discard the economic and

emotional responsibilities of family life as "women's work" with little or no socioeconomic sanction.

Issues surrounding the feminization of poverty in female-headed households have been extensively

studied in diverse sociocultural contexts and, in the Caribbean, Safa (1995) called for Caribbean

researchers to take a good look at the socioeconomic intersections of work life and home life in the

region and to deconstruct and problematize the enduring Myth of the Male Breadwinner that unfairly

and detrimentally casts women's work as "supplementary" in Caribbean societies. Related bodies of

research also aimed to deconstruct the image of the family matriarch in poor black female-headed

households to reveal the gender-based socioeconomic inequalities that underlie matrifocal

representations of powerless power (Ho, 1999; Mohammed, 2002, Ellis, 2003), to detail the

intersections of race, gender and class in local constructions of women's identities as workers in the global economy (Freeman, 2000, 2002), and to understand the ways that Caribbean legal systems both embody and reinforce social systems that privilege men by bestowing on them the ability to support or neglect their families as they see fit (Lazarus-Black 1991, 1997). All of these diverse interconnections between work and family life have impacted the lives of Sabans and connect the history of family formation processes on this tiny island to similar patterns that emerged across the Caribbean, North America, Europe, and in other places even farther a field.

Although female-headed households, particularly those that contain three or more generations of women and children, are more commonly found in the black Saban population, the meanings of female-headed households have changed over time even though they retain some of the social stigma and economic marginalization that characterized life in female-headed families in the past. In the past, many black female-headed households on Saba were characterized by extreme poverty, the absence of marital commitment between mothers and fathers, and the absence of any regularly contributing male partner. While Saban women in these situations suffered immensely, both economically and socially, spreading of the experience of single motherhood across a large segment of the black population lessened social sanctions over time and the experience of working, even in the marginal sectors of the local and non-local economy, gave many black Saban women a strong sense that they could care and provide for their children despite the shortcomings of their children's fathers. Dignity and empowerment through single motherhood arose alongside struggle and deprivation and taught many Saban women not only that they could go it alone but that they would probably *have* to go it alone in the long run. As divorce became a more common experience in Saban society, single motherhood took on a new dimension as women, black and white, came to understand that marriage was no protection against economic neglect in the wake of divorce and that many men would not honor their parental responsibilities if a marital relationship dissolved.

Repeated intergenerational experiences of male economic and emotional neglect slowly transformed into a source of empowerment for some Saban women who now regularly express the

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sentiment that they don't need men, that they can "do it on their own", and that it is their responsibility to prepare their daughters for the impending reality that they, too, will have to go it alone. Simultaneously, focus on instilling this mentality in young girls sends mixed and sometimes debilitating messages to young boys and men who are never given the opportunity to develop a sense of responsible fatherhood through their childhood experiences and are often catered to by the women in their natal homes. Through these experiences, many men and boys develop a sense of entitlement to female domestic and economic support that is often not tempered by an equal sense of responsibility within the context of family life. While this extreme devolution of all aspects family life onto the shoulders of women does characterize the experience of a significant minority of Saban women, the intensity of these experiences varies along a continuum and has different meanings and produces different experiences depending on who you are in Saban society. For example, even though economic opportunities for women have improved dramatically over the past few decades, a poor black unmarried single mother from St. Johns will have a harder time "making it" than a divorced white mother who comes from a wealthy politically well-connected family in Hells Gate even if they do share the similar world-view that women can create a stable happy family life in the absence of a man. While many of the narratives shared by black and white Saban women contain varied expressions of this historically developed can-do attitude, this nascent feminism often masks gender-based inequalities in Saban society. Experiences of those inequalities bled through in many of the painful family stories Saban women shared and in the palpable anger that underlay much of their critique of the role, or lack thereof, that men played in their family lives. The question soon becomes not whether women can do it on their own but why so many women are faced with the prospect and reality of doing it on their own in the absence of men.

Rephrasing the question makes the I-can-do-it-on-my-own attitude of so many Saban women appear as a double-edged sword in that matrifocal representations of family life both developed from a long history of economic marginalization and neglect of single mothers that now exist, somewhat ironically, alongside a recent real increase in the ability of women to assume provider roles through

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advanced education and employment while, at the same time, they continue to absolve socioeconomically irresponsible men from the demands of family life irrespective of the surrounding economic environment. As women's economic status on-island improved, Saban women began to feel even more confident in their abilities to provide for themselves and their children but men also came to feel not only threatened by this growing power but, in many cases, relieved that they would not be burdened by economic demands because, after all, women could now sustain their households without significant male contributions. Economic empowerment, then, had other socioeconomic repercussions on Saba as it not only eased the economic burdens of single motherhood and ensured that more women could do it alone without experiencing extreme poverty but also promoted a social environment where more women were expected to do it alone by the men in their lives and by the community that surrounded them. Just like black women who operated in the fringes of the local economy as domestic servants after their partners abandoned them during oil-refinery times, or white women who patiently crafted drawn-thread work napkins and tablecloths to support their families in the absence of sparsely-contributing sailing men, women's work on Saba has always been invisible, undervalued, but somehow expected by men who may or may not be stepping up to fill the gap between their families needs and the economic resources generated directly through women's paid labor.

