

The Creolization of London Kinship: Mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families, 1950-2003

By

ELAINE ELOISE BAUER

Goldsmiths, University of London

PhD in Social Anthropology

October 2006

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Elaine Bauer

Abstract

This thesis explores the relationships of mixed-heritage Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London. The ethnography focused on thirty-four extended families, using participant observation, oral history and life stories to trace the transformations and explore the complexities of ideas and practices of kinship since the 1950s.

In the last fifty years there has been a growing proportion of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London. This thesis examines how family relationships have evolved through time and across generations, and in changing social and historical contexts. The central themes are: 1) The innovations and strategies involved in the construction of relationships; 2) The different constraints and possibilities that inform these strategies, both in relation to existing family structures and ideologies and the wider social structure; 3) The significance of women and children in making and sustaining kinship relations; 4) The importance of non-biological as well as biological notions of relatedness in the formation, support, and maintenance of the kinship network. 5) the extent to which many of these changes may be interpreted in terms of creolization.

The thesis is divided into three parts. The first part provides the background to the research and the research context. The second part consists of the first three ethnographic chapters which focus on particular extended families, illustrating the main themes. In the third part, the ethnography explores more generally the social contexts in which these families have emerged, and the ongoing modifications and negotiations through which they have responded to changing circumstances, both within the families and in the wider society.

The thesis makes an important contribution to the discipline and to wider debates because: a) it makes a scholarly contribution to current debates on “mixed-race” families; b) it explores continuities and modifications in Caribbean and British family patterns, including creolized forms in the London context; c) it contributes to recent anthropological work on kinship, based on how people themselves think and practice relatedness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research would not have been possible without the generous support of Lord Michael Young of the former Institute of Community Studies (presently The Young Foundation), the Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the ORS Awards Scheme (United Kingdom Scholarships for International Research Students). To these funding bodies I express sincere thanks for giving me the opportunity to live and study in the UK.

This research would also not have been possible without the women, men and children who shared their experiences with me. To these individuals who welcomed me into their homes, allowed me to observe and participate in their lives and candidly told their stories as I probed into some of the most intimate areas of their family lives, I am above all grateful.

I would like to thank my supervisors and committee members for their guidance, support, and encouragement throughout my research and writing process. Thanks to Dr. Victoria Goddard, Professor Sophie Day and Dr. Jean Besson for their sustained support, helpful suggestions and advice over the last five years.

During the period of my research, I also have been co-researching with Paul Thompson on a joint project on Jamaican Transnational Families. I would also like to thank him for his seemingly tireless feedback and intellectual ideas.

Finally, and very importantly, I thank my sons Nicholas and Anthony, and all my family and friends in Canada for their understanding and encouragement, as I traveled 5,000 miles across the Atlantic from Canada to study in the UK. And to Professor Pat Caplan, I would like to say many thanks for your encouragement and support when I first arrived at Goldsmiths and wanted to return home because of culture shock. Professor Caplan encouraged me to remain and investigate an area of study that although “complex”, is worthy of investigation.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction: London, the research context	7
	Methodology	30
Chapter 2	Outlining and assessing English kinship since the 1950s	46
Chapter 3	Coming Together: A case study of the Smith family	87
Chapter 4	Extending the links: The agency of women and the significance of children in the creation and maintenance of kinship	139
Chapter 5	Kinship histories: The significance of family history in the creation and maintenance of kinship relations	182
Chapter 6	Mixed sociability and the growth of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London	226
Chapter 7	Mixed-heritage, racial prejudice, and social positioning	268
Chapter 8	Conclusion	316
	Bibliography	329
Appendix 1	Geographical distribution of Caribbean/West Indians in London 1950s to 1991	353
Appendix 2	Ethnic group question in the census	356
Appendix 3	Sample profiles of mixed households	359
Appendix 4	Cross-generational transmission	363

Tables, Figures and Photographs

TABLES

Table 1:1 Regional distribution of Caribbean people, Great Britain, 1991	11
Table 1:2 Largest local Caribbean population in 1991	12
Table 1:3 Caribbean population in Britain, 1951-1991	26
Appendix 3: Table 1 Sample profile of mixed family households	360
Appendix 3: Table 2 Female-headed households	362
Appendix 4: Cross-generational transmission	363

FIGURES

Figure 3:1 The Smiths: four generations	127
Figure 4:1 Gobi's family of origin	178
Figure 4:2 Headley's family of origin	178
Figure 4:3 Gobi and Headley's extended family	179
Figure 4:4 Randall's family	179
Figure 4:5 Courtney's family	180
Figure 4:6 Gobi's extended family	181
Figure 5:1 Ken's family of origin	223
Figure 5:2 Verna's family of origin	224
Figure 5:3 Verna and Ken Morgan's extended family	225

PHOTOGRAPHS

Dusty Smith	128
Dawn and Dusty	129
The Smith's family	132

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: London, the research context

Since the early stages of colonialism, people from the Caribbean have been coming to Britain and forming intimate and family relationships with people in British society. A well-known case is that of Francis Barber, a Jamaican slave, who at age seventeen in 1752 became servant to Dr. Johnson, author of the famous English dictionary. Barber, who was educated at Johnson's expense, remained with him and became his valet and secretary, and Johnson's main heir. Barber married an Englishwoman, they had four children, and later bought a school, which he ran with his wife (<http://www.100greatblackbritons.com>). However, such cases were rare, and social relationships between Afro-Caribbean and white British people in Britain only started to become much more common during and after World War II. As a consequence of these social interactions, the last fifty years have evinced profound changes in social attitudes and patterns of family relationships in British society.

My research is an exploratory study of thirty-four mixed Anglo Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families in London across two to four generations from 1950 to 2003. My aim is to understand the *processes* by which their family relationships have evolved and continue to develop. The thesis also traces intergenerational transmission of family values and practices over time, and among family members who are constantly creating/re-inventing/negotiating alternative ways of being and conducting their families against the background of the conditions and constraints that already exist in their families of origin, and also in the wider society. Central to understanding these processes are five main areas of inquiry: 1) In the context of mixed social interactions, what have been the experiences of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families among members in the wider society, and among members in their own families, and how have their experiences changed over time? 2) How far have they innovated in their attitudes and

sociability? 3) How have family values and practices been negotiated between generations? 4) What is the significance of women and children in making and sustaining kinship relations. 5) and how far have family members created and maintained kinship (including fictive kinship) bonds outside their nuclear and genealogical ties?

My fieldwork was conducted between June 2002 and December 2003 in various neighbourhoods across London. In a practice that is common to traditional social anthropology, I began fieldwork in a particular locality/neighbourhood in the city that was well defined in terms of boundary, with the intention of getting to know as many mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families as I could possibly find in the neighbourhood, and spent my fieldwork in that locality largely observing their behaviour. After my encounter with the very first family, I became aware that this anthropologically tidy approach was not possible for this type of study. This approach might have worked for exploring households, or even for families among whom members do not marry outside of their own group, such as Bangladeshi families in east London (see Phillipson, Al-Haq, Ullah, and Ogg, 2000; Phillipson, Ahmed, and Latimer, 2003). But I soon realized that unlike Young and Willmott's extended families in Bethnal Green (1957), the families in my study extended not only outside of their immediate locality into greater London, but even to other countries across the Atlantic (see Bauer and Thompson, 2006). Furthermore, focusing on one locality might have posed a social class bias to my research. Thus, my inquiry involved families whose homes were dispersed across the greater London region.

It must be stressed from the start these families do not constitute a representative sample of all mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families in London. I have focused on common themes that run through all the families in the research, and I identified these through indexing and tabulating my fieldwork data. But there is considerable variety among the families in how these common themes and patterns are practiced. Hence, in order to avoid broad over-generalizations, I have used micro studies of individual families to illustrate the diversity of family forms and models, and

the connections between the family and wider cultural values, and the ability to transform customary family values. In other words, I have shown through individual family cases, how members in particular families relate to each other and organize their lives, given individual choices and the influences and constraints of others in their family and of the wider social forces. Nevertheless, I believe that as cases, in the anthropological tradition, they effectively “illustrate aspects of social process and demonstrate certain theoretical principles” (Wallman, 1984:vii). Rosser and Harris (1965) have pointed to the usefulness of the detailed study of single cases in “opening up lines of thought and inquiry”, and in “raising the questions that need to be asked rather than in providing the answers – the most difficult problem of all research being to discover the right questions rather than the right answers” (p. 17-18). Although about particular families, each different, each person’s narratives raise a number of the issues that are central to the understanding of family and kinship behaviour, and of individual experiences in Britain in general, and London in particular.

Let me begin by first setting the context from which the most dominant theme - the effects of mixed sociability on the process of kinship among mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families over time and across generations - has emerged, as the springboard from which the thesis arose.

London: The context of social mixing

People from the Commonwealth Caribbean and their offspring are currently the second largest minority ethnic groups in Britain behind people from the Indian sub-continent. In an analysis of the 1991 census, the Caribbean population in Great Britain totaled 678,365 (Table 1.1), representing 1.2 percent of the total population (Owen, 2001). Over half of all those recorded from a Caribbean background live in Greater London, where 290,968 were classified as Black Caribbean in the 1991 census (Owen, 2001:71; Peach 1996:11). Both the 1991 and 2001 census showed that in the London

boroughs of Lewisham, Lambeth, Brent and Hackney, Black Caribbeans form more than ten percent of the total population (Table 1.2)(Office of National Statistics: Census 2001 – Ethnicity and Religion in England and Wales). In Greater London, Black Caribbeans are the third largest ethnic minority group behind Indians and Black Africans (Census, April 2001, Office of National Statistics).

Analysis of the 1991 census also revealed that with regard to household composition, “Caribbean people display a higher rate of inter-ethnic group partnership than people from other ethnic groups...and are less likely than people from other ethnic groups to live in a household headed by a person from the same ethnic group” (Owen, 2001:87). Approximately three-quarters of Black-Caribbean households were headed by a person from a Black-Caribbean background, while more than a quarter lived in households with white heads. More strikingly, the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in 1994 found that among the second-generation African-Caribbean adults (offspring of Caribbean migrants) half of the men and a third of the women have white partners, and that “for two out of five (or 39 percent) of children with a Black Caribbean mother or father the other parent was white [typically a mother]” (Madood and Berthoud, 1997:30). Both the 1991 and 2001 censuses reported that London has the largest proportions of people of “Mixed origin”, of which the majority are “Mixed White and Black Caribbean” (David Owen, 1996; Office of National Statistics, census 2001).

Table 1.1 Regional distribution of Caribbean people within Great Britain, 1991

Region, county and Metropolitan county	Total population	Caribbean population (000s)	Percent of regional population	Share of G.B. total (%)
South East	17,208.3	432.4	2.5	63.7
Greater London	6,679.7	371.6	5.6	54.8
East Anglia	2,027.0	12.1	0.6	1.8
South West	4,609.4	19.0	0.4	2.8
West Midlands	5,150.2	96.9	1.9	14.3
West Midlands MC	2,551.7	87.9	3.4	13.0
East Midlands	3,953.4	35.1	0.9	5.2
Yorks & Humberside	4,836.5	31.7	0.7	4.7
South Yorkshire	1,262.6	8.6	0.7	1.3
West Yorkshire	2,013.7	21.3	1.1	3.1
North West	6,243.7	37.7	0.6	5.6
Greater Manchester	2,499.4	26.3	1.1	3.9
Merseyside	1,403.6	6.4	0.5	0.9
North	3,026.7	3.0	0.1	0.4
Tyne & Wear	1,095.2	1.3	0.1	0.2
Wales	2,835.1	6.8	0.2	1.0
Scotland	4,998.6	3.6	0.1	0.5
Great Britain	54,888.8	678.4	1.2	100.0

Source: 1991 Census of Population Local Base Statistics (Crown Copyright) cited by Owen, in Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001:72

Table 1.2 Largest local Caribbean populations in 1991

Local authority district (thousands)	Caribbean people	percent of local population	percent of all Caribbeans in Great Britain
Lambeth	37.4	15.3	5.5
Hackney	27.6	15.2	4.1
Lewisham	29.0	12.5	4.3
Brent	30.2	12.4	4.4
Haringey	23.5	11.6	3.5
Southwark	23.1	10.6	3.4
Newham	18.6	8.8	2.7
Waltham Forest	18.0	8.5	2.6
Wandsworth	19.5	7.7	2.9
Hammersmith and Fulham	11.4	7.7	1.7
Islington	11.4	6.9	1.7
Croydon	18.7	6.0	2.8
Birmingham	53.6	5.6	7.9
Ealing	15.1	5.5	2.2
Wolverhampton	12.1	5.0	1.8
Westminster, City of	8.5	4.9	1.3
Tower Hamlets	7.6	4.7	1.1
Enfield	11.8	4.6	1.7
Luton	7.7	4.5	1.1
Nottingham	11.6	4.4	1.7
Manchester	15.4	3.8	2.3
Merton	6.3	3.8	0.9
Kensington and Chelsea	5.0	3.6	0.7
Greenwich	7.2	3.5	1.1
Reading	4.4	3.4	0.7
Slough	3.4	3.4	0.5
Sandwell	9.4	3.2	1.4
Redbridge	7.1	3.1	1.0
Forest Heath	1.7	3.0	0.2
Harrow	5.8	2.9	0.8
Camden	4.8	2.8	0.7
Sum of above	466.9	—	68.8
Caribbean total	678.4	1.2	100.0

Source: 1991 Census of Population Base Statistics (Crown Copyright). Cited by Owen, in Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001:72

These figures provide a general statistical picture of the current landscape of London. It goes without saying that this has developed gradually, and especially over the last fifty years, with the history of Caribbean migration and settlement in Britain. Much has been written about this by historians and social scientists. However, a brief review here is necessary to set the scene for this development.

A brief history of Caribbean and white British social relationships

The presence of Caribbean people in Britain has resulted from two main phases in migration patterns since the 1940s. The first phase began during the Second World War, when Britain recruited thousands of West Indians in support of the war effort. These recruits were predominantly men (but also a smaller number of women), many of them children of the professional classes in the Caribbean, who served in the armed forces in the Royal Air force, or worked as technicians in Britain's war industry. While most of these servicemen and women returned to their home countries after the war ended in 1945, some remained, and because there were many more men than women, they tended to marry white British women. The early post-war experience is vividly conveyed by Sam Selvon's novel *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and in Mike and Trevor Phillips' *Windrush* (1999). The second phase of migration was due partly to the response to labour shortages in Britain as a consequence of the post-war reconstruction programme (Peach, 1968), and deteriorating economic conditions in the West Indies (Patterson, 1963). Immediately after the war, due to the lack of regular passenger boat services, some migrants arrived in British ports as stowaways (Patterson, 1963:45), others via New York. It was in 1948, on the former German trooper the SS Empire Windrush that the first large group of West Indian migrants arrived in Britain (Phillips & Phillips, 1999).

The majority of these migrants were again young males, semi-skilled and skilled workers from Jamaica (Deakin, 1969). The scene shifted dramatically

and the gender imbalance was resolved to a large degree in the 1950s, when British Rail, London Transport, and the new National Health hospitals actively recruited in the West Indies for both men and women staff. Subsequently, in the next few years many of those already in Britain paid for other family members to join them. By the 1961 census, there were some 200,000 West Indians in England, already an unprecedentedly high figure. Half of them were from Jamaica, and more than half lived in London. By 1971, the numbers had more than doubled to over 500,000 (Phillips & Phillips, 1999; Hiro, 1971; Peach, 1968, 1996).

Reaction to the new arrivals

This second and large-scale arrival of West Indians brought a significantly different scale of contact between the white British population and people of different skin colour. Certainly African slaves had been brought to Britain from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards to serve the aristocracy and some wealthy merchants, and later, West Indian plantation owners would bring their own slaves back to Britain to care for them in their declining years back home in Britain. But in 1772 the famous judgment of Lord Mansfield, that slavery was not “allowed or approved by the law of England”, brought an end to the importation of African slaves and servants, and resulted in a gradual decline in the number of African slaves in Britain (Banton, 1960:55). Of the nearly fifteen thousand slaves in Britain at the time who were freed, some apparently remained in the service of their former owners, while others who had particular skilled trades moved to live in London (Patterson, 1965:42).

From the end of the eighteenth century onwards another phase began of a “small but steady flow of coloured visitors”. Some seamen settled in the dock areas of London, Cardiff, Bristol, Liverpool, Hull, and North and South Shields (Banton, 1960: 55), and London especially attracted “coloured students”, among whom West Indians were the second largest group behind Indians (Patterson, 1965:43). Seamen were typically away at sea for long periods, and ashore lived in “isolated and self-segregated settlements”, with

little contact with the indigenous British population. Students interacted with fellow-students, teachers, landladies, and minor officials, but left a little impression on the mass of the British populace (Patterson, 1965:42-44).

Thus, it wasn't until the Second World War and the post-war years, when West Indian migrants arrived in Britain in large numbers, that the British public came into contact with them in any significant way. The overall reaction to the arrival of the new migrants by the host community was one of prejudice and hostility (see Banton, 1955; Glass, 1960; Patterson 1965). Beginning with the first arrival of immigrants on the *Empire Windrush* in June 1948, the *Daily Express* reported:

**EMPIRE MEN FLEE NO JOBS LAND:
500 HOPE TO START A NEW LIFE TODAY**

Five hundred unwanted people, picked up by the trooper *Empire Windrush* after it had roamed the Caribbean, Mexican Gulf, and Atlantic for 27 days are hoping for a new life. They include 430 Jamaican men. And there are 60 Polish women who wandered from Siberia via India, Australia, New Zealand and Africa to Mexico, where they embarked in the *Empire Windrush*. The Jamaicans are fleeing from a land with large unemployment. Many of them recognize the futility of their life at home. (*Daily Express*, 21 June 1948, cited in Phillips & Phillips 1999:53).