For women, the choice to invest the fruits of their labor in family life is an expectation, one that is almost always fulfilled, while men can either choose to invest in family life or choose to invest elsewhere as they so desire. While women's work has always generated a stable, if small, stream of resources for family life, men's contributions were always more tenuous and often overemphasized or outright fictionalized to create a veneer of male economic success as primary providers that hid the fact that low-pay women's work comprised the economic backbone of many Saban households. Furthermore, the sense that women's work is never done pervades the historical and contemporary experiences of Saban women as their participation in "supplementary" wage-labor did not lessen the expectation that they would assume almost exclusive responsibilities for domestic life and

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childrearing. This general pattern is still in force on island as women from both the black and white communities now enter into paid employment that often demands longer highly-structured working hours and more skills than their equally compensated flexibly-employed male peers but still receive very little relief from the burdens of domestic life from their husbands or partners much less their ex-husbands or ex-partners. The bind outlined above came through clearly when a biracial woman was asked whether men generally support their children after divorce or separation:

> No, they don't. Not usually. And if they do, they feel like they are doing a lot but the amount of money they give really isn't all that much. It doesn't really help. Not compared to the input that a woman has to have. It's just enough to say, yeah, I'm supporting my child or something like that and usually they give it by force because it they has to be taken to the Court of Guardianship or something, you know, in order to get the money.

While this response is specific to situations that arise after relationship dissolution, many married women on Saba still face similar struggles as they try to balance work and home life with little domestic support from their partners, on the one hand, and try to convince their men to work for the family and invest their wages in family life rather than in other areas like male-dominated bar-life, outside women and children, or the purchase of unnecessary status-oriented consumer goods. The fact that a significant proportion of men either do not contribute to their children's upkeep at all or only do so in a minor way that allows them to create the appearance of responsible fatherhood is related to this long history of male privilege in Saban society. This privilege manifests in men's ability to opt into or out of family life with relative ease and to garner social praise by contributing even minor amounts to the upkeep of their children while many mothers are stretched very thin and given very little support or recognition for their Herculean attempts to merge the demands of work and family to create happy home lives. The end result is that many men are applauded for doing very little while the struggles of women remain invisible until they stumble. As one woman put it:

> You never hear easy where because of the father the child failed. They will say, well, "if the mother didn't take care of it, why you upset?". You know, it's always, quite often you'll always hear well, "look at the mother, the mother ain't got no time for it, what you expect". But you will never hear, you know, "well look at the father, why didn't the father come forward" or something like that.

Swift community condemnation of a faltering woman's human frailties usually follows instances where a woman has failed to live up to her familial responsibilities but these biting criticisms still rarely acknowledge the role that male absenteeism played in creating the situation.

Theories that posit male economic marginalization, particularly black male economic marginalization, as the root cause of different forms of male absenteeism in family life have ebbed and flowed in popularity over the years but have made a strong resurgence in the literature over the past decade or so and are generally offered as a counterpoint to feminist analyses of gender, economics, and domestic life across the Caribbean (Ellis, 2003, Barrow, 1998). However, even though the Myth of the Male Breadwinner has died a slow and painful death in many sectors of Saban society, there is still good evidence that most Saban men fare equally well if not better than women in the local economy and that well-paid jobs available to men, particularly those found in construction work, require less education, fewer skills-based qualifications, and shorter hours than well-paid office work available to most Saban women. Therefore, the structure of the local labor market cannot be conceptualized as one that "marginalizes men" in any way relative to women and, instead, provides good opportunities for men from all backgrounds to generate the wealth necessary to support their sons and daughters irrespective of the relationships that they currently share with their children's mothers. Inexplicably, the lack of evidence for structural marginalization of men from the local economy indicates that many men fail to contribute to single-mother households where their children reside *despite* the availability of economic opportunity. When viewed in this light, deliberately withholding funds or diverting resources to fulfilling other consumer desires, like purchasing a car or traveling, or to the maintenance of current wives and girlfriends should be read as a marker of male privilege in Saban society that subverts the needs of women and children and allows Saban men to act as they please without much social or legal sanction. In fact, social sanction is often reserved for never-married or divorced women who choose to use the legal system to try to extract money from wayward men as women are both socially encouraged to stay silent and provide for their families alone, as any good, strong woman should be able to do, and discouraged by the lack of commitment

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towards delivering and enforcing fair child-support orders on the part of the Court of Guardianship. Although the form of these socioeconomic and legal conflicts, or lack thereof, play out within the specific cultural context of Saba, they are recognizable to many women living in the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe and create a nexus of experience that connects Saban women and children to many others who have suffered similar patterns of neglect at the hands of men and the societies and legal systems that support their detrimental behaviors.

Rather than focusing in on how male marginalization in economic life may be contributing to varying forms of male absenteeism in family life, it is necessary to evaluate both the comparative economic power of men and women in a given society and the economic, social, and cultural history of men and women in family life. The example of Saba suggests that a pattern of long-term male absenteeism in family life developed under successive migration and labor regimes, generated a double-edged sword of women's empowerment within the context of family life, and reinforced the experience of male socioeconomic priviledge in Saban society more generally. As male participation in family life became optional over time, many men decided that the role of father, husband, or long-term partner would not be one they chose to exercise despite their on-going economic equality, if not superiority, to Saban women who were increasingly left with the task of raising children and juggling the demands of work without significant help from their children's fathers. The ways that relationships between men, women, and their families currently develop on Saba are tightly bound up with the complex sociodemographic history of this island and the hows and whys of these historical family formation processes cannot be neatly reduced to simple explanations of "male economic marginalization" in a society where the economic power of men has traditionally vastly exceeded that of women and, in some ways, still does. Instead, it appears that the peripheral status of men in many aspects of family life may be heightening male arrogance and economic irresponsibility more generally as low expectations of men in family life become self-fulfilling prophecies and as men can continue to inflict pain by withholding much-needed economic and emotional child support from ex-girlfriends and ex-spouses. Some of the rhetoric that surrounds patterns of male absenteeism reflects

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extreme male narcissism as many men regularly cite the inability of their women to adequately meet their needs during the course of their relationship as the prime reason why their relationships failed and characterize the demands of support from ex-partners as unwarranted barriers to "moving on" with life. The pain that is evident in family-oriented conversations with Saban women speaks to the fact that, despite I-can-do-it-on-my-own bravado, many women from both the black and white communities feel that there is something deeply wrong with the ways that some men relate to their families and hope that things can be changed even if the paths of change are as of yet unclear. Saban women are not alone in this lament as women across the globe are doing their best to negotiate the gendered complexities of work and family in their own lives even if the results of these negotiations are still far from ideal due to cultural resistance, largely on the part of men and the social structures that support male privilege and power, and the weight of historical inertia.

As a final contribution to the discussion about globalization and the similarities it has produced in the working and family lives of men, women, and children from different sociohistorical contexts, it is quite apparent that the relative affluence of Saban society has become an economic beacon for many Caribbean people who are trying to escape from poverty and economic scarcity at home and that many of these regional migrants enter the local workforce as laborers in construction, domestics and caretakers, service industries like bar-tending, and, in some cases as imported brides for local Saban men. This recent influx of foreigners has turned the remittance-oriented labor-migration history of Saba on its head as local Sabans now experience some of the privileges of exploiting cheap foreign labor available on-island while they simultaneously experience some of the down side of maintaining a large foreign labor pool that manifests in the depression of wages, increased job competition for poorer Sabans, the loss of remittance monies to investments overseas, and the tensions that arise in the process of trying to learn to live together despite cultural difference. From the perspective of regional migrants, the occupational structure of Saban society is familiar as men are channeled into the construction industries and women are channeled into domestic and care-taking work that Saban men and women "don't want to do". These gendered modes of immigrant

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incorporation have been identified as a global pattern where "first-world" economies attract "third-world" women as nannies, maids, and sex-workers who are desired not only for their traditional skills as domestic servants of various kinds but also for their adherence to older forms of gendered relationships that still ascribe unchallenged socioeconomic dominance to men and attending to male needs as the primary goal of a "good woman" (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2003). What is interesting in the Saban context is that these patterns of migrant incorporation and the perception of migrants by the local community still hold true even though Saba could not in any way match the scale or power of the economic draw emanating from a country like the United States. Focusing on regional patterns of migration, particularly issues of relative deprivation and ease of entry, may reveal the specificities of immigrant incorporation in places that would not necessarily be thought of as powerful economic draws like the U.S. as well as the differences and similarities that emerge in the ways that immigrants interact with local economies that fall outside well-defined centers of economic power and the attitudes that local people develop about the social, economic, cultural, and political participation of migrants in their communities. For example, Sabans tend to express similar views about immigrants that dominate discussions of immigration in the United States but their perspectives are necessarily tempered by the fact that immigrants have not only become long-term neighbors and friends but also partners, spouses, mothers, fathers, and extended family members in many Saban families. Proximity and familiarity shape the debate about immigration in ways not possible in larger highly segregated countries like the United States where the social paths of migrants and natives seldom cross and each tends to know the other in only highly abstract terms. Comparing and contrasting the experiences of in-migration both within the Caribbean region and between the Caribbean and places like the United States and Europe will help to complicate discussions about economic migration, relative deprivation, and immigrant incorporation that tend to focus only on large-scale movements of Caribbean people into centers of population like New York, Miami, Los Angeles, or London and the experiences that those movements generate. Teasing out the overlaps and divergences of in-migration experiences from the perspectives of migrants and locals across

many different contexts will allow us to better understand not only why people move to certain places, like Saba or New York, and what they experience when living away from home but also how native populations interact with migrant groups in different settings, how migrant populations maintain connections with homelands across time and space, and how the presence of foreign-born people can shift how locals view the world and their place within it.

While most in-migrants come to Saba to generate wealth to provide a better life for themselves and for other family members either on-island or back home, a certain subset of Colombian and Santo Dominguan women come to the island with the explicit goal of securing economic stability through marrying a Saban man even though their approaches to meeting this goal are radically different. Colombian women have been specifically "imported" as brides for white Saban men who cannot find a suitable partner in the local white population and who are not willing to look for a wife in the local black population. The Colombian women, however, were not selected randomly as most Colombians now resident on-island are connected by family ties and continue to encourage the migration of other family members into the Saban population. Although this process cannot be called "human trafficking", the fact that Colombian women are selected through photographs and are brought to the island for the explicit purpose of fulfilling white Saban men's desires to secure a wife who will cater to their needs does implicate these marital transactions in the broader issues of the sex-trade in the Caribbean (Kempadoo, 1999). In the case of Saba, distinctions between different complexion types became very important to local white men who stretched their perspective on whiteness to include Colombians as acceptable alternatives while Santo Dominguans were usually rejected as possible partners because most clearly had African heritage even if their skin was very light compared to most local women from the black community.