At a political level, the arrival of these “unwanted people” had indeed become a “shipload of worry for Mr. George Isaacs, Minister of Labour”, who felt the need to do his “best” for them because they “are British citizens”, and “hope no encouragement will be given to others to follow them”. (*Daily Express*, Tuesday 8 June 1948, cited in Phillips & Phillips, 1999: 59). At the local level, the new arrivals were often “reproached with the question ‘Why don’t you go home?’” (Banton, 1955:18). Additionally, not only did they face housing difficulties from “white landladies and landlords” who advertised “Sorry, no coloured”, or “English only” notices (Patterson, 1965:187), but newspapers, even when supposedly liberal in their editorial attitude towards “coloured people”, still accepted and printed discriminatory housing advertisements (Glass, 1960:109). In her study, Glass found that even with housing advertisements void of any hint of discrimination, when members of

her research team called, “enquiring about a room or flat on behalf of a West Indian friend... one out of every six were prepared to consider the application” (p. 60). Moreover, a few landlords or landladies asked: ““Are your friends very coloured?”” implying that they might be willing to accept an “Indian but not a Negro”. (p. 61). Additionally, Patterson (1965) found that in Brixton there was widespread belief that the arrival of West Indians in a street or neighbourhood caused property values to depreciate. Thus, there were many appeals made by local ratepayers seeking lower council taxes on the ground that “property values were being lowered by the ‘influx of Jamaicans’” (Patterson, 1965:171).

At work, however, because of Britain’s post-war labour shortage, discrimination was more often disguised. The recruitment of workers in both state and private enterprises was a question of public policy, determined by agreements between trade unions and employers’ associations and government. Therefore, “anti-coloured” tags in advertisements of vacant jobs were not sanctioned in the same way as housing advertisements, and in the employment sphere, tolerance was “in some respects ‘nationalised’” (Glass, 1960:66-76). Glass found that on the whole, English people had an entirely different attitude to their workmates than they had with their neighbours or would-be-neighbours. While they were prepared to work with “coloured people”, or even under them, they might be most reluctant to accept the idea of living next to them. An English person was “far more likely to be aware of their dark skin at home than in the factory”. (p. 67). By contrast, at a social level West Indian men were widely stereotyped and “feared as a threat to White female sexuality”, while the women were regarded as “primitive and dirty” (Chamberlain, 2001:44).

In her classic study *Dark Strangers: A study of West Indians in London* (1965 [1963]), Sheila Patterson explained the reaction of the white British population in Brixton to their West Indian neighbours in terms of “an immigrant situation”. According to her, the situation in Britain at the time was not a “colour or race situation, however much it may appear so to many colour-conscious migrants- it is an immigrant situation” (p. 17). She described

Britain at the time as an insular, conservative, and homogeneous society where “mild xenophobia or antipathy to outsiders would appear to be a cultural norm” (p.17). However, she argued that this xenophobia or antipathy extended in varying degrees to all outsiders, whether “Poles” or “coloured people”, or people from the next village or street (p. 17). (Indeed, the Irish, the Welsh, and the Jews had also experienced discrimination, but less so after the war when they had become more socially and economically integrated (see Benson, 2995; Marwick, 2003; Merriman, 1993)).

Contrary to Patterson’s argument, Ruth Glass (1960), who conducted her research across London during the same period as Patterson conducted her work in Brixton, argued that the problem was one of colour. According to Glass:

No other recently arrived minority group has aroused emotions and controversies of the same intensity and scale. There has been far less interest, for example, in the migration of Poles to Britain during and after World War II than in the migration of West Indians, although the number of Poles settled here is very similar to that of West Indians. The Poles, moreover, are in certain respects, of which language is only one, more alien than West Indians. But the West Indians in Britain are more noticeable than the Poles, irrespective of class differences between immigrants and natives, and between different groups of immigrants. And while it may be true that, as some people argue, the difficulties of all newcomers to Britain are alike, it is also true that coloured people meet these difficulties in an accentuated form. They are not simply migrants: they are coloured migrants. A white newcomer can hide, or eventually lose, the obvious signs of his foreignness; a dark skinned man cannot wash off his colour (Glass, 1960:3).

More recent scholars have come to support Glass’ view on the grounds that the Poles who entered Britain during and after World War II outnumbered the West Indians, yet their entry did not incite the same intense prejudice. Therefore, since the problem was not one of number, then it was “one of colour, culture and historical antecedents” (Goulbourne, 2002:33).

Interestingly, in the case of the migrants’ children’s experiences in London schools, Glass found that, unlike harassment encountered by the children of the earlier migrant settlers (such as the Jews, the Cypriots, the Italians, the

Hungarians and the Poles and the Indians and Pakistanis), the children of the West Indian migrants did not encounter the same difficulties. To begin with, the West Indian child population in London at the time was very small, due to the high percentage of single young people among the migrant population, who were also predominantly males. Additionally, many parents who emigrated left their young children behind in their home countries with extended families. This difference in the level of harassment between the children of West Indian migrants and the children of earlier migrant settlers was due largely to the absence of a language barrier among the West Indian children and their teachers and peers. Thus, the fact that they could establish communication immediately, meant that they had the advantage that they were not categorized as outsiders. Furthermore, according to Glass, because West Indian parents treated their children with a “careful, often very strict, old-fashioned manner...and the girls wear clean dresses everyday, the boys clean shirts...there are no obvious signs of exceptional poverty in their dress manner..[and] scholastically, too, they are so far in the middle range” (Glass, 1960:64), this initially made for an easier process of accommodation in the school environment.

Instead of discrimination towards the West Indian pupils, their white peers displayed a sense of curiosity “just because they looked different” (Glass, 1960:65) and often competed for the seat next to them. Glass found that discrimination was found mainly in schools with a larger number of migrant West Indian children, who discriminated against one another in terms of colour, calling each other “blackie”, or “you are blacker than me”, a colour-consciousness they had taken from the Caribbean to their new location (Glass, 1960:65). It was only subsequently at secondary schools that relationships between Caribbean and white English students took on a different phase, when according to Glass, white students were no longer “colour-blind”, and their “mental climate is then only one of the many contradictory influences to which they are exposed” (p. 65-66). Thus, it was at the secondary level of education that relationships between West Indian and white children became more complex.

Migrant's attitudes and coping strategies

Before their arrival in Britain, West Indians had very little in common besides being territories under British control. The British West Indian islands are widely scattered, varied in their sizes, with their own special features, their unique traditions, self-image, sense of individuality, and particular views of the other islands. Within each island there exist further variations. People from the rural areas do not always share similar ideologies with people from urban areas – including ideologies of “race”. According to Caribbean socio-cultural constructions, the island populations range in a continuum of skin colour from “white” to “black” (see Henriques, 1953: Chapter 3; Lowenthal, 1972: Chapter III; Hoetink, 1985). Different colonial histories have also resulted in populations of varying origins, with people who came from Africa and Europe, and sometimes from the Middle East, China, or India; and later biological mixing has brought further changes. But more generally there exists a social-class hierarchy based on colour, with the lightest people at the top and the darkest at the bottom, and associated colour-class prejudices. Thus, the image of the West Indian middle-class and elite resembles very much the image of the British middle-class, whom they regard as their model, and which sets them apart from their working-class counterparts (see Lowenthal, 1972; Henriques, 1968; M. G. Smith, 1965).

Inter-island rivalry is a well-known phenomenon in the Caribbean. For example, people from the larger islands often view those from the smaller islands as culturally inferior. They, in turn, may criticize people from the larger islands for their air of superiority or their domineering attitude. So while Barbadians are viewed as “inferiors from a feudal society, who try to be more English than the English”, Jamaicans are often characterized as “aggressive” (Glass, 1960: 93-94). Occasionally, these differences in attitudes were manifested in quarrels and fights in factories and Caribbean clubs in London. Moreover, middle-class West Indians were often seen as remaining aloof from their working-class counterparts (Glass, 1960).

Despite the different experiences and ideologies they brought from the Caribbean, upon arriving in Britain they experienced a common feeling of being outsiders and mutual strangers. Not only were people from different islands now living side by side with each other in concentrated areas of London, but most could only afford rents in cramped and crowded lodgings. Glass describes the typical situation as one in which a family, or several single migrants shared a room –often a small room – which served as bedroom, cooking and eating and leisure area. The furniture was usually very meager, and sanitary and washing facilities typically shared with other tenants (Glass, 1960:54). Thus, having little choice but to live side by side, they underwent a change in relation to each other. Furthermore, as far as the indigenous British population and other groups were concerned, West Indian peoples were all characterized as “Blacks” or “Jamaicans”, categories that would have offended many before they arrived (for example those of mixed parentage and non-Jamaicans). Thus, it was upon their arrival in Britain that people from the Caribbean islands realized much of their commonalities, and on this basis they have created and developed ethnic bonds that do not exist in the same way in the region (See Goulbourne 2001; 2002).

Goulbourne cogently illustrates how the creation and development of new ethnic bonds among people from the Caribbean is reflected in several British practices which have come to define the Caribbean in Britain: “The participation of Jamaicans in the (originally Trinidadian) Notting Hill Carnival, the growth and popularity of reggae (originally from Jamaica) in Britain, the display if not quite embrace of the Rastafarian lifestyle far beyond its narrow following in Jamaica, and the use of terms such as ‘Afro-Caribbean’ or ‘African Caribbean’ that have little or no meaning within the region itself” (Goulbourne, 2002: 29). In short, before migrating to Britain, most West Indians, although aware of their historical African background, had been more aware of their British connections. But due to their mainly negative experience upon arrival in Britain, they were now forced to forge a new and common identity (see Glass, 1960; Goulbourne, 2001).

Caribbean and White British mixed sociability

When did Caribbean people and the indigenous British people begin to mix socially? And what were the attitudes to this, of individuals from both the white and the West Indian populations? As we have seen, social interactions began in the workplace and in schools, and to a lesser degree in some living accommodations that West Indians shared with people from the poorer sector of the host society. There were also places such as churches, voluntary welfare associations, and leisure associations, children's societies, sports clubs, and interracial associations, where contacts were made between the West Indian and the indigenous population. On the whole, however, "these organizations tended to be the asymmetrical type of association where something is done *for* the applicant, rather than the symmetrical assemblies of like-minded where members cooperate *with* each other for certain ends" (Patterson, 1965:226). The "interracial associations" for example, which were set up by white sponsors as a way of bridging the "colour barrier" by bringing people of different colour together, failed on the grounds of too few white members, lack of common interests, differences in cultural expectations regarding the types of activities, and colour consciousness (Patterson, 1965:225-245).

Outside of these associational contacts, there were also informal social contacts and intimate relations between the West Indians and the local white people. Research conducted during the period of early West Indian settlement in London gives a mixed view. Banton's (1955) work in the Stepney dockland area reported far less social contact outside work than Patterson's (1963) study of the much larger West Indian population in Brixton. But both were researching in the 1950s when the West Indian (and other black) population was predominantly male. Hence, relationships with English women were the common experience for these men – and more so in Stepney than in Brixton. And in both contexts, they found that mixed-relationships and marriages were, on the whole, not accepted by the mainstream English population.

Banton concluded that the women who married these immigrant men were largely from outside the local district, and that they “rarely retain strong ties with their own kinsfolk” (1959:120); were “outcasts from white society” with a “background of deprivation”, who were “psychologically abnormal” (ibid:127). Essentially, these were women who were “incapable of conforming to the standards of her own group”, and therefore more likely to be drawn to “coloured men” (Banton 1959: 127). Consequently, the couples and their children socialized largely in a “coloured” social environment. Banton’s assertion warrants some caution, as it appears to feed into the prejudices of the wider society at the time.

From her Brixton sample Patterson reported a dozen mixed-marriages between English women and West Indian men, half involving “old-timers” who were skilled artisans or clerks, and had been Brixton residents since the 1914-18 war. These old-timers’ wives came mainly from upper-working-class backgrounds, and had themselves experienced an “initial period of rejection and disapproval by their own families and friends” before an eventual stage of partial or full acceptance (Patterson, 1965:251-252). With regards to sociability, Patterson reports that the friends and acquaintances of these couples were usually “white people”, perhaps due to their small number, and the length of time that these old-timers settled in south London, and the result of the “acculturative process” overtime, whereby, they “adapted to local ways” and had been “accepted in the local society” (ibid: 252). Outside of these half a dozen “old-timers”, the other cases of mixed marriages in Brixton involved younger “coloured” professional men, who had met their wives during the war or during their years of study in Britain. These English wives came from similar social and economic backgrounds to that of their husbands, and unlike the wives of the old-timers, they were, due to their militant opposition to any form of colour bar, strongly identified with their husband’s group. Thus, much of their leisure time was spent with “coloured people or liberal-minded whites from a similar socio-cultural background” (Patterson 1965:253). As with the disapproval of such relationships found by Banton, Patterson found that on the whole, although this handful of mixed marriages in Brixton were

successful, they did not succeed in changing the generally unfavourable local attitudes to such relationships and marriages (p.253).

In her cross-London research, Glass (1960) gives a plausibly balanced view on the attitudes of people both in the host society and among the newcomers. She found the general attitudes of members in the host society towards the West Indian migrants varied according to the social class status of the migrant. Thus the middle class West Indian's status allowed him to live and work in a "protected environment", where his neighbours and colleagues did not regard him as a threat to their status: "He shares their interests; he speaks their 'language'; his manners, his clothes and his routine are the same as theirs (or just as varied as theirs). And if he does seem different, he may be accepted for that very reason. He is often in a circle where it is the non-conformist who conforms where individuality or eccentricity (if only of a particular kind) is welcome" (Glass, 1960:107). Thus, the West Indian doctor or social worker, a journalist, a jazz player or a student spent much of his time among people who were neither strange to him nor saw him as strange. It was only when he ventured outside his immediate group that his colour became an issue.

This situation contrasts with the West Indian manual labourer. As Glass points out, most West Indians who migrate do not come from the lowest ranks of their own society, and had therefore never thought of themselves as working class before they arrived in Britain. Many who had been employers in the West Indies became factory hands in London, and some women who had had their own maids in the Caribbean had become kitchenmaids in Britain. The people among whom they now lived and worked did not correspond to their previous idealized image of the well-to-do British. Furthermore to their neighbours and co-workers, they were foreigners. Thus, there was a sense of mutual strangeness. "For in an atmosphere of insecurity, any outsider is a competitor. In the confined quarters of working class districts, there is not much room for any deviation from the norm... The newcomer is expected to obey the varying specific rules" (Glass, 1960:107). Thus, while the migrants soon discarded their idealized textbook notions of

British people, the British people held on to their “pessimistic, though ambivalent, stereotype notions of coloured people” (p. 108).

While sometimes mutual strangeness had been modified as a result of personal acquaintance, in general, the barriers between “natives” and newcomers, erected by the stereotypes on both sides, were still maintained (p. 108). Glass concluded that resentment of “coloured people” in Britain was most evident in neighbourhoods “where the coloured are most likely to be thought of collectively – as intruders, competitors and ‘invaders’” (p. 124). In line with Banton and Patterson, she also points to resentments with respect to sexual relationships. Taken collectively, the findings and conclusions of these early studies suggest that the experience of sociability between West Indians and white British people – with some exceptions – was rife with resentments and stereotypes on both sides.

In the early 1970s when Susan Benson conducted the first substantial study of twenty *Interracial Families in London* (published in 1981), she again found that the social relationships between individuals from different ethnic groups in Brixton were “relations between stranger, albeit strangers who might well live in the same street or work in the same factory” (Benson, 1981:48). Outside of work, most interactions across the colour boundary developed in what she terms “‘neutral’ arenas”, such as the marketplace, and involved only limited social relationships. There were other forms of “guest-host” relationships that were temporary and situational – “such as when Englishmen visited a West Indian rum café to buy ‘ganja’ (cannabis)” or “when a Jamaican electrician invited his English workmate to attend his family weddings and christenings” (p. 48). Patterson points out that such interaction did not, however, negate the colour or ethnic boundary. Furthermore, such relationships were unproblematic between same sex individuals, but were regarded as problematic when women and men of the different groups were involved. She concluded that English, Scottish or Irish women who had West Indian male partners were not regarded as respectable in the eyes of the wider “white” community, and were thus marginalized to the “black Brixton world” (p. 49).

The current situation

Since Susan Benson's work thirty five years ago, no research has been done in London – or even in Britain – on the social relationships between Caribbean and white British people. Additionally, outside Wallman's research on *Eight London Households* (1984), in which she also explored two West Indian households, no in-depth investigation into the extended Caribbean family in Britain has ever been carried out. As Goulbourne observes (2001:25), this is somewhat surprising, given that discussions about problems faced by communities in Britain are nearly always informed by general assumptions about their family and kinship patterns. Debates regarding the Caribbean community and employment, education, housing, the police, or child welfare have generally incorporated specific notions about Caribbean family life, customs and traditions (see for example, Dench, 1992; Barn, 2001). However, with the exception of Tracey Reynolds' work on "Caribbean fathers" (Reynolds, 2001), and her work on *Caribbean Mothers* (2005), there is a lack of qualitative studies on Caribbean family life in Britain.

By the 1970s the hostile political and local reaction to the influx of West Indians – and to some extent the impact of their numbers on housing and the fluctuating labour market – had resulted in the imposition of immigration controls on colonial British subjects, removing their right of free entry by a series of key new legislation from 1962 to 1971 (see Goulbourne, 2002; Marwick, 2003; Rosen, 2003). Following this the growth of the West Indian community sharply slowed down (Table 1.3), with a current total of migrants and their descendants of approximately 600,000 (National Statistics Online), now sustaining itself more through children born in Britain than from new migrants. Additionally, over time, the communities shifted from being mainly composed of young migrants to mixed-aged, with both children and grandparents present. Another particularly striking long-term change – as shown by the statistics earlier - has been that the rate of intermarriage with white partners, which, after dipping sharply in the 1960s and 70s with the arrival of more Caribbean women, has risen among young Afro-Caribbean men and women to a very high level (Berthoud, 2000).

Table 1.3 Caribbean population in Britain, 1951-1991

Year	Caribbean Birthplace	UK-Born children of WI-Born	Best estimate Caribbean population
1951	17,218	10,000	28,000
1961	173,659	35,000	209,000
1966	269,300	133,000	402,000
1971	304,070	244,000	548,000
1981a	295,179	250,565	546,000
1981b	268,000	244,000	519,000
1984	242,000	281,000	529,000
1986-8	233,000	262,000	495,000
1999	264,591	268,337-326,443	499,964-558,070

(Source: Ceri Peach, 1996:26)

What has been investigated?

It is estimated that Britain currently has the highest rate of intermarriage and children of mixed-parentage in the Western world, among which the largest mix is Afro-Caribbean and white British individuals (Alibhai-Brown, 2001:77). It is not surprising, given the rise in intermarriage between Afro-Caribbeans and members of the white British populace over time, that current surveys on British Social Attitudes reflect a higher level of tolerance to such marriages and families than in the past (see Alibhai-Brown, 2001; Madood, Beishon and Virdee, 1994). However, despite this growing phenomenon in Britain in general and in London in particular, there has been no research to date on the wider families of these individuals.