For Santo Dominguan women, marriage into the local black population became an attractive alternative to life back home and many women from the Dominican Republic came to Saba, set up their lives, and encouraged other family members to follow. However, this pattern of migration was never as formal as the importation of Colombian brides even though many local women insist that

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some Santo Dominguans came to the island with the specific intent of snagging a Saban man and that they were given information about available partners or about relationships that they might be able to disrupt by "stealing" someone else's boyfriend or husband. While Colombian wives settle into lives of quiet domesticity in their traditional roles as homemaker, mother, or worker in family businesses, Santo Dominguan women tend to pursue a different track by securing employment in local bars and clubs where flaunting their sexuality provides an "alternative" for Saban men who feel their local women are too reserved. As one Saban woman put it "these women know how to do things to get the men more attracted to them". Although these interactions are not conducted within the context of an organized sex-industry on-island, some of the means that non-local women use to attract local men correlate highly with the practice of "performing love" among sex-industry workers in the Dominican Republic and shed light on the differing gender norms that exist in these societies (Brennan, 2004).

While much research has been done on the growing sex-industry in the Caribbean (Kempadoo, 1999, 2004), related trends that fall outside of the sex-industry proper but still involve the importation of foreign women as brides or the migration of women to foreign locales where they hope to entice local men into marriage are equally important aspects of life in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Focusing attention on the logic and experiences that underlie these aspects of women's migration, the ways that women go about meeting their own socioeconomic goals in these situations, and the development of demand for certain kinds of women in specific local contexts both within and outside the Caribbean should garner equal attention to the more narrowly focused, if sensationalized, analysis of the Caribbean sex industry and the growth of sex-tourism in the region. From tiny places like Saba to the crowded streets of London and New York, many women from the Caribbean and elsewhere fantasize about the lives they might lead in other places and use not only their sexuality but also their ability to provide certain kinds of family life and domestic support to court wealthier men into familial relationships that they hope will provide long-term economic stability not on offer back home as well as the social comforts of having a husband and children. Like any fantasy, the realities of these relationships are different than those imagined "ideals" as men and women struggle to meet

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their own economic and emotional needs while building a home and a life together. This social terrain of imagination and reality is ripe for further anthropological study as it brings global issues of socioeconomic power, race, ethnicity, and gender into the discussion of family life in diverse local settings.

Project limitations, directions of future research, and the research hopes of Saban women

The old adage that research generates research is true in the case of studying Saban families and the limitations of this project, the gaps of knowledge that those limitations highlighted, the potential research paths that this research opened, and the continuing desires that Saban women have for the impact of this study combine to give the project meaning beyond mere completion of the onerous task of producing a dissertation. The overwhelming diversity in perspectives shared by Saban women made it impossible to capture and adequately present either the full suite of ambient community thoughts about each family issue or the breadth and depth of perspectives shared by each individual woman. Because of these limitations, the results must be read as preliminary and not as the definitive "truth" about what all Saban women think and feel about family life. The presentation of these perspectives is bound to cause controversy in some segments of the community while others may read their words and find solidarity with their unnamed island sisters.

One area that is clearly lacking in this treatment of Saban family forms is identification and analysis of the contemporary feelings, thoughts, perspectives and experiences of men in their natal families and in the families that they create in adulthood. Quite honestly, the degree to which Saban women expressed discontent about the roles that men play in the lives of women and children was unexpected and shows that there are real, perhaps bottled-up and largely undiscussed, problems in many of the relationships between men, women, and children on Saba. In trying to elicit the positive aspects of men as partners, husbands, and fathers, many women tended to list their ideal qualities but quickly follow up with strong beliefs that many men, especially young men, were falling short of the ideal. Unfortunately, this means that focus on fathers, husbands, and partners who are meeting, if not

exceeding, expectations is practically non-existent in this manuscript and the bias is definitely towards understanding the ways that men fail to meet their social responsibilities and the problems that this creates in the lives of women and children. Just to be clear and unequivocal: good husbands, male partners, and fathers are a vital part of Saban life and they deserve recognition for their contributions to their families and their communities. The fact that they are invisible throughout most of this analysis is unfair and points to the need for furthering the study of fatherhood on Saba by talking to a wide variety of men who range from full and positive participants in family life to those who are largely absent from the lives of their partners and children. Ultimately, understanding how "good" men relate to their families and holding them up as community role models may help other men get back on the path of positive, involved fatherhood through following the example of men who have built and maintained successful families over time. As it stands now, this text captures only one half of the conversation between Saban men and women which produces all the interpretive limitations that one might encounter by listening in to only one end of the phone during an on-going dialogue.

Apart from the need to include more perspectives of Saban men, it is also necessary to expand the study of the Saban Diaspora to include both in-migrants that now make up a substantial proportion of the local community and the off-island Saban communities that have sprung up in disparate locations within and outside the Caribbean. While the research presented here gives a good idea of how resident Saban women view the interactions that their communities have with non-local residents, talking with in-migrants will show the other side of that equation as non-local people share their experiences of trying to blend their lives, either permanently or temporarily, not only with their Saban peers but also with other in-migrants now residing on-island. For example, talking with Medical School Students or ex-pats involved in the ecotourism industry will help define the differences and similarities between the ways that this segment of the non-local community views itself in the context of island life and how native islanders view their participation in and contributions to daily life in each of the four villages. Alternatively, discussing the migration