Two attempts have so far been made to investigate mixed marriages between Africans and white British couples, and West Indians and white British couples. The first was Clifford Hill's (1965) inquiry into thirty-six mixed marriages in north London, which was part of a wider research project that

looked at “Colour Prejudice in Britain”. Hill’s survey revealed that ninety-one percent of the white population they interviewed in north London disapproved of mixed marriages between “white and coloured people” (Hill, 1965: 209). The second was Susan Benson’s more in-depth PhD research (mentioned earlier), conducted in the early 1970s (and published in 1981), looking at twenty working-class “interracial” couple households, comprising of African and white British and West Indian and white British backgrounds. Benson concluded that in English society “where ethnicity is a significant component of social identity and an important principle of association and dissociation in social life” (1981:1), people in “interracial marriages, ‘mixed’ marriages between ‘white’ and ‘coloured’ [have an] ambiguous position”(p.1). Their ambiguous position is not only externally imposed, but also arises from their own ambivalent feelings about ethnicity, and whatever strategy they used to deal with their ambiguous ethnicity, whether successful or not, has social costs and benefits. “These costs and benefits were reflected especially clearly in the problems faced by the children of these interracial couples” (Benson, 1981:133).

With regards to Benson’s work, apart from the problems with her discussion of children’s identity (see below), had she focussed on a more culturally coherent group, her findings might have offered some very different explanations with regards to “ethnicity” and “mixing”. It is well known that the cultural attitudes of Africans and West Indians are different – a pertinent example is their attitudes to skin colour. The term “coloured” implies a mixed origin of part European and part African blood. While it might be insulting to a Nigerian or a Ghanaian to be called “coloured”, because most Africans find such mixture undesirable, many West Indians are proud of the mixture, because in their societies of origin, skin colour corresponds with class status – the lighter the colour of the skin the higher up the social scale (see Hill, 1965: 12; Henriques, 1968). Benson herself noted West Indians and West Africans “felt themselves to be very different people, with very little in common” (1981:39-43).

Of other in-depth qualitative works done in Britain thus far, the focus has mainly been on the children of mixed “black and white” parentage and issues of identity formation. While the earlier studies of West Indian – and African – settlement in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s were mainly sociological, with an emphasis on race relations, many of these studies were informed by assumptions of a “problem” for children of mixed parentage. The popular view, repeated in the earlier research, had been that neither the “black” nor the “white” community accepted children born of mixed marriages, who therefore developed identity “problems” reflecting their ambiguous social positions (see for example Banton, 1955; Hill, 1965; Little, 1947; Richmond, 1955). But from the 1970s researchers painted a more optimistic picture (see Bagley and Young, 1979; Durojaiye, 1970; Wilson, 1987; Tizard and Phonex, 1993), demonstrating that this assumption was unfounded, unsupported by sound empirical evidence, so that conclusions were drawn from “a mixture of impressionistic observation, popular myth and theoretical analysis of race and racism in Britain” (Wilson, 1987:16). The more recent studies showed that “mixed-race” children identified with both their “black” and “white” peers (Durojaiye, 1970), and that their evaluation of colour was based on positive evaluations of both of their parents. Furthermore, their positive identification was reflected in high levels of self-esteem (Bagley and Young, 1979).

Benson’s study of “interracial” household families in Brixton is the only post-1960s research that paints a less optimistic picture of the identity of children of mixed-parentage, and her data on the children warrant some caution. While her primary focus was on the *identity of the couples* rather than on the children’s identity, on the basis of very little first-hand, or as she terms it, “incomplete information” (Benson 1981:143), Benson endorsed the “problem” perspective of the earlier studies. And although the twenty-seven children in her study ranged from a few months to twenty years of age, she drew conclusions about their friendships and identity not from the children’s own accounts, but from incidents she observed, or accounts given by their parents. She reported that many of the children in her sample had “identity problems” as indicated by their denial of “black” identity, or their desire to “change their appearance so that they looked more like whites”, or trying to “wash off their

‘dirty’ brown skin” (p. 143). Benson argued that, “In a racially divided society, where differences of ethnic origin are of primary significance in establishing social identity, the future lives of such children must, inevitably, be fraught with difficulties” (p. 144). Given the unsystematic and second-hand nature of Benson’s information, it is questionable whether her findings and conclusions accurately reflect the views of the children in her study in a small area of London, let alone children of similar parentage in all of London. Instead, her findings and conclusions appear to have fed into the anxieties of the parents about their children, especially when compared with findings from other studies that were conducted around the same time, which illustrated positive identification among “mixed-race” children (see Bagley and Young, 1979; Durojaiye, 1970).

The only British researchers who have subsequently addressed, in-depth, the issue of “identity” in mixed-parentage children living with their own parents, have been Ann Wilson (1987), and Barbara Tizard and Ann Phoenix (1993). These studies looked at children in both “black” areas and “white” areas, and from working-class as well as middle-class backgrounds. Wilson’s study of fifty-one six to nine year-old British children, with one white parent and the other African or Afro-Caribbean, found that “many children seemed to have found a happy and secure identity for themselves as ‘black mixed race’”(Wilson, 1987:vi). Tizard and Phoenix’s fifty-eight adolescents were from similarly mixed family and social class backgrounds. Both found little evidence of “identity” confusion among their participants. These two studies demonstrate the difference between the findings and conclusions based on scanty evidence and common assumptions, and those formed from systematic empirical evidence.

More recently, Windance Twine’s (1999) work on “white” mothers of “black” children in Britain has been exploring the acts of “antiracism” that such mothers engage in, in their daily lives. Windance Twine argues that white mothers of African-descent children in Britain differ from the white mothers of white children, in that they “may have to prove their maternal competence to Black family members as *white* mothers in multiethnic families”(p. 730).

Consequently, in contrast to Black mothers of Black children (and to the white mothers of white children), they may subject themselves to the close surveillance, evaluation, and, sometimes harsh criticism of their Black family members to insure that they are culturally competent as the mothers of Black children” (1999:744). She further highlights how white mothers who raise their children to self-identify as “Black” must not only “bear their whiteness in ways that are different from the white mothers of white children” (p. 730), but struggle to counter a harsher degree of everyday racism (p. 744).

It does not take the evidence of such literature or the census to become aware of the extent of social mixing that has evolved in London over the past fifty years between Afro-Caribbeans and white British people. This phenomenon is evident in nearly all aspects of individuals’ lives – in schools, churches, workplaces, entertainment and leisure activities, and neighbourhoods. Given this history of social relationships between Afro-Caribbeans and white British people, and the rate of intermarriage and family formations between these two groups, why have these families gone uninvestigated? What has been done on British/English kinship within the last fifty years? How might these studies inform my research? These are the questions that the following chapter sets out to explore. However, before doing so, I turn first to methodology.

Methodology

The Research Process

Methodologically, the research process is sometimes described as a linear progression, whereby the researcher begins with an idea, gathers theoretical information, develops a research design, collects and analyzes the data, then reports the findings: the theory-before-research model (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992:46). In effect, tasks are completed in stages with each stage considered complete as the research progresses forward.

My own research model proved to be one of a more cyclical or spiraling process, and resembles the classic approach of Glaser and Strauss’ (1967)

“grounded theory”. It began with an idea which derived from own inquisitiveness about a group of people of whom very little is known, followed by a literature review that provided me with theoretical concepts and some existing approaches which helped me to formulate and refine my ideas. Next I designed methods for data collection, followed by actual data collection. Data collection and analysis led me to re-examine and rethink theoretical approaches as new explanations emerged from the data. This ensured a constant re-examination of each stage of the research process. The process lasted approximately four years from June 2002 to September 2006 (while also teaching from October 2004 to 2006). The process involved eighteen months of fieldwork which included participant observation and interviews, six months of transcribing ninety-eight interviews (transcribed by myself), and eighteen months of writing up.

The sample

The group on which this study is based consisted of thirty-four mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families in London across three and four generations. I originally thought of conducting my investigation in a single borough in order to maintain an anthropologically tidy tradition. However, very soon into my fieldwork, I realized that it would be impractical to restrict the sample to a single borough when intergenerational family residential mobility is taken into account. I also observed that restricting the sample to a single borough or neighbourhood would narrow the social class range of my families. Unlike Young and Willmott’s (1957) East London families, or Firth’s (1956) middle-class London families, contemporary mixed-heritage families are not contained in a single community. Hence, I obtained participants for my sample through suggestions from people I knew, from conversations at family functions, at churches, at academic seminars, standing in lines at banks, train stations, and at airports, and also by approaching possible participants in public places such as parks, on the streets and on public transportation (this approach was not always successful).

My investigation began primarily with the mixed-heritage couple and sometimes the mixed-heritage child, and continued on to the extended family of both the Afro-Caribbean and the white English partners, with the eventual investigation of the extended family as a whole. Sometimes I began with a grandparent and worked down and out into the kin universe.

I tried to obtain a balance in terms of the gender and heritage/ethnic combination of the starting couples. Thus, of the thirty-four families, starting with the initial couple, twelve were made up of an Afro-Caribbean female with a white British male, three were made up of a mixed female (Afro-Caribbean and white British) and a white British male, and nineteen were made up of a white British female and an Afro-Caribbean male (Appendix III: Table 1). The household couples consisted of eleven parents who were legally married and still living together, six who were legally married but had parted, eight who were cohabiting, five who were cohabiting but had parted, three in “visiting” or “extra-residential” relationships, and one foster family (Appendix III: Table 1). There were nine families with female-headed households. Two of these were black women of whom two were legally married but since parted, one mixed-race woman (Afro-Caribbean and English mix), and six were white women, two of whom were legally married but since parted (see Appendix III: Table 2).

Children

In the sample of thirty-four extended families there were numerous children of both Afro-Caribbean and white British ancestries across two to four generations. There were twenty-six households with children still living at home. Eighteen of these households consisted of only mixed-race children, and eight consisted of a combination of mixed-race and black children, or mixed-race and white children, or mixed-race, white, and black children all in the same household (Appendix III: Table 1). In particular, however, I was aware of one hundred and twenty-seven mixed-race children, among whom were twenty-nine adults and ninety-eight children ages six months to nineteen years old (these included grand and great-grand children, nieces, nephews and cousins in the extended family). I made contact with fifteen mixed-race adults

and forty-three mixed-race children between the ages of one and a half and nineteen years old.

Sample bias

Because there was no basis available for a random sample, I used the strategic sampling approach. Thus, I recognize the limits regarding the generalizability of the findings and conclusions. One particular limitation is in the gender bias in the older generation. While among the current families there is more of a colour/gender balance, among the earlier families there are more white English wives with Afro-Caribbean men. However, this is no accident. Because male immigrants from the Caribbean in the 1950s far outnumbered women, mixed marriages were largely between Caribbean men and white British women. It was only from the late 1950s that many men began to send for their wives, and also a large number of women from the Caribbean began to arrive independently in search of work. Hence, up until the 1960s there were always fewer marriageable Caribbean women in Britain than men (Hill, 1965:215-216). In my sample there is only one such family. In his sample of thirty-six mixed marriages Hill found only two such couples. By the early 1970s, in her sample of twenty couples, Benson study included two African women and two Caribbean women. These limitations considered, my findings must therefore be seen as exploratory rather definitive.

Methods of data collection

Regarding contemporary research practice, Clifford notes: “Despite the move out of literal villages, the notion of fieldwork as a special kind of localized dwelling remains” (Clifford, 1992:98). Thus, contemporary anthropologists are increasingly calling for a re-evaluation of traditional anthropological methods to accommodate for the increasing mobility of people whom they study (see Amit, 2000; Bauer and Thompson, 2006; Horst and Miller, 2005; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997), and for the increasing number of studies that are being conducted in urban and diasporic contexts.

There is no denying that conducting ethnographic fieldwork in dense urban cities requires modifications of the traditional paradigm of participant observation. Given that people's lives and activities are fluid, exploring "the field" for me required different approaches ranging from regular visits with some families, and face-to-face interviews, to periodic visits with others, informal chats, and even emails and telephone calls. Thus, in conducting fieldwork, it was often "the circumstance which defined the method rather than the method defining the circumstance" (Amit, 2000). The evidence from my ethnography thus throws light both on what people do and also on what they say they do. Wallman (1984) warned against mistaking the perspectives of participant observation with the method itself:

In the popular image, social anthropology is a technique of inquiry, nothing more. By this metonymic logic, its means are equated with its ends, its method with its methodology; if it is not possible to 'do' participant observation – which, in the traditional paradigm, requires year-round isolation from one's own ordinary life and round the clock immersion in the lives of others – then it is not possible to 'do' social anthropology. In these terms it is difficult to work as a social anthropologist in any town and impossible in your own... Participant observation is a means to understanding social life in the round, to the appreciation of context and meaning, and to the relational perspective, all of which are distinguishing marks of social anthropology (Wallman, 1984:43).

Thus, contemporary anthropologists (see for example Amit, 2000; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997; Oakley, 1992; Knowles, 2000; Norman, 2000; Olwig, 1999) are reminding us that it is the understanding of context, meaning and social relationships that are still crucial to social anthropology, and which can contribute to the understanding not just of urban lives and phenomenon, but other broadly contextualized phenomenon. In the process, such understanding helps to deconstruct and break down the distinction between 'them' and 'us', and challenges the reifications of other cultural concepts. It was these insights that gave me the courage to embark on ethnographic fieldwork in a large urban center such as the city of London.

For data collection I employed a triangulation technique which included library research and the collection of British census data on ethno-racial

groups; in-depth semi-structured, face-to-face tape-recorded interviews; and participant observation. Additional telephone calls and e-mails were made to participants when further information was needed, or when clarifications were necessary. I also received e-mails and telephone calls from participants who wanted to just “say hello” or to pass on additional information.

Library research

Existing literature on Caribbean family and kinship studies and on English/British family and kinship studies were reviewed for comparison with my data. Census data on Caribbean settlement in Britain and on ethnicity were also reviewed. The literature and census not only provided valuable information, but also stimuli for questions that I found useful while interviewing and observing participants.

There has been a long tradition of the use of life stories in anthropological research. Sidney Mintz’s *Worker in the Cane: A Puerto Rican Life History* (1960), and Oscar Lewis’ *Children of Sanchez* (1961), which gives accounts of members of the same family, are both classics demonstrating the strength of the life story tradition in anthropology. Among more recent works I have also been influenced by Elizabeth Tonkin’s illuminating book, *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History* (1993). Based on her anthropological fieldwork in West Africa, she argues that we need to understand how different kinds of contexts produce different kinds of accounts of a life story (so one could contrast accounts in a one-to-one interview, a couple interview, at a family occasion, etc.). Pat Caplan’s *African Voices, African Lives* (1997) is also notable as an instance of an anthropologist giving priority in interpretation to her informant’s relevant “view of the world through his own words” (p. 18). Additionally, I have been influenced by Paul Thompson’s (2000) methodological discussion of the oral history/life story approach. He shows how oral testimonies can be used to establish and interpret past patterns of social change, particularly of family and community relations, and to understand the significance of these changes from the narrator’s perspective. Finally, Besson and Olwig’s *Caribbean Narratives of*

Belonging (2005), with empirical data on the lives experienced by various Caribbean people, offers insights into the notions and practices of belonging in different social, political and cultural contexts – including Britain.

The interviews

I conducted ninety-eight in-depth face-to-face interviews with members in thirty-four mixed-heritage English-speaking Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London across two to four generations. The interviews were semi-structured, conversational, and followed a broad life history approach, exploring family and social/cultural background and their community context as well as personal relationships, and questions were adjusted to correspond with the different relationship categories. They varied between one and five hours long.

I interviewed couples (some together, some individually), parents, children (the youngest eighteen due to ethical considerations), siblings, and various other members in extended families such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and other fictive kin members in order to explore the patterns of these relationships over generations. For example, are relationships continued in the family over generations? Are they forgotten about? Do they become significant elements of family history? Are they seen as positive, negative, or of no consequence to the family network? Additionally, family genealogies were collected from each family in order to observe any patterns or trends (or lack of) in the formation of mixed families, and the life paths taken by kin members in each generation in terms of education, work, patterns of residence and family (as in legal marriage, cohabiting/common-law, or visiting unions (Appendix IV)) and the nature of relationships, contacts and exchanges between kin members.

Participant observation

Participant observation was carried out in various ways. I made regular visits to homes of families, and sometimes even stayed with some families for a few of days. I participated in many family activities such as accompanying parents to pick up their children from school, helping children with their homework,

and babysitting. During the summer of my fieldwork, I also did activities with some children independently of their parents. For example, I took some children out on day trips to various places in the city such as the zoo, the Science Museum, and the movies. I have had some children to my home where I also interacted with them without their parents. These occasions with the children have given me insights into children's perceptions of relatedness, which were sometimes different from their parents'.

I attended numerous family functions such as barbecues, birthday parties, children's baptisms and christenings, three weddings and a funeral. I was also invited on occasions to some social clubs, and church services. Additionally, I regularly went on social outings with individual family members to picnics in parks, to the movies, the art galleries, to dance clubs, pubs, and sometimes having them to my home for supper.

Outside of physical contacts, I made regular contacts with people via email and the telephone. These forms of communication connected me with key participants and their social activities while I was absent from the field. Some families also called me regularly for informal chats and also to update me on family matters. On four occasions, family members called to inform me that their relatives were ill and in the hospital, and I immediately went and visited the sick relative in the hospital. I also visited the sick at home after their release from hospital.

Data analysis

A major goal of field research process is to capture the complexity of the phenomena under investigation – to get the insider's view of reality – and to make convincing sense of it (Strauss, 1987). Some researchers believe that fieldwork should be *deductive* – following the *theory-before-research* model – whereby certain observable consequences are deduced from existing theories. Others take an *inductive* approach which begins with the researcher “immersing” herself/himself in the field documents in order to identify the meaningful themes (Berg, 1995:180). Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to theory that is generated from the data as “grounded theory”, distinguished

from theory that is derived from prior assumptions. The “grounded theory” approach advocates flexible research designs that allow themes, patterns and theoretical explanations to emerge from the field data.

In my research, I found that using a combination of deduction and induction was the best approach in analyzing the field data. Deduction, because I had entered the field with initial ideas and research questions that were developed in combination with ideas from literature which directed my data-gathering effort. Therefore, I needed to verify, or identify the larger meaning of my findings as they related to the existing theoretical frameworks. Grounded theory (induction), because my objective was also to discover new explanations for the particular phenomenon under investigation.