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motivations and experiences of home and away amongst the large population of Caribbean in-migrants could help flesh out how Saba became an attractive alternative to life on other Caribbean islands, how in-migrants tap into the socioeconomic opportunities that they find in their new homes, and how different groups of Caribbean in-migrants develop unique relationships with the surrounding local community. Specifically, discussions with women from Colombia and the Dominican Republic could generate counter-narratives that emphasize different motivations and experiences than those offered by Saban women who reflected on the relationships that exist between local men and these two groups of migrant women. Comparing the perspectives of local and non-local women could add both richness and complexity to our understanding of the processes of integrating non-local women into Saban families, either through marrying or having children with local Saban men, and, by extension, to our understanding of family life on-island more generally. Experiences of cultural hybridity in blended families are also of interest as they challenge rigid notions about what constitutes "Saban identity" but also force reflection on what constitutes the core of what it means to "be Saban" in island life and in the external world. Tapping into the off-island network of Sabans who are living life in other places scattered across the globe will also add to this discussion of Saban identity by querying the experiences of Sabans who live away from home, the ways that Saban migrants and their descendants view Saba and the people who choose to make their life on-island, and the channels of communication and types of information exchange that exist among Sabans dispersed in different times and to different places. The ways that labor, gender, race, and family are deployed in these discussions will be of keen interest as congruities and incongruities in the ways that Sabans on- and off-island enact social relationships within the context of family life and the diverse social discourses that family life generates among different actors in the Saban Diaspora should shed light on both the persistent cultural continuities that bind all Sabans together and the points of disagreement that define difference both at home and abroad.

A final area that remains undeveloped in this text is the ways that the movements of family life enter public arenas like schooling, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, long-term care for

the elderly, and other social problems. Many Saban women spontaneously raised the issue of increasing discipline problems in the schools as one outcome of unstable home lives and pointed to the problems of youth vagrancy and alcohol and drug abuse as other indicators that some children are growing up in less than ideal situations. As one woman shrewdly pointed out "We are a small community, we see all these things so quick". Despite this closeness in community life, most women felt that the stresses and strains of family life are now more isolated and self-contained than ever and that most women feel like they don't want community members alerting them to potential problems with their children much less taking on any responsibility for disciplining them in public spaces. Saban women repeatedly asserted that the sense that "it takes a village to raise a child", so common in the past, has been replaced with the strong modern belief that "no one should tell me or my child what to do". Although drug and alcohol abuse were not integrated into the study directly, they became the focus of many women's critiques about the loss of community involvement with raising children. As one black woman put it:

> A lot of our young children, you have the problem with drugs. That drugs is part of the whole world now and what, as a woman, how do you look at that? And when I'm looking at the young people, what's happening to them now and then you have that racial thing. Which race does drugs affect most on the island? And then you have there that it affects our black people and then you ask yourself why? Why is it affecting our black children more than it's affecting our white children? And you have there again, okay, a lot of people say, well, the mothers have to work, you know, the mother has to go out to work and the children are left by themselves. And again I have to say, as a black community, we must get rid of this idea that we all of a sudden brought up that we can't help each other and correct each other's children and try to make each other, especially as women, we need to try to make each other understand that we need each other to support each other, you know. If I see your child doing wrong I should be woman enough to say, well, you know, your child is wrong and help correct that child, especially with single mothers and so. And somehow that is a trend that somehow it was developed because in the past it was that women, they corrected each other's children. Today's date they all of a sudden have this idea that nobody can correct my child or something like that and it's really something that is wrong. And that's a big problem that we have and I find that it needs to be touched. Why is it that the drugs is affecting us more? They [white people] are better at keeping it hidden but I think that, to me, I think that it's fed to our community more. Our community is more weaker in accepting it, not knowing how to deal with it. And one point I was asked, I would ask myself, is it really maybe that drugs affects the black community much faster that it brings down the immune system more faster than in the white community? Is it that in the white community they're immune system is so accustomed to it, maybe using it occasionally? I don't know. But you can see the difference, you can see a strong boy, all of a sudden in two years, you can see them break down to nothing. Whereas you have that you can hear that, okay, white young boys are using it but you don't see the effect on them. And that's something that

we as women need to tell our children. It's not affecting us, well, okay, just physically but emotionally also and not just emotionally but also physically. Instead of keeping it silent, face facts. And that's something that we have. We have that, do you realize that something is going on with your son? Oh, no, nothings wrong with my son, what you see wrong with my son? There's nothing wrong with my son. But the symptoms is there. Do you know that your son is using this? No, my son is not using it. But you smell it in your house. And these are things that we need to be honest with. Stop beating around the bush. Saba is so small but we just ignore it…We are trying to fight against it, we are trying to speak about it but nothing is being done because "Oh nothing, it's not in Saba, it's no problem". But now today it's here and it's out of hand but still we want to say it's not here. It's not a problem. It's just, oh, now and then the boys breathe in a little something. All the time it's a big something….For a small community, I find that that's what the women need to do, they just need to be supportive of each other. And maybe by doing that we will be able to save our young men and women because right now I find that we are losing our young. Especially in the black community. I even tell my mother that we are walking around with fear. We don't want to face the fact that we are losing them. Well, as long as mine make it, let the other ones drop dead. You know, nothing is happening, nothing is happening. Come on, you can see your neighbor falling. We are not blind. We just don't want to do anything about it. That's something that, to me, the women need to work on. Try to save their sons and daughters.