Systematic analysis of my ethnographic data began during transcription, when I began to extract themes, topics and issues in a systematic order. This continued with the reading of the transcripts and other fieldnotes, and it was during this stage that themes, and patterns in narratives, conversations and activities of individuals began to emerge. An approach akin to inductive content analysis (Berg, 1995:180) helped me to identify the frequency of themes and patterns in the data, and to organize, code and tabulate them in a manner that allowed for cross-referencing and verification. The use of ethnographic narrative – “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) – helped to render as detailed as possible a picture of the past and present (told by individuals) and observed events, the individuals involved, the roles and rules associated with certain activities and events, and the social contexts in which these factors arose.

I have identified many common themes and patterns running through all the families in my research. Examples of some common or typical features that emerged across the thirty-four families are individuals’ tolerance of diverse “others” and their willingness to mix socially; their experiences of racism; their need to devise coping strategies to survive both within their families and in the wider society; their experimentation and innovation in creating their kin networks; the significance of women and children in making kinship (women

are the main agents to forming and maintaining kin networks, and children create the links between families); the creation and maintenance of the kin universe that involves an extensive network of blood, affinal (relatives through marriage) and fictive relatives; and the importance of family history and experience in the inclusion of kin.

However, although these themes and patterns are typical across the thirty-four families, there is considerable variety among the families in how they are practiced and experienced. Therefore, in order to avoid broad over-generalizations, I have used micro studies of individual families to illustrate the diversity in the group as a whole. Essentially, through the use of family case studies, I have shown how members in particular families relate to each other and organize their lives, given individual choices and the influences and constraints of others in their family and of the wider social forces. Such case studies are also very valuable in that in contrast to thematic analysis when individuals rather whole families are usually the unit of analysis or example, a family case study enables us to explore as a single system, the complex interaction of a large number of kin roles and actors.

Thus, I believe that as cases in the anthropological tradition, they effectively “illustrate aspects of social process and demonstrate certain theoretical principles” (Wallman, 1984:vii). Although about particular families, each different, they raise a number of the issues that are central to the understanding of family and kinship behaviour across all the families, and of individual experiences in Britain in general, and London in particular.

Challenges in conducting research

Conducting research in a dense, hyperdiverse city such as London posed many challenges. To begin with, researching mixed-heritage extended families meant traveling to various locations in the city. Secondly, managing time and schedule for visits and interviews at everyone’s convenience was not always easy. However, the most challenging experience I faced came after completing my fieldwork. And that was, how to leave the field? Unlike most of my peers who went to remote locations to conduct their research, in my

case, although fieldwork in London as a Jamaican-Canadian means fieldwork “abroad”, as a student living in her fieldwork site, it also means conducting fieldwork locally. I have made some very good friends among the families, and not only am I still being called regularly with added information, but I continue to get invitations to family social events. Through the research process then, I have come to realize how, as Vered Amit pointed out, “the onus towards comradeship, however incompletely and sporadically achieved, provides a vantage point imbued at once with significant analytical advantages as well as poignant dilemmas of ethics and social location” (Amit, 2000:2).

Defining key concepts and terms

“Race” and related concepts

After reviewing the corpus of definitions and explanations of “race” and its related concepts, what becomes clearest to me is how arbitrary and therefore problematic the concept is when it comes to classifying human beings (Barrett, 1994). For the purpose of this study, “race” refers to the socially constructed classification of human beings based on historical and social context, their experiences as a group, and the popular usage of the term in academic and everyday day discourses, including participants own usage. Hence, in particular instances, the terms “black” and “white” will refer to individuals based on “their” identification with a particular reference group. “Racism” refers to the varying forms of prejudice and discrimination based on the uncritical acceptance of negative social definitions of a subordinate group of people typically identified by physical features (James, 1999).

“Ethnicity”, like race, is a socially, politically and historically constructed concept (see Back and Solomos, 2000; Bulmer and Solmos, 1999; Goulbourne, 1991; Hall, 1996). The two concepts are often close, but they are not easily reducible to the same category. For the purpose of this study, ethnicity will refer to the shared cultural heritage of a group of people such as common ancestry, language, music, art, or religion.

Caribbean and **West Indian** are terms that are often used interchangeably and often with uncertainty. This study focuses on people from the English-speaking Caribbean territories, with their similar cultural traditions, common language, educational system and so on.

Afro-Caribbean will refer to anyone from the English-speaking Caribbean countries with primarily African ancestry (I sometimes use the word interchangeably with Caribbean). **First generation Afro-Caribbean** will refer to people who migrated to Britain from the Caribbean; **second generation Afro-Caribbean** will refer primarily to the children born in Britain of first generation Afro-Caribbean migrants, but also those who came to Britain as young children; **third generation Afro-Caribbean**, to the grandchildren of first migrants.

White British will refer to people born of British ancestry. **Mixed-race and mixed- heritage** are self-ascribed terms that I have used to refer to individuals of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British parentage and to the families in my research. Mixed-heritage is sometimes used interchangeably with mixed-parentage.

Mixed sociability refers to the social relationships between Caribbean and white British people.

Forms of marriage and conjugal patterns

Marriage here refers to the socially sanctioned form of heterosexual mating and coresidence, establishing duties and commitment with respect to sex and reproduction. **Intimate relationship** refers to a couple relationship including sexual intimacy.

Legal marriage refers to marriage that is legally recognized in a church by a priest, or in a registry office by a registrar. **Cohabitation** will be used interchangeably with **common-law marriage** to refer to a form of marriage similar to legal marriage – minus the legal recognition – in that the couples

have a consensual arrangement to share the residence, and a mutual emotional and practical conjugal commitment. **Visiting relationship** refers to couples who are in conjugal relationships but who are not committed to establishing a common household, and who have less conjugal commitment than couples in legal marriage or cohabiting couples. Some couples are involved in long-term visiting relationships in which there are expectations of mutual fidelity and responsibility to children born from these unions (see Besson, 2002: Chapter 8, on the “‘Complex’ Marriage System’ in Jamaica).

Family refers to members of the nuclear residence of husband, wife and children, and also to the extended kin groups who maintain extensive contacts and exchange help and services among each other nationally and transnationally. The families in my research have fluid boundaries, and inclusion in one’s family is dependent on the history of the relationships. Therefore, while blood relatives may not be included as family –due to lack of contact and support - non-blood ties such as those created out of relationships that were originally ties of friendship may become important in this system of reciprocity and mutual support, and are therefore often included as family. Included also are non-blood relatives such as those through affinity (marriage), adoption, fostering, and step-siblingship.

Social class

There are many criteria for defining social class such as people’s occupation and income, education, housing and their self-ascribed class status. For this study, I have used education and occupation as the primary criteria, but also taking into consideration housing status and self-ascribed class categories.

Structure of the thesis

There are three parts to this thesis. The first comprises the Chapters 1 and 2, providing the background to the research and the research context, discussing the methodology and addressing the literature on British and Caribbean kinship and creolization since the 1950s.

The second part of the thesis comprises three ethnographic chapters that focus on particular extended families, illustrating the main themes of the thesis. Chapter 3, “Coming together: a case study of the Smith family”, explores the process of kinship and forms of relatedness among four generations of one family. It illustrates a kinship system that developed through ongoing recreations and strategic adaptations and negotiations not only within the family, but also within the changing social context of London from the 1950s to present. It provides an introduction to how people in my research families speak and do kinship, and the creative adaptations/transformations that they have innovated in the changing London context over time.

Chapter 4, “Extending the links: The agency of women and the significance of children in the creation and maintenance of kinship”, elaborates through the analysis of Gobi’s family one main theme of the previous chapter, and of the thesis: the agency of women in the making and maintenance of the kinship network. Here the focus is women’s agency, and also on how children are especially significant in forming the links between families. It illustrates the significance of biological as well as non-biological relatives in kinship. Gobi’s family demonstrates a complex crisscrossing of biological and non-biological siblingship that forms the backbone of her kinship network. Hence, relationships cannot be traced exclusively – or even easily – through genealogical relations of filiation or alliance. Instead, relations are more easily traced through the ties or connections between children/grandchildren/siblings. Such connections are further reinforced or symbolized by the common titles they attribute to relatives such as “mum”, “granny”, “grandpa”, “sister” and “brother”, who are not always blood relatives. Finally, this chapter also shows how that the *history* of family relationships can determine who gets included as kin.

Chapter 5, “Kinship histories: the significance of family history in the creation and maintenance of kinship relations” continues from the previous chapter, by exploring further, this time with Ken and Verna Morgan’s extended family, the significance of family histories in the creation and maintenance of kinship relations. As with most families, Verna and Ken Morgan’s extended family

relationships did not develop into its current state without a complex history. Thus, an understanding of the dynamics of the relationships I observed was only possible when interpreted in conjunction with the narratives people told of their past. In other words, it is through *the history of their families* that I was able to gain some understanding into the ideas and forms of relatedness people constructed within their current extended family. As Carsten points out, “for many people time and history are understood in the idiom of kinship and ideas about relatedness” (1997:13-14). This is true for the Morgan family, not only in terms of the development within their own families over time, but also in terms of how the different generations of their families have also been influenced by changes in the social and political context of Britain in general, and of London in particular.

The third part of the thesis draws on all the families to explore more generally the social contexts in which these families have emerged, and the ongoing modifications and negotiations through which they have responded to changing circumstances, both within the families and in the wider society. Thus Chapter 6, “Mixed sociability and the growth of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London” traces the growth of social relationships between Afro-Caribbeans and the white British population from the 1950s to 2003, as experienced by the people in my research. It uses ethnographic detail to show how gradually through everyday encounters a culture of mixed sociability has developed, and how these mixed-heritage families have evolved and continue to be created from the ongoing processes of social mixing, despite racial prejudice.

Chapter 7, “Mixed-heritage, racial prejudice, and social positioning” addresses the experience of racial prejudice for individuals in my research families, despite the rise in mixed sociability in the last fifty years. It also explores the innovative strategies family members use to combat colour prejudice through the generations. Finally, it examines mixed-heritages individuals’ understanding of *their* social positions in British society, and the strategies they have innovated in securing their senses of belonging.

Finally, Chapter 8 “Conclusion”, sums up the main arguments of the thesis. Thus this thesis is an ethnographic description of what the people in the mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London say and do. Because there are many voices, I have framed the voices in double quotation marks and usually indicated when an individual person is speaking. Otherwise, where words or phrases are framed in quotation marks without reference to an individual, it implies general speech among various individuals. Regarding the tenses in which the thesis has been written, while I have given accounts of the past in the past tense, accounts of practices that occurred during my fieldwork are written in the present tense.

Chapter 2

Outlining and assessing studies of English kinship since the 1950s

This chapter addresses the literature on kinship in Britain since the 1950s, and its relevance to the central themes of my thesis. Ultimately, I argue that theoretical writings on studies of kinship and family relatedness outside of Britain provide the most useful clues for understanding relatedness among my research families. For example, I found a relevant parallel in Carsten's (1997) interpretation of Malay kinship with a historical dimension and forms of family relatedness shifting the focus from a social/biological distinction to a more "flexible and open and [native/local] category of 'relatedness'" (Carsten 2004:311). Additionally, the creolization/culture-building works of Caribbeanists such as Besson (2002), Mintz (1992 [1976]), and Olwig (1981), with their emphasis on the creative adaptations of Caribbean family patterns as modes of resistance and accommodation, are of particular relevance. For although my research families' networks evolved outside of the Caribbean, the ongoing struggles these families face in London and the continued survival strategies they devise may be compared with the processes that occurred in the Caribbean. First, however, a look at research on British kinship since the 1950s.

Studies of Family and Kinship in Britain: the 1950s to 2003

Given the British anthropological concern with kinship – albeit other people's kinship - it is surprising how little attention British anthropologists have paid to kinship in their own society. During the first half of the twentieth century, among British social anthropologists, the study of kinship became the main focus of empirical research and theoretical explanation. These early twentieth-century anthropologists, armed with a functionalist methodology, relied heavily on W.H.R. Rivers' genealogical method for fieldwork and the

analysis of data (Bouquet, 1993:12). However, their interest in social organization took them to remote parts of the British Empire to study “primitive” societies, while paying very limited attention to kinship in their own society. There were some early community studies conducted in Britain that included aspects of kinship (see for example Arensberg and Kimball, 1940; Frankenberg, 1966), but with a few exceptions (for example Firth, 1956; Firth, Hubert and Forge, 1970), British anthropologists seemed uninterested in kinship at home. There was also the community studies work of Michael Young, who trained as an anthropologist but practiced as a sociologist (Young and Willmott, 1957). Even Strathern’s *Kinship at the Core* (1981) continued in the community genre. It was more from sociological works on the extended family, that ideas about British kinship could be gained, (see for example Bell, 1968; Bott, 1957; Rosser and Harris, 1965; Willmott and Young, 1960). Furthermore, among these studies, kinship was mostly regarded as “a local, empirical phenomenon rather than a central British (let alone English) assumption about social organization” (Bouquet, 1993:15).

Although dated, some of these earlier discussions of English/British kinship still yield useful ideas. To begin with, Young and Willmott (1957) provide insight into the family as a social institution as it appeared in early post-war (1953-1955) East London. Contrary to the assumption of many sociologists of that period, that the “extended family” of the past had shrunk in modern times to smaller nuclear households, they found the “wider family” was indeed “very much alive in the middle of London” (p11-12). Their approach in studying the “wider family” by examining the “new family of marriage” and other links on both sides - parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws – has proven useful for my own methodological framework.

Research such as that by Bott (1957), Firth et al, (1970), Rosser and Harris (1965), and Young and Willmott (1957) have shown the significant differences between kinship in urban conditions compared with kinship in rural conditions (for example Strathern, 1981). One example is the difference between the neighbourhood sociability in rural areas that is often based on

members of the same families in the village, and that of the “social pockets” which develop in a metropolis such as London, that are not usually composed of kin (Firth *et al*, 1970:9). In their cross-class study in urban Swansea, Rosser and Harris also argue that variations in kinship behaviour are as much due to education and class as to formal kinship structure. According to these authors, “While the *elementary* family is a basic structural unit of the society and is thus controlled by a variety of sanctions both legal and diffuse, in relation to the total social system the kinship structure and the organization of *extended families* is not of major and critical importance” (1965:287). However, because the basic structural framework of Swansea is bound up with the economic system of “education-professional or vocational training – occupation-employment-income-status-social class”, kinship in the structure of urban Swansea becomes a “minor” or “marginal” matter. This, therefore, makes possible a great deal of individual variation in kinship behaviour (Rosser and Harris, 1965:287-288. See also Bott 1957:221-222, and Firth 1956 for London).

I soon part company with these works, however, especially with their illustration of the English kinship system as “structurally of a relatively simple character” with “shallow genealogical depth and relatively close lateral boundaries” (Firth *et al*, 1970:450; Firth, 1965:18). Unlike the English kinship systems found in Firth *et al* research, where individuals did not on the whole trace their relatives beyond their grandparents and their second cousins, among the families in my research there were no such narrow genealogical boundaries when reckoning their relatives.

Another key difference between the findings of these studies and my own relates to basic familial structure, which, according to these studies is built around two sides of the family – mother-wife-husband-husband’s mother- and linked through marriage to a common set of grandchildren (see Rosser and Harris, 1965:289; Young and Willmott, 1957). Within the families in my research, in general, the family structure is built around many sides/strands of parents, and is linked together by a criss-crossing of siblings and grandchildren (see Chapter 4).

On the other hand, the assertion of these findings that the “socially-accepted weighting” of kin relationships is balanced more on the wife’s side of the family - a finding which they link to the stress on women’s roles and family relationships through the agency of women (Rosser and Harris, 1965:289; Young and Willmott, 1957:44-78) – does also operate on a more complex level among the families in my research. Among the mixed Afro-Caribbean and white families, the weighting of the balance of kin relationships is neither straightforwardly on the mother’s nor the father’s side of the family, but more often to the Afro-Caribbean side of the family, and is often linked to colour, and sometimes status difference, which creates conflict and sometimes discontinuities. Thus, my research suggests that the balance of kin relationships is weighted not so much by gender, as by colour and class.

A further difference between these earlier findings and my own, is their suggestion that social support is mainly the province of women. My research suggests that social support is provided by both men and women, depending on the history of the relationships between those in need and those who provide and receive; the type of emotional or material support required; and the availability of such support among family members. Thus, we find support being offered by husbands, wives, mothers, brothers, uncles, aunts, grandmothers and grandfathers.

A final key difference between these earlier findings and my own relates to the formal terms in English kinship system that separate parents and confine siblings to members of the natal family, also restricting grandparents to the two pairs of parents of a person’s mother and father (cf. Firth et al, 1970:450; Rosser and Harris, 1965:199-200; Young and Willmott, 1957). These terms do not operate in the same way among the families in my research, which have no formal rules about their use. For these features of the kinship system, it is primarily from the Caribbean family literature that the most useful insights can be derived (see for example, Barrow, 1996; Besson, 1995; 2002; Chamberlain, 1999; Clarke, 1999; Foner, 1979; Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001; Mintz and Price, 1992 [1976]; Olwig, 1999; R. T. Smith, 1988).

Essentially, the earlier studies of kinship and the extended family in Britain reveal modifications of the family structures (in pre-industrial or “primitive” societies) in response to changes in an industrial environment. However, the framework was limited largely to *static* approaches, with data drawn primarily from genealogically close and personal relationships, and with an emphasis on frequency of contacts, and exchange of aid among a web of “traditional” extended family members (see Firth, 1956; Young and Willmott, 1957). Rosser and Harris' study of *Family and Social Change in Swansea* (1965), a parallel and comparative study to Young and Willmott's of Bethnal Green, offers a further insight into the modification of the kinship group in response to industrialization and urbanization. They concluded that in Swansea, a region much less compact and more heterogeneous in social composition – in terms of history, tradition, topography and to some extent language – the extended family “still performs most of those primarily domestic functions of help in crisis which was characteristic of the extended family found in Bethnal Green” (Rosser and Harris, 1965:292).

These suggestions are similar to some of my own findings. However, the families in my research were responding not only to industrialization and urbanization, but also to migration, racism, and mixed sociability. Thus, although these works have given me some general insights into possible approaches for analyzing my research data, they have not proved sufficient in their theoretical tools to address the main themes that emerged among my research families.

More recent studies of British kinship

With very few exceptions (for example Simpson, 1998), anthropological work on British kinship is still largely lacking. Most of the material from which information on the practice of extended kin relationships can be gleaned has continued to be sociological, working mainly on “the family” (example Rapoport et. al., 1982; Brannen and O'Brien, 1995; Smart and Neale, 1999; Phillipson et. al., 2001; Phillipson et. al., 2003; Finch, 1989; Finch and Mason,

1993; 2000; Mansfield, 1988; Barnes et. al., 1998). These works cover themes such as family and social change, marital relationships, divorce, family support of older people, women in migrant Bangladeshi families, family obligations, inheritance, and step-parenting.

What these more recent studies reveal is that among the current British population, there is a greater diversity of experience than in the past of family and kinship arrangements due to current patterns of marriage and divorce, and other types of couple relationships (see Simpson, 1998; Smart and Neale, 1999). These studies also show that there is wide variation in who gets included in kin groups, based on the type of interpersonal and practical exchanges involved, and how they change over time and generations. These studies also argue that among the British population, there is a widespread conception that “my family” means more than co-residential domestic arrangements (Finch and Mason, 2000:6). Children now have a more complex and wider combination of parents and step-parents, several sets of grandparents, siblings and other kin, and many adults and children are linked by a variety of in-law relationships (see Simpson, 1998; Smart and Neale, 1999; Weeks et al., 1999). Thus, even with the nuclear family, co-residence can no longer be regarded as a universal characteristic, partly due to divorce and subsequent repartnering arrangements. Bob Simpson (1998), for example, illustrates how divorce and remarriage are transforming families in Britain. Simpson dubbed the prolonged and complex social arrangements following divorce and remarriage the “unclear family”, as opposed to the idealized “nuclear” family of the political, bureaucratic and intellectual imagination in Thatcherite Britain (1998: vii-xii). Smart and Neale state that the policy on family law at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, with its desired aim to return family and married life to a “stable nuclear ideal”, resulted instead in people formulating their own family patterns, in ways that may:

disperse the biological family across households and marriages/cohabitations. It may also generate links between grandparents and grandchildren which are no longer anchored in the marriage of the parents, but which can survive various transformations in those parents’ relationships because they are forged directly with the grandchildren rather than resting on the longevity of marriage.

Moreover, in future these grandparents are themselves more likely to be divorced and even repartnered, introducing the possibility – for want of a better word – of *step*-grandparents (Smart and Neale, 1999:181).

What these more recent studies show generally is that now more than before, people are inclined to make conscious decisions about who counts as ‘my family’ and for what purpose (Finch and Mason 2000:7). As Simpson (1998) and Smart and Neal (1999) show, families have not been destroyed to the degree that had been anticipated and generally assumed. Rather, they have been created and recreated to suit their changing circumstances.

Caribbean families in Britain

Although Caribbean families and kinship have been reshaped in Britain (Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001), there has been little research on these changes . But as Finch (1989) points out, with regards to the paucity of research on family and kinship variation in Britain as a consequence of ethnic variation:

Researchers working in the 1950s perhaps could be forgiven for not recognizing the importance of ethnicity in family relations, since Britain was a more monolithic society in ethnic terms than it became subsequently. We can now see that ethnicity is an important source of variation in individual experience and no studies of family life can afford to ignore it (Finch, 1989:52).

Thus, the different cultural traditions represented in Britain map onto kin relationships in significant ways, even if they are little understood. Therefore, the general notion of “the family” as consisting primarily of its nuclear core never made any sense if it was intended to include British citizens whose cultural roots are in the Indian subcontinent, or Africa, or the Caribbean (Finch and Mason, 2000: 6. See also, Goulbourne, 1999).

Discussions about the problems faced by Caribbean communities in Britain – for example in education, employment, housing, or with the police - are nearly always informed by general assumptions about their family and kinship

patterns, yet family life, kinship systems and living arrangements have rarely been the particular focus of either academic inquiry or policy discussions (Goulbourne, 2001:25). Nearly all the assumptions and generalizations with regards to the “breakdown” of the Caribbean family in Britain are based on census data and surveys. Thus, from these sources, it has been argued that the absence of a nuclear unit and the high incidence of single-parent households result from migration, which ruptured the generational family links and kinship arrangements, and disrupted patterns of socialization and stability, “leaving the Caribbean family disorientated and directionless” (Chamberlain, 2001:40, citing Patterson, 1965; et. al.). This situation, in popular views, has been further compounded by state dependency (see Dench, 1992). However, the census surveys use “households” as their unit of measurement, and assumes that households equate families. What census data cannot show is the persistence of Caribbean family patterns and living arrangements in Britain (see Bauer and Thompson, 2006; Chamberlain, 2001; Goulbourne, 2001). The census could never reveal the complex kinship patterns among Caribbean families in Britain that are rooted in extensive ties of reciprocity and mutual aid that have developed alongside the supposed “pathological” features of the “single-parent”, “female-headed” households, “unstable” and non-legal unions (Smith, 2001:56). Anthropological studies in the Caribbean and the United States have shown the pragmatism and viability of these complex kinship systems, and also their functional appropriateness in response to conditions of unstable economic conditions (see Driver, 1982; R.T. Smith, 1956; Stack, 1974).

Moreover, recent sociological research on changing “white” British families is revealing some close parallels with Caribbean families in Britain, although there has been little attempt at comparison between the two groups. Although the Caribbean migrant community experienced increased rates of formal marriage in the 1960s “when they joined in the British celebration of the nuclear family as the universal and ideal model” (Goulbourne, 2001:240), among their offspring and the younger generations this is not the case. They have chosen family patterns and living arrangements that are typical of families in the Caribbean, and becoming typical in Britain (see Mansfield

2006). Thus, some social scientists question whether the “new minority are adopting the values of the indigenous majority population”, or instead, whether we have a situation in which the patterns of Caribbean families and living arrangements are “becoming the generalised patterns for the majority community” (Goulbourne, 2001:235-236). Mansfield (2006), in her research on marriage and family life among white British families, emphasizes how family life in Britain has been transformed since the 1970s. While the numbers of marriages have halved, divorces have doubled and extra-marital births quadrupled. The common sequence of family formation as it exists today is: “cohabitation- marriage-parenthood”, with other emerging sequences such as: “cohabitation-parenthood-marriage”, and most recently, “parenthood-cohabitation-marriage” (Mansfield, 2006:65).

Additionally, in her cross-cultural research on “Mother-headed Families” Alisa Burns (1995) shows that while there is a high rate of single motherhood among Afro-Caribbeans in the UK, the great majority of single mothers are in fact white (1995:159). Furthermore, with regards to generalizations about lone Caribbean mothers and state dependency (see Dench, 1992), it has been shown that while half of Caribbean mothers in Britain are single and never married, many of them receive help from the children’s fathers. Also, because Caribbean mothers are more likely to be working than other lone parents, among all lone parents, they are the least likely to be poor (Platt, 2002:86). This relates to the traditional economic independence of women in Caribbean families (see Barrow, 1996, Besson, 2002; Bauer and Thompson, 2006).

As with the lack of research on Caribbean family life in Britain, with the exception of Benson's work on couple families over thirty-five years ago, so too has there been a lack of research on mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British couple or extended families in Britain. The British media and advertising campaigns are highly peppered with mixed-heritage couples, which is a reflection of the growing phenomenon. Mixed-heritage families, like same-heritage families, are sites of support and strength as well as conflict and pains. Yet they have escaped the interest of qualitative kinship researchers, thus left as the subject only of general public assumptions based

on stereotypes and prejudices. I believe that they fully warrant social science inquiry, and that research on these families could add a significant new perspective to our knowledge of British kinship, and encourage debates about it.

Key supporting literature

In my attempt to analyze my ethnographic data of the lives of the families in my research in relation to the existing literature on British/English family and kinship studies, I arrived at a near roadblock. Although these mixed families are British families, London families, they have been ignored by English kinship studies. Furthermore, the themes that emerged as central to my understanding of their relationships, such as family history, mixing, belonging, fluidity, continuity, and change, are themes that are largely lacking from the previous studies of English kinship. Hence, with their predominant research focus on households and genealogy, the previous studies proved largely unhelpful for the analysis of my research families.

One central theme running through this thesis concerns the ongoing struggles encountered by family members, and the strategies that they have had to devise to find suitable ways of conducting their lives. Devising coping strategies in order to function within families is not unique to these families. What is different for most of them is that from the start, beginning with the couples, conflicts, negotiations, adaptation and accommodation become continuing aspects of their relationships. This is due partly to individual personalities and choices, but also to the different cultural expectations and behaviours that individuals bring into their family relationships - differences that are exaggerated when partners come from radically different social and cultural environments. This is a key issue that is missing in much of the literature, especially from the earlier anthropological studies. More recently, however, it has been usefully added by a few social scientists (see Finch and Mason, 2000; Smart and Neale, 1999; and Simpson, 1998).

In these dynamic and intricate kin networks among mixed Afro-Caribbean and White British families in London, five themes emerge in the chapters that follow that are relevant to kin relatedness. These are, firstly, the significance of *history and mixed sociability in the process of kinship*. Secondly, the *centrality of women and children in doing kinship*. Thirdly, the importance of *family stories and narratives in understanding kinship*. Fourthly, *ideas about kinship and relatedness* that are untypical to English kinship. Finally, I believe that there is an overarching theme, *creolization*, which springs from the long transgenerational history of mixing and change in culture and kinship between Britain and the Caribbean. What follows is an explanation of each theme in terms of their usefulness for understanding family relatedness, and the more relevant theoretical writings that have provided insights.

History, and the process of kinship

Family and kinship networks do not just develop in particular social circumstances, but also in historical periods and under historical conditions. Thus, understanding the process of kinship among mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London requires an understanding of the process of mixed sociability over time and across generations. As Chapter 1 illustrates, history also helps to map the processes of incorporation, negotiation and accommodation in the London context. Within these families, history helps to explain the diversity of family practices across generations, as a result of the ways in which negotiations are reached not only because of family influences, but also due to influences from the wider social forces. It is also by looking at the history of relationships as told by family members, that we understand the discontinuities and continuities in family relationships.

Kinship and generations

In looking at history to explain the process of kinship among mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families in London, I have found Carsten's (1997) work on Malay kinship particularly helpful. Carsten has combined history with ethnography to show that kinship is a temporal process. She has shown how for many people, time and history are understood in the expressions of kinship and ideas about relatedness (Carsten, 1997:13-14). Hence, Carsten shows that Malay kinship is a process that emerges through time, through the process of giving and receiving food.

Kinship for the families in London is a complex historical process. Their family histories show that change for them comes about through ongoing cycles of births, complex lateral sibling connections and affinal links, separations, divorce, illness and death, not to mention the influence and the impact of the wider social forces. Throughout the thesis, and particularly in Chapters 3 and 5, most of the material discussed comes from the perspective of individual family members learnt from older generations. In effect, the material presented is an account of “the history of their kinship” (Carsten, 1997:13). Thus, in Chapter 5 for example, it is largely through a historical analysis that we understand the practices and attitudes as they have evolved among members of Verna’s family.

With regards to individuals’ sense of belonging and their membership or position in their families, I have also found Gow’s concept of “the temporal processes of kinship”(1991:259-270) useful. For the people in my research, the time dimension of kinship and their membership in the kinship group – and in the wider society – also relates to the time dimension of history. Throughout the thesis, we see how individuals use various strategies to negotiate their own and other’s positions within their kin group. The status or position a person holds or is given within her/his family and kin group is highly contingent upon past acts of caring from childhood to adulthood. In other words, an individual’s position in a family is highly dependent upon a process involving past experiences of care given, and of mutual exchanges of

help and support. Thus, we find throughout the following chapters, that even biological parents, sibling and other blood relatives could become marginal to the kinship group, depending on the type and quality of past relationships (see also Bauer and Thompson, 2006; Bourdieu, 1977; 1990; Finch, 1989).

Incorporation, negotiation, accommodation, and innovation

Historical and generational frameworks also proved useful in understanding the processes of incorporation, accommodation, adaptation, negotiation, and innovation within the families in my research. As Finch points out, negotiations between members of the same family regarding the types of support to be provided draws upon the history of relationships and commitments in that particular family (Finch, 1989:201). I show throughout the thesis how current forms of relationship between individuals in a family reflect the past history of the relationship between those individuals. For example, where adult children have a poor relationship with their own parents, the explanations given by them often relate to their own childhood experiences (see also Firth *et al* 1970:399-407). A particular example can be found in Chapter 5, where the poor relationship between Lionel and his father Boysie affected negotiations regarding the provision of support for Boysie in his old age. From Lionel's perspective, Boysie's track record as an unsupportive father to him throughout his life, meant he did not feel any sense of moral obligation towards him in his old age. Because no dynamic of reciprocity had been established between them, no reciprocal gift was required.

The historical and generational approach also helps us to examine how the roles and positions within the family are negotiated and how they vary between generations and individual family members. As some authors have pointed out, (see Chamberlain, 2001; R. T. Smith 2001), there is little historical support for the notion of "traditional" family values. Among the families in my research, this notion is further complicated by the variety of family forms that individual members bring to their particular family. Thus, in exploring traditions and practices across generations, we find in Chapter 4 that

the “traditional” formal sit-down Sunday dinner that was an aspect of Gobi’s Jamaican partner Randall’s family, has continued in Gobi’s home, but the formal aspect of everyone eating together at the table has gone. Instead, the food remains on the stove, and family members help themselves as they come in at various times throughout the afternoon. Thus, by using history and generation as conceptual tools, understanding about family practices in the current context might be more clearly achieved.

Discontinuities - Continuities of family relationships

Employing an historical framework for analysis also helps to explain the discontinuities and continuities in family relationships that are part of the process of kinship. Kinship is not something that reproduces itself identically, but “was created, it exists in a specific form now, and it has a future” (Gow, 1991:199). Discontinuities and continuities of relationships among kin members in the London families are outcomes of ongoing processes with many factors involved. Some of the causes of rupture and distancing are, in order of significance, colour prejudice/racism, social class difference, separation and divorce, and death. As we have seen in Chapter 1, racism was an issue for many families. Because of racism, many of the British partners (mostly women of the mixed couples who met between the 1950s and the 1970s) found themselves cut off from their families of origin. For some, the difficult situation was compounded by the arrival of children, so even the more liberal would ask, “What will happen to the children?” “How will the children fit into society?” Alongside such questions there were also assertions such as: “They will never fit in.” Or, “They are bound to feel displaced in society, because they are neither black nor white” (see also Benson, 1981). As the following chapters illustrate (Chapters 6 and 7 in particular), racism still operates as a divisive factor in family relationships, but different in kind and in intensity, reflecting increased social interactions over time and between generations, and a blurring of cultural boundaries (see below, “creolization”).

Although issues such as class difference, family conflict, separation, divorce, and death have been identified as general causes of family disruption and breakup, what is striking among the families is how rarely these issues result in discontinuities. Instead, faced with separations, divorces, and deaths, family relationships most often continue, based on individuals' sense of shared histories, and indeed, shared expectations for the future. A primary explanation people give for continuities in their families – especially after separation or divorce – is that it is “for the sake of the children”. Lester, a fifty-five year old Jamaican migrant, speaks for many: “The relationship hasn't ended, even though the fix of legal marriage has ended. We have our children and grandchildren between us, and they keep us all going together still”. However, it is not only parental relationships that continue after separation and divorce, but also relationships in the wider kin network. This is so, because the web of extended familial relationships that people develop over time are not easily erased. As one woman puts it, “I have come to embrace my West Indian family and culture, and with the gifts of love and support we have given each other over the years, it is very difficult for me to close the door on that”.

In the main, for these families continuity is about shared experiences and hopes over time, and their expectations for the future. And this is also an ongoing process of evaluating and reevaluating relationships (see Chapters 3-5). Finch refers to this process as “working it out” (Finch, 1989:179-211). Her work is insightful about negotiating family commitments over time. However, from an anthropological perspective, in dealing with the questions of which kin relationships continue and which do not, it is with Simpson's (1998) work that I align myself. In his ethnographic account of kinship relationships after separation and divorce, Simpson explores a significant area of family relationships that is very central to my research. That is, the question of what happens when people separate and divorce and move into a “new and alternative pattern of domestic and personal life, with relationships based on complex and convoluted patterns of inter-personal commitment, dependency and exchange” (ibid 1998:x). Simpson refers to the complex social arrangements following divorce and remarriage as the “unclear” family. He

argues, that although the domestic and social arrangements which evolve after divorce involves the mingling of positive and negative sentiments expressed between husbands and wives and other family members might be complex and unclear, “they are still expressions of human kinship and are therefore of primary anthropological concern” (Simpson, 1998:xi). Simpson's argument is some distance away from the classical structural-functionalist emphasis on relationships that work.

Simpson's particular relevance to my work is that instead of viewing family and kinship relationships as collapsing after the couple separates, he examines the ongoing transformation which kin relationships undergo to fit the existing social and economic situations of all involved. Simpson points to the language used in popular discourse (political and sociological) such as “lone” or “single” parent” (often mother), “second family” and “absent father”, which tend to emphasize the rupture and divisiveness, while masking the ways in which people retain connections after the couple separate (Simpson, 1998:33). From an anthropological perspective, the dominant paradigms of kinship and family in western society, and adopted by the discipline, have a limited conceptual and analytical vocabulary with which to consider these continuities.

This thesis examines kin relationships as an ongoing process, despite circumstances such as family ruptures caused by migration, conflict and ostracism due to colour prejudice, and crises resulting from separation, divorce, illness, and death, to uncover some of the more enduring aspects of individual and family relationships. Chapters 4 and 5 provide good examples of continuities after separation and divorce. What is particularly striking is how much effort the women (Gobi and Chantal) invest into maintaining family relationships, primarily, according to them, “for the children”. This leads us to the second theme that is central to the thesis: the significance of women and children in forming and maintaining kinship links.