Problems inside homes are moving outside and Saban women are aware of the situation but are mostly at a loss about what to do to stem the tide. This is one area that deserves fuller attention both through continued family research on island and, more importantly, through public discussions amongst Saban women themselves. Many children who are staying on island are learning to cope with their limited economic prospects and the gulf between what they want to accumulate as markers of modern life and what they can realistically hope to achieve without advanced education or many labor migration prospects. These chasms between consumer desire and economic reality can make drug use an attractive form of escapism and drug dealing an alternative means to generate quick cash. Even in their public silence, Saban women are keenly aware of these issues and many women interviewed during the course of this project were eager to share their feelings about the negative socioeconomic effects of drug use and distribution in their communities. It is difficult not to see the similarities between this situation and the situations that arise in many economically depressed African-American neighborhoods back in the States and brings to mind a powerful poem by Langston Hughes:

What happened to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—

And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load

Or does it explode?

This insightful eloquence emerged from a different historical situation but is relevant for Sabans from both the black and white communities who find themselves fractured by their desires to live a "modern life" and the seemingly insurmountable economic barriers that keep them from realizing those aspirations. The simmering unhappiness of these situations and mounting resentments are continuing to spill over into community life and are desperately in need of attention not only by women, who are the first line of defense against the lure of drugs and alcohol in their children's lives, but also by other community members and public officials who have the power to initiate a public debate about these issues and generate a plan of action to tackle these growing problems.

This research does not make any arrogant or foolish attempts to tell Saban men and women what to do about the "problems" that they identified in their family and community lives but, instead, offers a detailed look at the ways that different women articulate the meanings and experiences of family life in the hopes that this may provide a roadmap for continuing community discussions and, perhaps, a basis for formulating a plan for community action on the various topics addressed. During the course of these conversations, at least half of all of the women who participated made a heartfelt plea for increasing the availability of counseling and psychological services on island to help men, women, and children deal with the complex and sometimes painful experiences in their lives. The fear of community gossip still makes reaching out to friends and even family a dangerous prospect and many women report having been let down by people who later revealed their confidences to others. Self-silencing exacerbates already difficult situations for people who are hurting and feel that they have nowhere to turn. One black woman addressed this problem in the lives of children by saying that:

> Somebody should do a study on how the children are affected because you really don't hear nothing much how the children are affected. Especially when there's guys, husbands, you know, they have daughters, especially when they look for a father figure, especially in life to guide them, and they are not there. So you really don't hear nothing much to say how the children are affected, how the children done this or anything like that. When my father left my mother, I was affected because sometimes, you know, that children calls their fathers daddy, you know, you want them to be there too, daddy. The kids could be suffering but they don't talk.

Increasing the availability of social services on island could help parents better understand and cope with the family problems that arise in their own lives and, as a result, in their children's lives. Another white woman shared her view that "Island people are strong people. They're tough because they have to be, not spoiled, you know. They have to get through trauma and battle problems alone". This self-sufficient mentality developed over a long history of independence, isolation, and hard work but forgets the fact that Sabans have always been interdependent with one another and supportive in times of crisis if not day-to-day life. Trying to resurrect the spirit of camaraderie and mutual reciprocal relationships may help ease some of the burdens of island life by opening up the possibility of truly sharing difficult experiences not only with family and good friends but also with qualified professionals who can help Sabans work through problems that they can no longer tackle on their own. The presence of one overwhelmed but extremely dedicated social worker is clearly not enough to deal with the emerging social problems that arise within Saban families and then spill out into the wider communities. In particular, the need for increased access to mental health services and drug and alcohol treatment was one loud and clear message sent by Saban women as they discussed their family lives and family life more generally.

When ending each of the interviews I asked every woman to share both her experiences of being interviewed, her thoughts on any topics that the interview failed to touch on, and her hopes for the outcome of the research project. One white woman shared her thoughts on the interview and her hopes for the impact of the project like this:

> The interview is an eye opener for the person who is being interviewed. Because there are questions in there that people on a daily basis are not going to ask you but now that they are asked, you are thinking about it. Like when I went home last night, all I could think about was this interview. Like, nobody has asked me these questions before. Of course, you have all this information within you but it never came out because it was

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never asked. You know, and once it's asked you start thinking of all these different changes on your island and the impact that they are going to have and that's why I think that this interview is very good and I think that the women are going to not only think about it but they are going to share it with their sisters, their friends, and their daughters. And all of a sudden you have a lot more people thinking and it's all stuff that they knew, it's just that now they will talk about it and maybe do something about it, not just talk about it, you know?

Without fail, women interviewed for this project felt that the simple process of asking questions opened up hidden wells of information that lay within each individual woman. Many women were surprised by the volume of thoughts, experiences, feelings, and opinions that they shared about family life on Saba and many found the process to be personally cathartic and, as with the woman above, empowering. In a society where women do much of the heavy lifting in the workplace and at home, the context of the interview allowed them a social space to vent some of the pent-up fears, frustrations, and hopes that are not allowed to surface in day-to-day living. Saban women, and women in general, are often not asked to share their opinions about social questions and only the boldest and most self-confident women find the courage to voice their perspectives forcefully in public spaces. The interview gave Saban women a place to speak confidentially, sometimes fearlessly, about their family lives and the family-related trends and problems that they witnessed in their own communities. The Saban women who devoted their time and energy to this project engaged in the interview process with an open mind, an honest heart, and a sincere desire not only to help identify family related issues and problems as they see them but also to spark dialogue about family life among other women and the community more broadly.