The centrality of women and children in doing kinship

The earlier literature on English kinship offers some ideas about the centrality of women in doing kinship. Young and Willmott (1957) for example, refer to the “mother-centred kinship system” whereby the extended family was organized “by women and for women”, and became the “trade union” for women after they become married (ibid:189). The close relationship between mother and daughter, and the closer kin ties between the wife and her family of origin, was protection against the men who either died sooner than their wives, were often unemployed, or kept their wives short of money even when employed. Thus, the mother-daughter relationship was based on mutual aid and support, with mothers giving help in the care and responsibility of children, and daughters reciprocating when their mothers were left widowed or old and in need of care. Rosser and Harris’ (1965) comparative Swansea study also found that the wife’s family of origin was dominant, highlighting the emphasis on women’s role in the family and kin relationships. On the whole, these studies found that the “mum” (typically the wife’s mother) was the person who “holds the family together, ‘the dominant centre of the web of kinship’”, with a tendency for the married daughter to live with her mother or close to her (Rosser and Harris, 1965:vi).

My research also reveals a strong relationship between mothers and daughters. However, mothers are not the only ones that hold the family together, or form the dominant “web of kinship”. I found mothers, but also daughters, grandmothers, wives, former wives, and aunts playing key roles in doing kinship (and also some men, but to a lesser degree).

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 illustrate vivid examples of women across generations putting great effort into creating and “keeping the family going”. In Chapter 3, in particular, we find, that Polly’s instrumentality has generated an ongoing kinship network that includes her ex-husband, his “outside” child and the child’s mother. Furthermore, although family relationships with Polly’s ex-husband Geoff had been discontinued after a bitter divorce, it was Polly’s daughter Anna whose strategic renegotiations restored Geoff’s position within

the family. In Chapter 4 the key figures in doing kinship are Gobi herself, her ex-partner Randal's mother Angela, and Gobi's adopted daughter Christa. Another striking feature among Gobi's family is the manner in which family members relate to one another equally, regardless of whether or not they are biologically related. Within the family, we find three sets of grandparents with whom the children relate equally, calling them "grandma", "granny" or "granda". To the children, Gobi is "mum", and to each other they are "sister" and "brother".

The significance of children and siblings in creating the links between families have been ignored or underemphasized in English kinship studies. In the limited space given to siblings, the emphasis has been placed on *gender difference* in the *frequency of contact* between siblings, between siblings and their mother and their mother's siblings. Thus, they show the influence of mothers in the frequency of contact between siblings – siblings see each other because they see mum, daughters see mum more often than sons see her (Young and Willmott, 1957:77); men have poorer relations with siblings than women do (Firth et al, 1970:431); the higher frequency of contact with mother's siblings shows the stress on relationships through women (Rosser and Harris, 1965:221-222). Essentially, what these studies show is a female and maternal bias at various genealogical levels.

A notable exception to these English kinship studies is Simpson's (1991) emphasis on children, in his analysis of continuities after divorce and separation. Simpson shows that where there are children from a marriage, after divorce, notions of continuity, connectedness and extension become fundamental to kinship, and also "to the relational context through which people identify themselves" (ibid: 36). This is so not only because workable relationships become crucial between parents and their children, but because preserving some continuity of the sibling group is also essential. Hence, the "family", as it emerges after divorce, "is complex, with children and resources linking households across space and time, in ways which render the identification of family with a single discrete household wholly misleading" (ibid: 31).

Simpson shows that where children are concerned, relationships after divorce are rarely brought to an absolute end. Instead, they roll forward with considerable momentum for many years, and constitute an important part of the complex structures of post-divorce family relationships (ibid:151). For example, in my London study, after Marva and Troy divorced, relationships with the children continued with Troy moving between households. Troy later partnered with another woman Lisa, and they have two children. When Lisa went to hospital to deliver her second child, it was Marva who took the first child into her home and cared for her until Lisa was well enough. Additionally, although Marva does not regularly visit Troy and Lisa in their home, she has active relationships with both them and their younger children.

Carsten's (1997) illustrations of Malay "relatedness" effectively demonstrate what is significant to Malays as opposed to what would be significant to western kinship with its emphasis on genealogy. However, her analysis of Malay kinship, which takes the emphasis beyond biological kinship to include "social kinship", also demonstrates a flexibility of kin relationships that I found among the families in my study. Similarly, her comments regarding the prominence of women and children resonate with my own findings. In Pulau Langkawi, Carsten argues that women's activities are at the heart of the process of incorporation among kin, and that siblingship is the "core of kinship" rather than filiation (ibid p. 25). In Langkawi, siblingship is the most elaborated relation, and all other relations are said to derive from sibling relations, and "women and sibling sets are intimately bound up with each other and with the way kinship is lived and conceptualized" (Carsten, 2004:13-14). Among the London families, it is primarily through the sibling sets that kinship links are formed, and it is the women, young and old and across generations, who actively maintain kinship links.

The complex and intricate forms of relatedness among these London families could never be adequately understood from observations alone. Furthermore, understanding relatedness from an historical and generational perspective is only possible when complemented by the life story narratives people tell.

Hence, the third theme, “life stories and narratives”, became central for my analysis of their family lives.

Family stories and narratives in understanding kinship

Simpson notes that the complex, and sometimes, problematic character of post-divorce family relationships, are marked by the presence and absence of significant others. Thus, the life stories and narratives people construct on past, present and future events are important in facilitating our understanding of family and kinship relationships: “Parties demonstrate the sense they make of these relationships through the stories they tell, that is, narratives which locate others in relation to self” (Simpson, 1991:151). For the mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London, kinship is largely understood through a history and narrative; their memories of past events, family practices and relationships, experiences of joys and pains make up their story of family and relationships.

Thus although participant observation is a key element in fieldwork, oral narratives are also important, even though the relationship between these two elements are not always clear. Observing what people do provides us with crucial evidence, but by listening to people’s narratives and explanations of their family histories we can gain an extra dimension of understanding. This is because people’s actions in the present look not only to the future but also to their own experience of the past, and this helps to shape what they do or avoid doing in the present (Thompson 2000). Furthermore, anthropologists have for some time pointed to the significance of “an ethnography with time and transformation built into it” as “a distinct way of knowing the anthropological object” (Sahlins 1994:377). Chapter 3 provides a good example of this argument. Here we follow four generations of the Smith family from the early 1950s to the present. We see the transformations within the kin network, not only with regards to their relations to each other, but also in terms of their relationships with people in the wider society, as a consequence of changing social and political circumstances over time.

Collecting life stories across three generations made it possible to construct a profile of family life and patterns of behaviour, with the memory of the older generations extending across time and space. It was through the transgenerational life stories that knowledge of family organizations and living arrangements were gained, and how attitudes, behaviour, and practices are negotiated and modified across generations. In Jess' family, for example, it was through her children's narratives that I was able to uncover the important genealogical link with Jess' grandchild that she failed to acknowledge, due to her "respectable" and contradictory attitude regarding marriage out of wedlock. In other words, it was through "the history of their kinship" (Carsten 1997:13) that I was able to understand the ideas and dynamics and forms of relatedness people constructed within their kinship networks.

For example, in chapter 5, my first experience with members of Verna and Ken's extended family at the birthday dinner event made me aware that the real-life experiences and memories of people cannot be easily omitted, edited, or erased. It was only after hearing the family stories that I understood the enduring presence of Verna's mother Chantal who had died four years earlier, and the significant impact and influence she still had on family relationships. It is through the narratives of her children and other members in her family that Chantal's voice is heard.

It is also through narratives and life stories that individuals convey their sense of belonging and right to recognition in a society that they have lived most of their lives (Besson and Olwig, 2005). In Chapter 7, for example, mixed-heritage individuals speak about their instrumentality in constructing their own ethnic identity for the census. Through their own actions they resist the categories intended to subsume them within an institutionally-imposed marginal ethnic group to which they do not feel they belong.

The complexities of using oral narratives (and other oral sources) in qualitative research have been documented by many researchers (see for example Finnegan and Drake 1994; Samuel and Thompson 1990). But along with the strengths of this approach there are also limitations. Besides the time-

consuming aspect of tape-recording and transcribing long interviews, there is always the problem of memory. The interview is a dialogue between the past and the present. The process of remembering is also a dialectical process, incorporating current questions and concerns, as well as the act of remembering, into the memory. This process of remembering is entwined with hopes, dreams, fears and past regrets which are further entangled with current recollections (Chamberlain, 2006:13). Consequently, in telling and retelling (as in second hand storytelling) family stories, people often misremember or forget names, dates, and events, and are selective in their accounts, depending on how they want to present – or preserve – their family history, or perhaps on what they believe the interviewer wants to hear. Additionally, as some researchers have pointed out (see Abrahams, 1985; Bornat, 1989 and Samuel and Thompson, 1990), people's memories are in part moulded over time through myths and images, and by the ideologies and conventions not only within their families, but also within the wider society. Hence, "our narrative models, drawn from the culture we live in, shape even our own first-hand experience and expression", and in order "to understand who we are and what we have done we 'narrate our lives' following out those models" (Finnegan 1994:121). Thus, although oral narratives are important for understanding people's life experiences, in light of the complexities of memory, this approach needs to be employed with caution.

Caution need not restrict interpretation, however, both because of the fact that to a large extent people do remember reasonably well, and also even if their memory is different at different times in their lives and in different contexts, this can in itself offer clues to how individuals see themselves in relation to others in their families and the society at large. Thus, the multiplicities, discrepancies and unpredictability of memory, could prove effective in analysis, as memories also require interpretation if their full richness is to be exploited (Portelli, 1991; Chamberlain, 2001:119). In attempting to deal with the limitations posed by memory, I employed several strategies, such as interviewing family members across generations, and paying careful attention to casual conversations – especially when a number of relatives were gathered together. I also tried to see as many family photographs as possible.

Ideas about kinship and relatedness

In recent years, anthropologists have used many conceptual perspectives in analyzing family traditions and relationships, and among them the concept of “relatedness” has been especially prominent. Relatedness as a conceptual tool shifts the analysis of family and kinship studies away from genealogical connections (biology and nature) as the central definition of kinship, to a more flexible approach that includes the “local meanings and symbols” (Schweitzer, 2000:6-7) of being related in particular cultural contexts (Bouquet, 1993; Carsten, 2000; Strathern, 1992). While these anthropologists are not denying biology as an aspect in the study of kinship, they argue that, “biology alone is insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of what kinship *is* and *does*” (Schweitzer, 2000:16). In other words, the concept of relatedness inquires locally into what particular terms, practices, and rules mean to people, and offers new understandings into their own ideas or constructions of family relatedness, which are not necessarily based on the recognition of genealogical connections (Carsten, 2000; Schweitzer, 2000).

Among kinship theorists, Schneider (1968; 1984) has been influential in steering kinship studies away from genealogical relationships toward a more cultural analysis. In *After Nature* (1992), Strathern, using Schneider’s kinship model as a point of departure, argues that in Britain, with the effects of technological developments in reproduction, nature alone does not work for the analysis of families and kinship. Thus, she calls for “a new conceptualization of the ground” to explain the “modern cycle” (1992:195). Bouquet (1993) views relatedness as a “concept which allows for different nuances” and which “does not presuppose that genealogical relations are necessarily the most important” (1993:157). Carsten’s (2000) use of the concept shifts kinship studies “away from a pre-given analytic opposition between the biological [resulting from sexual reproduction] and the social [as in adoption and fostering arrangements] on which much anthropological study of kinship has rested” (2000:4), to the “lived experience of relatedness in local contexts” (p. 1). Furthermore, Carsten (1997) rejects Schneider’s (1984) notion of distinguishing or separating biological kinship from social kinship

on the grounds that kinship defined in these terms cannot be applied cross-culturally. In Carsten's view:

Instead of rejecting kinship as such, I suggest that we would do better to ask: how do the people we study define and construct their notions of relatedness and what values and meaning do they give them? If we accept that both the definition and the meaning of kinship are culturally variable, then we certainly must reject a universal definition of kinship in terms of procreation. But this does not mean that we cannot compare both how people conceive of relatedness and the meaning they attribute it in different cultures. It seems to me that if we are to reject kinship in the sense which Schneider criticizes, then we would do better to adopt a term to characterize the relatedness which people act and feel. I would call this kinship (Carsten 1997:290).

New kinship studies exploring gay and lesbian kinship (Weston, 1991), adoption (Modell, 1994), "house societies" (Carsten, 1997), kinship resulting from reproductive technologies (Strathern, 1992), surrogacy (Ragone, 1994) and step-families (Gorell Barnes, Thompson, Daniel and Burchardt, 1998), have explored "cultures of relatedness" beyond the traditional biological representation of kinship (Carsten, 2000) with an attempt to evaluate "the role of non-biological means in the reproduction of ourselves" [kinship] (Schweitzer, 2000:8). As with these new kinship studies, my research on mixed-heritage Afro-Caribbean and white British families also challenges kinship studies that view sexual procreation or shared substance as the central symbol of kinship (Schneider, 1980; 1984). However, as Schweitzer points out, "while it has become evident that biology alone is insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of what kinship *is* and *does*, it is equally hard to maintain that kinship has nothing to do with biology and procreation" (2000:16). My research on mixed-heritage families also supports this view.

My research suggests that mixed-heritage families cannot be understood without including their families of origin. The vocabulary people used when describing and evaluating their kin relations made this evident. Practices such as the adoption of children and grandchildren precisely because of "blood ties", also confirms this. However, what was also clear, was that family and kinship were not limited to "blood relatives", but also extended into a universe of relatives through fostering, adoption of non-blood children, and other non-

biological and fictive kin relations, which for some people, developed into closer kinship bonds than genealogical ties. Family to them, were individuals they described as their “support network” among whom they shared emotional, financial, and material resources for support and maintenance of their family/kinship network.

The anthropological research that has been undertaken since the 1980s has been most noteworthy for a conceptual shift, an attempt to combine “biological” and “social” relationships, and other new constructions of kinship that are occurring through a process of choice. Kinship and relatedness are described in terms of “indigenous statements and practices” (Carsten, 2000:3). Furthermore, the effects of the new reproductive technologies – surrogate motherhood, artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization etcetera – have challenged long-standing Anglo-American concepts of kinship (Stone, 2004:332). With reference to English kinship, Strathern argues that the effects of the new reproductive technologies and the extension of consumer choice to the areas of human reproduction in which such choice was not applied in the past has shifted the perception of kinship from “nature”, to a perception of kinship as social construction and as choice (1992a: 6-7).

Nevertheless the debate over the problem of defining “kinship” and how to make that definition universal continues. There have been some works that I have found helpful. Ishwaran and Piddington’s edited volume on *Kinship and Geographical Mobility* (1965) has provided insights into kinship relationships over geographical distances due to migration, urbanization, industrialization and acculturation. As with a handful of recent works which have broadened the long-standing anthropological understanding of kinship (see for example Besson 1995; Black 1995; Carsten 1997; 2002; Finch and Mason, 2000; Strathern 1992; Weston 1991; Simpson, 1998), my research also poses a challenge to the traditional views of kinship, as it requires analysis that reflects what patterns of behaviour and ideas about relatedness mean to people on their own terms based on their own particular experiences, “rather than models derived from the analysis of very different cultures” (Carsten 1997: 27).

It is Carsten, building on and advancing Schneider's arguments, whom I have found most useful in suggesting conceptual tools for my analysis. In *Cultures of Relatedness* Carsten's (2000) use of the concept of "relatedness" – although open to criticisms (see for example Holy, 1996:167-9) - shifts kinship studies "away from a pre-given analytic opposition between the biological and the social on which much anthropological study of kinship has rested" (2000:4), to the "lived experience of relatedness in local contexts" (p. 1). This alternative approach freed her to explore Malay notions of "relatedness". So instead of asking, do Malays have kinship by the traditional anthropological definition of kinship, she asks, how do Malays construct and define their notions of relatedness, and what value and meaning do they give to them? (Carsten, 2004:322). Carsten suggests that this broader, more open and flexible category of "relatedness" would encourage an anthropological redefinition of "kinship" that was less bound by analytic assumptions and more open to indigenous diversity (Carsten 1997:285). In response to criticisms that broadening the concept from "kinship" to "relatedness", would obfuscate the boundaries and make it difficult to distinguish "kin" from friends or neighbours, Carsten admits that broadening the concept does not solve the problem. Instead, the concept of relatedness has effectively enabled her to "suspend one set of assumptions, and to bracket off a particular nexus of problems, in order to frame questions differently. 'Relatedness' makes possible comparisons between Inupiat and English or Nuer ways of being related without relying on an arbitrary distinction between biology and culture, and without presupposing what constitutes kinship" (Carsten, 2000:5).

The problem that I faced in describing kinship among the people in my research is that the dominant social science theoretical models of kinship do not correspond with my people's kinship notions and practice. As with Malay kinship, among the London families, relatedness is derived both from reproduction and social activities, and separating the two categories is not something people do when they speak about their kin. The people in my study define their forms of relatedness in terms of biology (though prone to selectivity) and also in terms of their history and experience of kinship practice (see Bourdieu, 1997; 1990).

Carsten argues that kinship is not a fixed state, but is a process of becoming. This process involves the practices of living together, eating together, fostering and marriage, and these activities, particularly the sharing of food, create and strengthen the substance, namely blood, through which people conceive their notions of relatedness. Unlike the western conception of “blood” as something one is born with, to Malays it is a substance that is “continuously produced and transformed from food that is eaten” (Carsten, 2004:319). Essentially, Carsten argues that:

Kinship is not a lifeless and pre-given force which in some mysterious way determines the form of people’s relations with each other. On the contrary, it consists of the many small actions, exchanges, friendships and enmities that people themselves create in their everyday lives. For most people it is perhaps the heart of their creativity. But the content of these relations is not only continuously created anew, it is also shaped by long-term political processes. And this has also involved rethinking what kinship is—from a different angle (Carsten, 1997:23).

Carsten's point relates very closely to my data, especially in reference to creativity, which is relevant to the lives of the people in my research - and of particular relevance to the women as key in doing kinship. Thus, it is primarily with this approach to kinship that I align myself and move forward in the chapters that follow, to explore the relatedness that the people in my research *act, feel, and speak* about.

A large part of my research aim is to answer questions such as: Who is family? and, On what bases are family recognized? From these questions I hope to gain insight and understanding into what family means to these mixed-heritage families. Hence, I believe that employing Carsten’s (1997; 2000; 2004) concept of relatedness as an analytic tool could prove useful. However, the concept does not fully capture the complexities involved in the experiences of the families in my research. For example, it does not answer other questions such as: Under what historical conditions do people come together to form mixed-heritage families? In the process of creating their families, what strategies do they develop to overcome racism and other societal and familial constraints? How are they maintained, given their experiences of ongoing struggles/conflicts? How are they recreated/reproduced? Essentially,

my research requires a more comprehensive approach that evaluates the ongoing *process* of kinship among these families. A process that would illuminate not only mobility and mixing (as in hybridity), but also the history, cultural conflict, rupture, trauma, racism/violence, structural inequalities, resistance, and the survival strategies of adaptation and accommodation, resulting in a dynamic and innovative “type” which is recognized as “belonging to the locale” but continuing to interact with new influences (Allen, 2002, cited in Sheller, 2003:276). Essentially, my thesis required a conceptual framework that would help to explain the historical and cultural dimensions from which these individuals “forged” their complex and dynamic family formations and interrelationships.

Ideas about creolization

Although there are various theories regarding the concept of creolization (see for example, Bolland, 2002; Brathwaite, 1971; Burton, 1997; Collier and Fleischman, 2003; Mintz, 1996; Sheller, 2003; Trouillot, 1998), I believe that the concept taken in the main captures the ongoing, fluid, conflictual and complex relationships that people describe, and that I observed among their families. Terms such as “mixing”, “blending”, “different cultures”, “multi-cultural”, “multi-ethnic”, “mixed-race”, “mixed-heritage”, “diversities”, “forged”, “building bridges”, “create”, “cut off”, “struggles”, “survival” and “accommodate” (among a host of others), were dominant phrases people actually used to describe their own experiences.

During my fieldwork, I attended a picnic one afternoon in a park in London with two couples, Pearl and Bert (second generation Afro-Caribbean female/white British male), and Jane and Josh (white British female/second generation Afro-Caribbean male). These couples are friends who consider themselves extended families though not related by blood. As we sat, ate, and conversed, the topic of the difference in “upbringing, and attitude to life” between “Black British” people (as in second generation Afro-Caribbean people) and “white British” people took center stage, and Bert suggested that

“Black British people are *creolized* Caribbean and British.” According to Bert, “Black British are a bridge between the two cultures, and Britain is very much influenced by the Caribbean communities. Culturally and artistically, they have got a massive influence on this society as a whole”. Bert was referring to the Caribbean music that had become a prominent feature in Britain not just among Afro-Caribbeans in Britain, but also among white British people and especially among the younger generation. The Notting Hill carnival was a major evidence of this phenomenon. Caribbean food has also become popular in Britain.

Indeed some social scientists have pointed to the influence of Caribbean-derived artifacts in British national life, such as phrases in popular language, music, youth dress style, and in food (see Gilroy, 1993; Goulbourne, 2002; Henry, 2005). My observations of what people in my research said and did also support this notion of the merging of cultural forms - not only of Caribbean and English/British, but of other nationalities. An example is the lunch I was served by a mother in my research, of Jamaican jerked chicken and English baked beans stuffed in a Mediterranean pita bread. I was told that this was her son’s favourite meal.

A few days after the picnic in the park, I conducted an informal interview with Bert in his home. I learned that Bert's interest in Afro-Caribbean culture began in the 1980s when he moved to London from a small village in Suffolk, and began to socialize with Afro-Caribbean friends he met in college. According to him:

There is an energy and a freedom of expression about that type of music that I felt wasn’t around. It wasn’t about love songs, it wasn’t about pop, it goes beyond fashion, it goes a lot deeper than that, than merely just what’s in and what’s out. It was telling me something different, something interesting. It was very much a cultural thing, an art form, so you tend to start living it. For me, it did fulfill a certain amount of creativity. There was an element of being outside of society, being in another community. A community that kind of ran on a parallel, but society wasn’t aware of it, and couldn’t see ...until obviously, they began to see.

The more I thought about what he had said, the more I came to see Bert's insight that "Black British people are *creolized* Caribbean and British" as a potential key conceptual idea for interpreting my material as a whole. Furthermore, Bert's insight echoed the anthropologist Nancy Foner, who thirty years ago, recognized among Jamaican migrants in Britain, a process akin to the process of creolization that occurred in the Caribbean. According to Foner, Jamaican migrants in England "are caught between two worlds: they are no longer just like Jamaicans back home, but they are also not exactly like, or fully accepted by, most English people. New cultural patterns as well as new patterns of social relations - neither wholly English nor wholly Jamaican - have emerged" (Foner, 1977:120).

Additionally, Sheller (2003) notes: "Caribbean cultures are cultures-on-the-move, which are already creole and in turn are said to have 'creolized' the metropolis. Having begun as collisions of diverse cultures that became indigenized as 'creole', they went on to spill across the Atlantic world spreading their influence into the 'global cities' that became key Caribbean cross-roads" (Sheller, 2003:278). Sheller further points out that, "it is not only populations and popular cultures that cross international boundaries, but also more complex theoretical formations" (ibid.). Thus, we find that some key theoretical terms for describing contemporary global culture have also travelled from the Caribbean (see for example the works of Gilroy, 1993; Hall, 1990; Hannerez, 2000; Clifford, 1992). So what can we learn from the literature about the meanings and implications of "creolization"?

As with kinship, creolization has experienced a variety of turns on its analytic journey, fueled by a host of debates and suggested syntheses. Moreover, as Trouillot (1998) notes with reference to the phenomenon in the Caribbean: "Because it first occurred against all odds, between the jaws of brute and absolute power, no explanation seems to do justice to the very wonder that it happened at all" (ibid:8). Hence, "creolization" continues to be "a miracle begging for analysis" (p. 8). As a concept "creolization" has its origins in Caribbean cultures of resistance, survival of enslavement and colonial plantations systems, and in movements of decolonization (Sheller, 2003:285).

The concept was first developed by Caribbean theorists (see Brathwaite, 1971; Mintz and Price, 1992 [1976]) in the 1970s to refer to "the agonising process of renewal and growth that marks the new order of men and women who came originally from different Old World cultures (whether European, African, Levantine or Oriental) and men in conflict" (Nettleford, 1978:2).

The concept sprung from other debates seeking to understand how "African" or, conversely, how distinctively "Caribbean" or "Creole" are Caribbean cultures (Burton, 1997:1). The original opponents in this continuity-creativity controversy were Franklin Frazier, an African-American sociologist, and Melville Herskovits, a Euro-American anthropologist. According to Frazier, the experience of the Middle Passage and the whole oppressive enslavement process on the plantations stripped the African-born slaves of all their family and cultural assets. Hence, in order to survive, they had to create new language, work, and family customs that were often imitations of their European slave masters (Frazier, 1966 [1939]). In opposition to Frazier's argument, Herskovits argued that in spite of the brutal conditions of slavery, some African cultures in religion, language and family forms survived unchanged, while others were reinterpreted/reconstructed in order to adapt to conditions in the New World (Herskovits, 1964 [1941] (Mintz and Price, 1992:62-65 offer a brief summary of Frazier-Herskovits debate)). As a synthesis to the Frazier-Herskovits debate, a mediating theory developed which argues that from the beginning of colonialism in the Caribbean, a form of "cultural miscegenation between Africa and Europe, corresponding to the sexual miscegenation of black and white" (Burton, 1997:2) took place. Thus, there evolved in the Caribbean, a distinctive "Creole" synthesized culture (Mintz and Price, 1992).

One of the most significant early theorists of creolization was the Barbadian historian Kamau Brathwaite. In his thesis on *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820*, Brathwaite (1971) defined creolization as a process of cultural change "based upon the stimulus/response of individuals within the society to their environment and – as White/Black, culturally discrete groups – to each other " (p. 296). Brathwaite saw this "intercultural

creolization” as a “two-way process” (p.300). Without ignoring the hegemony of the White group over the Black group, Brathwaite’s main objective was to illustrate the integrative effect that this “intercultural evolution has in the emerging society” (Bolland 2002:24). To do this, he points to the effects of miscegenation which has resulted in a growing intermediate group:

the large and growing coloured population of the island, which... acted as a bridge, a kind of social cement, between the two main colours of the island’s structure, thus further helping (despite the resulting class/colour divisions) to integrate the society (Brathwaite 1971:305).

Brathwaite’s analysis of “creole society” in Jamaica arose as a postcolonial response to Caribbean cultural anthropology in the mid-twentieth century, which was largely influenced by M. G. Smith’s “plural society” thesis (Sheller 2003:279). Smith (1965) argued that within each Caribbean society are separate “racial”, “cultural” and social segments which maintain separate and distinct practices and “institutions” – “a form or system of activities characteristic of a given population” (p163) - and these segments and corporate groups are held together and controlled by the dominant central or colonial government. Smith focused on institutions such as kinship, religion, education, recreation, economy, property, and government (Chapter 7), and from his study of Jamaica argued that there are no common values between the different cultural or social sections (characterized as “white”, “brown”, and “black” (p. 163)), and that “the coexistence of these divergent value-systems within a single society involves continuous ideological conflict” (Smith, 1965:174).

Brathwaite’s Creole society, like Smith’s plural-society model, focuses on the significance of culture in Caribbean societies. However, counter to the plural-society model which emphasizes the persistence of social segmentation and conflict between each racial and ethnic groups, the Creole-society model stresses an evolving cultural integration and homogenization of people from diverse racial and ethnic origins, into one national ethnicity based on the creation of a new Creole culture (Bolland, 2002:23, 29). In short, the central

argument of the Creole-society thesis is that the Africans and the Europeans who settled in the Americas/Caribbean “contributed to the development of a distinctive society and culture that was neither European nor African, but ‘Creole’” (Bolland, 2002:23). Thus, the Creole-society model which advocates a notion of social and cultural change, is the seedbed from which the concept of “creolization” germinated, “and a concept that is now widely used to refer to processes of the creative reconstructions and cultural changes in the Caribbean and elsewhere” (ibid).

Other Caribbean intellectuals such as Orlando Patterson (1975), Rex Nettleford (1970), and Marvyn Alleyne (1985, 1988) have also contributed to the concept of creolization, offering variants of the Creole-society thesis by exploring issues of post-independence Caribbean societies (for a more detailed view of these variants on the concept of creolization see Bolland, 2002:26-30). In brief what supporters of the Creole-society model offer is an approach similar to Brathwaite’s (1971) model of national integration/homogenization with an emphasis on social and cultural change, and only implicit reference to structural contradictions and social conflicts between the different segments in the Caribbean societies.

More recently, Bolland (2002) has made a cogent attempt to synthesize the Creole-society thesis (his synthesis has been endorsed by others such as Burton, 1997; Sheller, 2003). Bolland has challenged the Creole-society thesis for its theoretical ambiguities, and has developed an alternative “dialectical” view of creolization. Bolland contends that “conceptually, ‘creolization’ and ‘Creole-society’ remain ill-defined and ambiguous” (2002:29). While it draws upon anthropological theories of culture change, it moves back and forth between a “dualistic” and “dialectical” analysis of individual and society, thus lacking a consistent and explicit theoretical basis (ibid:18). On the one hand, the Creole-society model portrays the social structure (society) as a “Black/White dichotomy” (Bolland 2002:30, citing Brathwaite, 1971:xiv), and the creolization process as a “cultural action...based upon the stimulus/response of individuals within the society to their environment and – as White/Black, culturally discrete groups - to each

other” (Bolland 2002:30, citing Brathwaite, 1971:296). According to Bolland, this dualistic view portrays creolization as a

‘blending’ process, a mixing of cultures that occurs without reference to structural contradictions and social conflicts... [Thus], it obfuscates the tension and conflict that existed, and still exists, between the Africans and Europeans who were bearers of these traditions (Bolland, 2002:30).

On the other hand, Bolland points out that the Creole-society model does draw attention to conflicting relationships and the tensions that arise in the processes of social and cultural change, but only implicitly. For example, Alleyne, a creole-society theorist, analyses the development of Caribbean Creole languages as “contradictory, conflict-prone and insecure, ambivalent in outlook and attitudes, ambiguous in their formation and in their functioning...” (Alleyne, 1985:158, cited in Bolland, 2002:30). Bolland contends that such ambiguities with a dualistic view on the one hand and an implicit dialectic outlook on the other hand does not provide a sound theoretical basis for the concept of creolization. Hence he proposes a more explicit dialectical analysis of creolization that takes into account the “interrelated and mutually constitutive nature of ‘individual’, ‘society’, and ‘culture’, and of human agency and social structure” (ibid:30).

With the experiences of the families in my London research, I find Bolland’s dialectical theory of creolization most useful for analysis. As he points out, “dialectic theory draws attention, in particular, to conflicts in social systems as the chief sources of social change” (Bolland, 2002:31). Bolland reminds us of the power relationships which define and differentiate many social relationships – relationships of domination/subordination – and that as forms of oppression vary from one society to the next, so do the locations and kinds social change. He cites Marx’ nineteenth century capitalist society and relationships of social class in understanding the dynamics of that society. However, Bolland rightly points out that that class is not the only relationship of domination/subordination: “On the contrary, various forms of oppression are based on status inequalities, defined in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age and legal status, or a combination of these as well as class” (ibid:31). My

thesis illustrates various examples of power relationships that operate not only between individuals and the “society”, but also among individuals within families.

Moreover, by endorsing a dialectical view of creolization for analysis of the London families, I am able to take the analysis beyond the point of simply “mixing” and “blending” of people and traditions, to show how these individuals/families in London who, from the very start of their relationships are made to feel subordinate, have nevertheless managed in many ways to shape their own culture and make their own history. As the following chapters demonstrate, despite harsh experiences they have been very active in adapting, in seeking strategies to subvert the goals and structures in their society and within their families.

In sum, it is Bolland's general conclusion about the process of creolization that I find most relevant for my analysis:

Creolization is not a homogenizing process, but rather a process of contention between people who are members of social formations and carriers of cultures, a process in which their own ethnicity is continually re-examined and redefined in terms of the relevant oppositions between different social formations at various historical moments. (Bolland, 2002:38).

More specifically, creolization is also linked to the forms of family and kinship relatedness in Caribbean societies, as Mintz and Price (1992), Besson (1995; 2002), and R. T. Smith (1988) have cogently shown. It is argued that the West Indian Creole kinship system began during slavery and the plantations system, and was the result of the denial of the right to establish socially recognized families and lineage among the slaves by their masters (Henriques 1973; M. G. Smith 1957; T. R. Smith 1957). Despite the experience of fragmentation of their traditional bonds, the lack of knowledge of genealogical affiliation, and the conditions laid down by their masters, the slaves were still able to symbolically reconstruct family and kinship forms, “either by various forms of ritual kinship or by spiritual (religious) ancestry” (Fleischmann 2003:xx). Moreover, as Mintz and Price (1992 [1976])

illustrated, the social bonds that developed between shipmates during the Middle passage, continued on plantations in many parts of Afro-America. These bonds extended beyond the original shipmates themselves to include other biological and non-biological kin.

For example, Mintz and Price (1992) show how the "shipmate" bonds which began on the Middle Passage among the slaves, continued on the plantations, and were synonymous in the slaves' view with "brother" or "sister". These fictive kinship bonds extended "beyond the original shipmates themselves and interpenetrate with biological kin ties". Thus, on the plantations, "shipmates were said to 'look upon each other's children mutually as their own', and 'it was customary for children to call their parents' shipmates 'uncle' and 'aunt'" (Mintz and Price, 1992 [1976]:43). Among the families in the post-emancipation free villages and the post-treaty Maroon community in Jamaica, Besson (1995) also found that the kinship terminology that has evolved among the complex conjugal, cognatic descent and bilateral kinship system evolved through the process of creolization on the basis of the shipmate bond (Besson, 1995:195-4). "Such fictive kinship therefore, was the very basis of the new African-American slave cultures, and the consolidation of kinship and marriage systems became a central theme in the culture-building of the slaves" (Besson, 1995:187).

Additionally, it has been argued that the complex Creole kinship system of "dual marriage" (involving both legal and non-legal marriage) involving multiple residences, and generating an extensive bilateral cognatic descent kinship ties and "matrifocality" that exist among different class and racial groups in the Caribbean today, is rooted in colonial history (see Besson, 2002:18-19; 1995; Smith 1996; 1988; Green, 2006). Moreover, these family and kinship patterns were not only practiced among the slaves, but also among the planter class through interracial relationships with African slave women, and transnationally between the colonies and Europe (see Green, 2006). Many planters who resided in the colony had married relations with white women with whom they either co-resident or headquartered abroad, while simultaneously in relations of concubinage with black women, enslaved or

free (Green, 2006:16; Bush, 1990). This “dual marriage” system according to R. T. Smith which began from the beginning of the plantation system, was “a system in which the elements were mutually and reciprocally defining and which articulated with the racial hierarchy” (R. T. Smith, 1987:167).

In the “dual marriage” system, white male planters became the mediating biological and social link between two or more sets of families, facilitating the reproduction of two different race/class lines (Green, 2006:16): a legitimate line with the white master as common genitor and reproducer of white “paterfamilial propriety and racial superiority”, and an illegitimate Afro-Creole matrifocal line of a mixed intermediate class (Green, 2006:18):

Just as marriage came to be an exclusive property of the very wealthy and a mechanism for the transnational reproduction of the Euro-creole upper class, concubinage came to be the means by which a ‘bastard’ intermediate class was bequeathed to the societies of the West Indies by the planters and their surrogates as the social superiors of the slaves and, later, of the Black peasantry and working class (ibid).

Upon emancipation from slavery, pressure was directed at the African ex-slaves by the British and American missionaries and the British Parliament to conform to the European form of marriage and family (West India Royal Commission), but these efforts failed among the majority of the ex-slave families due partly to economic constraints (Henriques 1953). Contemporary Caribbean family forms continue to exhibit features of the Creole family system that existed during slavery and the early post-emancipation period. Besson for example illustrates the continuation of the creolized slave kinship system in the post-emancipation free villages and the post-treaty maroon community of Accompong in Jamaica. She shows how cognatic descent, bilateral kinship, and a “dynamic ‘complex’ or open system of marriage and affinity, linked both to serial polygamy”, and “a high incidence of half-siblingship”, all interrelate "to maximize dimensions of consanguinity and affinity [originally] elaborated through the process of creolization on the basis of the shipmate bond" (Besson 1995:194-5, 198; Besson, 2002:281). It is striking how often I have found in my London families similar patterns of multiple conjugal forms, serial monogamy, a high incidence of half-

siblingship and “wide-spread bilateral kinship ties with no boundaries” (ibid:281).