Some of what was said reflects deep anger about the treatment of women and children in Saban society and seeing these feelings on the printed page, in black and white, may be striking both to the women who spoke these words and to others who may read them. It is my hope that those who read this text will keep an open mind and heart just as these women did and that any discomfort about what was said can be turned into a platform for the difficult discussions that may arise. For Sabans who see their own perspectives captured in the words of these women, those who see themselves reflected in some of the criticisms they share, or those who feel like their own views are not

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adequately represented, it is hoped that this work will be seen as a starting point rather than an endpoint and an opportunity to build bridges across social divides rather than build walls around them. One woman passed the torch on to her fellow islanders by speaking these words at the end of our conversation:

> I believe I have said the things that had to be said and maybe somebody else will say other things that I didn't say. So I find that I have talked enough. I mostly shared things what I experienced, you know.

It is my hope that Saban women will continue sharing what they know and striving to be the purveyors of positive change in their own homes and in their communities. Continuing this dialogue may help all Sabans, black or white, man or woman, parent or child, see themselves reflected in the pain, tragedy, and triumphs of their fellow islanders. Creating this kind of empathetic understanding may ultimately help generate forms of community action that target the array of social problems articulated both by these women and by other Sabans who might choose to join the discussion. Tackling problems head-on is fraught with social risk in a small place but the potential rewards would far outstrip the dangers…

Imagine a tiny island in the middle of the Caribbean Sea.
Imagine brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, neighbors and friends with helping hands outstretched,
Lifting each other up on a shared journey through the unpredictable tumult of existence.
Imagine a place where no dreams are deferred,
Where each soul is free to seek happiness along the way.
From cradle to grave,
Through good times and bad,
That, indeed, would be a lot to have in this life.

APPENDIX 1: ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Topic1: Migration and Socioeconomic Opportunity

Migration seems to be part of life here on Saba. Because it is such an important part of living on Saba these first questions will ask you about why you think that Sabans migrate, where they go, why they return, and how their lives and families might be shaped by these experiences.

_____ a. In general, why do you think migrants make the decision to leave Saba?

_____ b. Are migration opportunities different for African-descended and European-descended Sabans? If so, in what ways are they different and why do you think they are different?

_____ c. Are migration opportunities different for men and women? If so, in what ways are they different and why do you think they are different?

_____ d. Where do Sabans tend to migrate? Why do they choose those places?

_____ e. Once migrants leave the island, do they keep in contact with people on Saba? If so, how do they stay in touch with people still living here?

_____ f. Are the lives of migrants different when they are living away from Saba? If so, how?

_____ g. Is it difficult for return migrants to readjust to life on Saba? Do they act differently than people who have not spent a lot of time away from Saba? If so, in what ways do they act differently?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you a lot of questions about migration here on Saba, but before we move on to the next section on childbearing, can you think of any important migration-related issues that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

Topic 2: Childbearing, Childrearing, and Family Types

Now that we've talked a little bit about the importance of migration in the lives of Sabans, I'd like to talk with you a little about Saban families and your thoughts about the many different kinds of families that exist here on Saba. First, I'm going to identify certain kinds of marital and non-marital childbearing relationships. Then, I'm going to ask you to share your thoughts about the advantages and disadvantages of each of the childbearing scenarios that I identify.

_____ a. From your perspective, what are the benefits and disadvantages of these different ways of having children?

> **Marital Childbearing:**
> _____ Scenario 1: Parents marry each other before having children and live together permanently
>
> _____ Scenario 2: Parents marry each other before having children but do not live together
>
> **Non-marital Childbearing:**
> _____ Scenario 3: Both parents are unmarried but are living together (cohabitation)
>
> _____ Scenario 4: Both parents are unmarried but not living together (visiting union)
>
> _____ Scenario 5: Outside children when the father is married to another woman
>
> _____ Scenario 6: Outside children when the mother is married to another man
>
> _____ Scenario 7: Outside children when both parents are married to other people

_____ b. Do families experience stress when family members migrate? If so, what kinds of stresses might these families experience?

_____ c. What are the potential stresses that families might face under the following migration scenarios?

> _____ Scenario 1. The father has migrated off-island and the mother and children stay on Saba.
>
> _____ Scenario 2. The father has migrated off-island and the mother and children migrate to another place.
>
> _____ Scenario 3. The mother has migrated off-island but takes the children with her. The father may stay on Saba but may migrate elsewhere.
>
> _____ Scenario 4. The mother has migrated off-island leaving the father *and* children on Saba.
>
> _____ Scenario 5. Both the mother and father have migrated off-island but the children stay on Saba with family or friends.

Topic 2: Childbearing, Childrearing, and Family Types (Continued)

Now that we have talked, in general terms, about different kinds of childbearing relationships on Saba and the impacts of migration on Saban families, I'd like to talk with you a little more about non-marital childbearing. Because it is becoming more common for Saban women to have children without being married, is important to understand why Saban women choose this path, what effects it has on women and children, and how people like you view non-marital childbearing.

_____ a. In general, what are your feelings about women having children before they are married?

_____ b. Is it more common for African- or European-descended women to have children before marriage? If there is a difference, why do you think this difference exists?

_____ c. Do men view women who had children before marriage differently? Is there a difference in attitudes between African- and European-descended men?

_____ d. Some parents have children before getting married and marry only after the children become adults. Why do you think that these parents wait so long to get married?

_____ e. Some parents have children before getting married but they marry when the children are quite young. Why do you think that these parents marry when their children are young?

_____ f. Do you think that the pressure to migrate on men and on women is part of the reason why women are having children before getting married?

_____ g. Did the idea of non-marital childbearing come from Saba or was it a way of life brought back to Saba from other places? If it was brought back from other places, what places do you these were and what were the reasons why Saban women chose to adopt these formerly non-Saban ways of life?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you a lot of questions about childbearing here on Saba, but before we move on to the next section on the responsibilities that men and women have for each other, can you think of any important childbearing-related issues that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

At this point, inform the interviewee that this is the approximate half-way point of the interview and ask them if they wish to continue or whether they would rather schedule another time to complete the interview.**

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Topic 3: Social constructions of gender; parental and extended family responsibilities for children

Now I'd like to ask you about some of the complex relationships that exist among men, women, and their children here on Saba. By sharing your thoughts about the following questions, we can begin to get a better sense of the responsibilities that men and women have for each other and for their children.

_____   a.   What qualities are most highly valued in women here on Saba? In men?

_____   b.   What qualities are most highly valued in a wife/girlfriend? Husband/boyfriend?

_____   c.   What makes someone a good mother? A good father?

_____   d.   What responsibilities does a man have for his children and do these responsibilities change depending on his relationship to the mother (married, cohabitating, visiting relationship, etc.)?

_____   e.   Why are some children born outside of marriage recognized by their fathers and some are not? What impact does recognition or non-recognition have on the life of a child?

_____   f.   What responsibilities do extended family members have for raising children? Do these expectations differ in the African- and European-descended communities? Do they differ depending on the marital status of the mother?

_____   g. For many different reasons, it is common to find children living with extended family members or friends rather than with their parents in Caribbean societies. Does this happen on Saba? If so, why do you think that some Saban children live with people other than their parents?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you a lot of questions about the responsibilities that men and women have for each other here on Saba, but before we move on to the next section on divorce, can you think of any important issues about male/female relationships that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

Topic 4: Divorce

We have talked a bit about the responsibilities that men and women have for each other. Now I'd like to talk about the relationships between those responsibilities and divorce here on Saba. I want to ask you these questions because it is important to know why Sabans get divorced, what impacts divorce has on Saban families, and how divorce is viewed by people like yourself.

_____   a. In general, how do you think that divorce has impacted families here on Saba?

_____   b. How do you think that divorce impacts Saban children?

_____   c. Does divorce impact men and women differently? If so, how?

_____   d. What responsibilities do the following people or groups have for children of divorce?

        _____   Mothers?

        _____   Fathers?

        _____   Extended family?

        _____   Family friends?

        _____   Community?

_____   e. Do fathers generally live up to the responsibilities that they have for their children after divorce? Mothers?

_____   f. What responsibilities do stepfathers have for their partner's children? Stepmothers?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you a lot of questions about the impact of divorce on Saba, but before we move on to the next section on race and ethnicity, can you think of any important issues about divorce that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

Topic 5: Social Constructions of Race and Ethnicity; The Role of Race in Family Formation

In some of the topics we've talked about today, we've discussed issues surrounding race and ethnicity in Saban society. Because it is inappropriate to assume that race and ethnicity are the same on Saba as they are in other places, I'd like to get your perspective on what Sabans mean when they talk about race and ethnicity and on how race and ethnicity are experienced here on Saba.

_____ a. How many different racial groups coexist on Saba and how can you tell who belongs to each racial group?

_____ b. How do people of mixed descent fit into this classification? How do you know that someone is of mixed descent?

_____ c. Are notions of race linked to ideas of race in other places (U.S., Europe, etc.) or are they distinctly Saban?

_____ d. Does racism exist on Saba? If so, what forms does it take? How can you tell when someone is racist?

_____ e. What are the general attitudes towards mixed descent couples on Saba? Of their children?

_____ f. What are the typical kinds of mixed-descent male-female relationships that exist on Saba (ex.: marital vs. non-marital union, childbearing vs. non-childbearing, African-ancestry man and European ancestry woman vs. African-ancestry woman and European ancestry man)

_____ g. Are attitudes towards mixed descent children different depending on the type of relationship their parents shared?

_____ h. Are people from certain communities on Saba more likely to marry and/or have children interracially? If so, why? Are interracial relationships more common now than they have been in the past?

_____ i. Saba has become more ethnically diverse over the past 20 years or so. In particular there are more people, especially women, from South America migrating to this island. Many of these women marry men from the European-descended community. Why do you think that European-descended men are choosing to bring in South American women to Saba? What, if any, effect has the presence of this new ethnic community had on Saba?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you a lot of questions about the race and ethnicity on Saba, but before we move on to the next section on changes in population composition, can you think of any important issues about Saban understandings of race and ethnicity that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

Topic 6: Population Decline and Population Composition

Now that we've talked about Saban perspectives on race and ethnicity, I'd like to hear your thoughts on the recent shift from a predominately European-descended population to a predominately African-descended population here on Saba.

_____   a. Has the shift changed life on Saba in any way? If so, in what ways?

_____   b. What, if anything, might this change mean for Saba's future?

_____   c. Has the shift from a majority European-descended population to a majority African-descended population changed the way that these communities interact with one another?

OPEN DISCUSSION FOR COMMENTS: I've asked you several questions about changes in population composition here on Saba, but before conclude the interview, can you think of any important issues related to changes in Saban population composition that you would like to talk about that we didn't cover in this section?

GENERAL COMMENTS: Are there any other issues that you would like to discuss before we finish our interview?

END OF INTERVIEW

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