Raymond T. Smith (1988) shows that in Guyana and Jamaica, “the family structure of different classes and racial groups can be understood as variations on a common structural theme” (p. 7). What he identifies as the “matrifocal family” structure found in the Caribbean is not “simply the consequence of certain functional problems within an ideally conceived nuclear family” (p. 8). Instead, it is part of a complex of meaning and action that involves all classes and status groups, and which “constitutes the West Indian creole kinship system” (p. 8). Indeed, among my research families, both “middle-class” and “working-class” (according to their own categorization), many women become household heads. And this does not necessarily result from “functional problems”, but often due to personal choice.

Migration across islands and oceans continues to be a central feature of Caribbean Creole cultures. Although migration disrupts family bonds, Caribbean families have maintained kinship relations transnationally through a network of relations –both blood and non-blood relatives – making all sorts of links that provide emotional, financial, and other forms of aid and support (see Besson, 2002b; Chamberlain 2003; Goulbourne and Chamberlain 2001; Horst and Miller 2006; Thompson and Bauer 2006). As Fleschmann points out, the capacity of the Caribbean family to construct and reconstruct ethnic and kinship ties – the legacy of slavery and labour migration –viewed from the angle of globalization becomes a “modern asset” (2003: xxxii). Among the families in my London research, members also actively maintain links to cognatic descent groups in the Caribbean and in North America through transnational kinship.

In my view the process of creolization in terms of the creation and recreation of families is also a “process of kinship” (See Carsten 1997). Thus, I strongly believe that creolization is an appropriate theoretical concept for exploring the development of Afro-Caribbean and white English families in London for a number of reasons. Although the concept is more generally used to describe

societies in the Americas and the Caribbean (see for example Besson, 2002; Bolland, 2002; Brathwaite, 1971; Mintz, 1996; Trouillot, 1998), and concepts such as transcultural, cultural hybridity, diasporic identities and globalization (among others) have become the popular rhetoric among social scientists, as Trouillot points out, they are only masks for the creolization process that still goes on globally. Hence, “the creolization process in the Afro-Americas appears, in retrospect, as an early state of grace only now accessible to the rest of humanity” (Trouillot, 1998:15). This is evident in issues raised by social scientists such as Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic* (1993) and Hall in *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (1990; 1999).

Secondly, and particularly relevant for the families in my London study, unlike hybridity, which points to the process of biological reproduction and genetic recombination (Maurer 1997:11-13; Röhrig Assunção, 2005:34), creolization points to history and change in families that occur through a process of mixed socialization, and the circumstances (often harsh such as violence and racism) faced by individuals engaged in the process. Moreover, it is a process that is never fixed, but is always being created and re-created, as is the “process of kinship” which is “a process of becoming” (Carsten 1997: 12).

Thirdly, and also very important, in my view, the concept of creolization most adequately encompasses individuals’ spoken narratives regarding their own experiences of “mixing”, “blending” and “integrating”, “accommodating”, and the “joys”, the “struggles”, and the ambiguities involved in “crossing boundaries” and “adapting” to “create” “mixed-heritage” families. Additionally, with regard to family strategies for surviving, unlike acculturation, which implies passive adaptation, their *active* adaptive strategies are more akin to creolization.

In sum, without any single clear-cut grand theories, what the themes and threads running through the thesis illustrate, is the development of mixed white British and Afro-Caribbean families in London over historical periods and contexts. Along with the other conceptual tools outlined, I believe that the

concept of creolization is also useful for understanding the mixed-heritage London families. For example, with regard to their forms of relatedness, for many of them, the strategies they have employed such as forms of marriage, patterns of residence, forms of parenting, extension of family and kinship ties to non-biological kin etcetera, are forms of relatedness that are still not generally considered the "norm" in British society. Therefore, they have had to find ways to modify and transform certain codes of conduct that already exist in their families of origin, and in the social structure as the "normal" ways of being.

I do not by any means intend to essentialize these families by implying that their experiences are only unique to them. Contact between any different groups of people inevitably requires negotiations and adaptations against the background of socially sanctioned modes of conduct. In her essay on "Future kinship and the study of culture" Strathern alluded to the creolization of English kinship when she stated that:

The English could draw on the family as a metaphor for thinking about continuity and change alike. For families might either appear as autonomous entities with their own traditions, as constellations of unique properties (and property) transmitted between generations, based on a line of natural ancestry; or they might appear as constellations of individuals who worked together or who moved away from one another, and who in any case diversified their interests, renegotiated their obligations and chose with whom they associated (Strathern 1992: 53-54)

In the study of culture, Strathern suggests that anthropologists draw on the "idea of the cosmopolitanised and always plural culture, or even perhaps the *creolised* language", because according to her, "despite the apparently exotic origins of these constructs" they also resonate with English ideas about kinship (1997:54). Strathern views "the city" as a source of cultural change where cultures are increasingly becoming "creolised", and "traditions becoming fainter" (p.55).

Strathern was referring to the changes in English kinship as a result of "artificial procreation". However, whether one is referring to artificial

procreation or "miscegenation", with regard to kinship among mixed Afro-Caribbeans and white British families it is about creating something new, even though from already existing elements. Furthermore, the concept of creolization incorporates the different and often contradictory processes of cultural interaction and cultural creation/recreation that are employed in analysis by many creolization and cultural theorists. In trying to understand the family and kinship patterns which have developed in the context of the *Black Atlantic* (Gilroy 1993), creolization could prove a useful conceptual tool in analyzing the changes in family forms, practices and values which have evolved over time.

Mintz himself, an original advocate of the concept, recognizes that although creolization as a concept was born in the Caribbean, and the processes that the word represents was first studied in the New World, these processes are also occurring in Europe and the rest of the western world (Mintz in Besson, 2002:xvi). Creolization is also linked to specific forms of family and kinship relatedness in Caribbean societies and I believe that the concept may equally fruitfully be used to describe the process of kinship among mixed Afro-Caribbeans and white British families in London. I now move on to illustrate the usefulness of these several theories in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 3

Coming Together: A case study of the Smith family

In Chapter 2, I showed how individuals' understanding of their own experiences expressed through their life story narratives, has informed the theoretical focus of my research – the process of kinship and forms of relatedness as a process of creolization. In this chapter, I use the case study of a single family, the “Smiths”, to explore how, as more generally with the wider process of creolization, this particular family *does* kinship and relatedness through a non-static, non-homogenizing process of re-creating, re-inventing, incorporation, adaptations and negotiations of social and cultural processes, that involve biological as well as non-biological relatives.

The chapter takes a historical and anthropological look at the Smith family from the 1950s to the present and across four generations. Although other families in the research often had some similar experiences as the Smith's, there is uniqueness in every family. Therefore, the Smith's family case should not be generalized to all the families in my research. On the other hand, by focusing on a single case, I am able to draw out individual experiences and diversities, and illustrate different aspects that unite members of family into kinship. The narratives from the Smith family are multiple, so that whenever I am using extended quotations I indicate who the speaker is. Otherwise I simply indicate with quotations marks, the specific words and phrases which people used.

Dawn and Dusty Smith

Coming together

Dawn Smith is the eldest child and only daughter of an Irish family of three children from Cork. Dawn's father died while she was still a child. Consequently, she and her eldest brother left school from an early age to work and help support the family. As a young woman in the late 1940s, Dawn left Ireland with two other friends and moved to London to find work, and, as she said, "do something with my life". All three young women found work in the same brewery, and lodged with friends of the other two women, sleeping on sofas in a very cramped house. From her four-pound weekly earnings, Dawn paid for her lodging, and sent money home to her mother for financial help, and that left her with very little for leisure. At the brewery, Dawn met another woman, Clara, who was also from Ireland, and they became very close friends. Dissatisfied with her living conditions, Dawn went to live with Clara, who invited her to share the room she was renting with another woman in a house. Having no other relatives in London, Dawn and Clara became lifelong "sisters".

Dusty Smith left Jamaica for London in the 1940s. He too lived in a house with "a lot of other people". He worked as a driver in the Royal Air Force (see photos at end of chapter), and later as a manual labourer in various factory jobs in London alongside people from various ethnic groups. In 1950 Dawn and Dusty met one Friday night at a dance and "danced to a few tunes". They did not exchange any personal details that night, but on the Monday morning when Dawn arrived at work, she saw Dusty at the entrance to the brewery looking for work. Dawn's first instinct was that Dusty had come to "harass" her. In fact, he had shown up for a job that he had seen in an advertisement. He applied, got the job, and their rationale for this extraordinary coincidence was that "fate had decided" their union. They developed a very close friendship, which led to an intimate relationship.

Dawn's friends before meeting Dusty were all people from her own ethnic background. Dusty on the other hand had a more ethnically diverse group of friends, many of whom were "mixed-race" couples. After the couple got together, all of Dawn's friends except Clara discontinued their friendship with her, leaving her with a network of friends who were mainly Dusty's friends.

Shortly after their relationship became intimate, Dawn became pregnant, and the couple decided to live together. They knew it would be difficult at the time to find housing as an Irish and Afro-Caribbean couple, because this was during the period when racism was severe in Britain. By this date many of the prejudices and anxieties that the English held of the Irish – with regards to differences in religion, custom, and competition in an overcrowded labour market – had lessened. Hence when large-scale Caribbean migration began, the Irish were no longer the main targets for discrimination. Nevertheless, the stereotype of "the Irishman as drunken, dishonest and rowdy [was] still a reality to some English landladies and magistrates" (Jackson, 1964:205). Thus, advertisements for housing appeared in local London papers and on notice boards stating, "No Blacks, no Irish, no dogs" (Glass, 1960; Jackson, 1964; Patterson, 1963). Furthermore, during the early 1950s, London's landlords/ladies who kept a "respectable" house did not usually accept unmarried couples and couples with babies "because of noise and other possible nuisance value" (Patterson, 1963:187). However, Dawn and Dusty would make phone calls in response to advertisements in the newspapers. Of the couple, Dawn made the phone calls: "I just read in the newspaper you have a room to let". The landlord/landlady would respond, "Yes, yes, yes dear, come along". The couple would turn up, only to hear, "Oh, the room is gone", or "Oh, I went out and my husband let the room"! After a series of such responses, they resorted to announcing while inquiring for accommodation that, "one of us is black"! They finally succeeded in securing a place to live – one room on the ground floor of a house, with shared kitchen and bathroom. However, they could not disclose to the landlord that they were neither married nor that they were about to have a baby.

Getting married

When Dawn became pregnant, Dusty asked her to marry him, but because of Dawn's age, according to the laws of marriage she needed to get consent from her mother. By now she had stopped working, and Dusty had changed jobs and was working seven days a week on the railways to support them. Dusty told Dawn to write to her mother and ask for permission to marry, and to tell her everything about his background, including the colour of his skin. Dawn who had grown up a Catholic, wrote to her very religious mother Sue, who replied stating, "He could be a white man, green man, black man, coloured man, he could be any kind of man as long as he's Catholic"! Dusty who had grown up as a boy attending the Church of England, had, he said, "finished with those things" as a young adult. He had taken on very strong political views, and no longer believed in "going to church every Sunday or going to Heaven when you died".

However, since the only condition under which Dusty would be allowed to marry Dawn was to convert to Catholicism, he complied. Thus, before they married, he went to the local Catholic church and became a converted Catholic. Very shortly after he converted, they planned their wedding. By now Dusty had helped his younger brother Peter to migrate to London, and Dawn still had her "sister friend" Clara close by, and Peter and Clara were the witnesses and the only attendants to their wedding, which took place in the local Catholic church (see photo at end of chapter).

Getting married was an event in itself for the couple (see photo at end of chapter). Because their landlord was unaware that they were living as a common law couple, they had to plan the event covertly. Additionally, in order to avoid becoming public targets of racism, Dusty and his brother Peter walked on ahead to the church, and Dawn and Clara followed some distance behind them. They carried the flowers in a shopping bag to disguise them, and pinned them on to their lapels when they arrived at the church. After the wedding ceremony Dusty

and Peter went to the local pub “for a drink”, and Dawn and Clara went for a “cup of tea”. They had invited a few friends to their room that evening to celebrate their wedding, but because they couldn’t disclose the real reason for the party to their landlord, they asked him for permission to have a “little birthday celebration”. Permission was granted under the condition that they kept the noise and the music down. Because they only had one room, they dismantled their bed and took it to the shed in the back garden so that they would have some space for socializing. Dawn recalls how “In them days, you didn’t turn off the lights by a switch like you can now, they automatically went off at ten o’ clock”. At ten o’ clock sharp the lights went out, and although they had secured some candles to provide light, the landlord was standing at their door commanding an end to the party. Left alone in the dark, they found it impossible to retrieve their bed from the shed in the back garden, and they couldn’t ask their landlord for help, so they spent their wedding night sleeping on the floor.

No space for the baby

A few months prior to having their baby, when it was starting to become obvious that Dawn was pregnant, she and Dusty informed their landlord, who told them that they would have to leave. However, they were unable to secure housing before the arrival of the baby, so that when the couple arrived home from the hospital with baby Polly, their landlord insisted that they couldn’t stay there any longer. Devastated, Dawn wrote home to her mother Sue, telling her that they were “getting chucked out”, and they had nowhere to live, and asked for her advice. Sue told her to send baby Polly to her, and she would take care of her till they were able to have her back. Fortunately for them, Clara – Dawn’s “sister friend” – was going back to Ireland for a visit, and when Polly was three weeks old, Clara took her to live with her grandmother Sue.

Back in Ireland, Dawn's two younger brothers John and Toby were still living at home with their mother Sue. They lived in a small two-bedroom house, so Polly slept with her grandmother at nights. Polly's first formative years were spent with her grandmother who became her "mother", and her uncles became her "big brothers". They went to church every Sunday, and she was taken to all the church socials in the town. The families kept in touch mainly through letters. Dusty and Dawn sent regular parcels of money, clothing, and toys for Polly, and Sue took photographs of Polly in her new dresses and send them to her parents.

Buying a home

Back in London, Dawn and Dusty had moved out of their original rented room to another room in a house they rented from a friend of Dusty's. Eight months after the birth of Polly, Dawn became pregnant with Mark. Desperate for more living space by now, they began to save money to buy a home of their own before the new baby arrived. A very large fifteen-room house that had been divided into flats, in "very bad condition", came on the market in north London for thirteen hundred pounds, and they bought it. Dawn and Dusty bought the house because "it was in such a terrible condition, nobody wanted it, and it was cheap, but had potential". The house had three floors and a basement, and "every room needed repair". It also came with existing English tenants. They moved into their new home, and Dusty who had no experience in home repairs, went immediately to the library to find books on home renovations and decorating. After his work on the railways during the days, he worked tirelessly on the house in the evenings, "fixing it room by room". They took in some of their friends who like themselves had experienced difficulties in finding accommodation. In exchange for lodging, these friends helped with the house repairs. Once the repairs were completed, their friends remained in the house, some paying "what they feel like", others "paying nothing", and according to Dusty, "It was alright, because they were my *brothers*".

Inside the big house

As the house got fixed “room by room”, Dawn and Dusty took in more lodgers like themselves who were having difficulties finding accommodation. They recalled that at various times there were individuals and couples:

From the Caribbean, African people, a German woman living with a Trinidadian man, an Irish girl with a Jamaican chap, another Jamaican guy with an English woman who had twins, one very dark, and the other was light and blonde. There were also four Chinese-Jamaican brothers living in the big house. One was married to a French girl, one was married to an Indian-Jamaican woman, and another one was married to an English white girl”.

Thus, in the process of solving their own housing difficulties, they also created a new space for ethnically mixed sociability.

About two years after moving into the house, when the renovations were completed, Dawn and Dusty decided that it was time for Polly to come back and live with them. Their son Mark had been living with them all along. By now Polly was four years old, and had bonded with her grandmother Sue, who had become her “mum”. When Sue told Polly that “your mum’s coming to take you back to England” Polly was confused and upset. So upset that when Dawn arrived to bring her back, she refused to go without Sue. Hence, Sue left her two sons behind in her house and accompanied Polly and Dawn back to London. In London Sue remained in the big house for a few months, in order to help Polly adapt to her new environment and her new family.

Adaptation was not an easy process for Polly, because having been separated from Dusty and Dawn at three weeks old, and knowing only her grandmother as her mother, and her uncles as her brothers, meeting her own parents and her brother for the first time was emotionally difficult. One of the most difficult times she recalls was the day her grandmother told her that she was going

shopping to the butchers, but never came back. “I felt that I had been tricked, that she’d gone. And it was an enormous house, so I just felt lost. I can’t describe how big it seemed. Loads of stairs up to the attic, and lots of different people living in the house”. After Sue left, Polly’s adaptation was helped by having her “cousins” Leah and Sam in the house much of the time. Leah and Sam were not blood relatives, but were the children of “auntie” Clara who was Dawn’s “sister-friend”, and who also was the person who took Polly to live with her grandmother. “My cousins were the only other children in the house apart from my brother and me. They didn’t live there, but they were there a lot, and they would come on Fridays and spend the whole weekend, or I would go over to Camden Town and stay with them a lot”. Hence, by this point, the house had become not just a setting for mixed sociability, but also for a creolized cross-ethnic form of fictive kinship.

Polly continued to see her grandmother every year, because Dawn sent the children each summer for six weeks to spend their holidays with their grandmother. This pattern continued until Sue migrated to London – at Dawn and Dusty’s persuasion.

Family inside the big house

Inside the house there was a complex network of relations. There were lodgers who were mostly friends of Dawn and Dusty’s, friends who had become “brothers” and “sisters”, and there were children who had become “cousins”. Also in the house were Dawn’s two younger brothers John and Toby, whom she had later helped to migrate from Ireland, and Dusty’s younger brother Peter, whom he had also previously helped to migrate from Jamaica. Peter’s wife Jean also lived in the house till they bought their own house and moved out. Some years later Dusty and Dawn invited Dawn’s mother Sue to migrate to London to live with them, since all her children were now in London. Sue did migrate to

London, but still bent on maintaining her independence, she decided to get a flat of her own. The Smiths found Sue a flat not far from their home. They also found her a cleaning job which she did a few days per week, and every weekend from Friday to Sunday, she went to stay in the big house, where she spent most of her time socializing with Dusty and his friends, watching sports and gambling. Thus, although the Catholic Church was an important part of social life for Sue in Ireland, in London, she – like Dawn and Dusty who converted to Catholicism so he could marry Dawn - no longer attended the church. Thus, Jackson's argument that "the close link between Church and society in Ireland has made the Church a centre for immigrant life in England" (Jackson 1964;306) was not true for the Smith family.

Within the complex network of relationships inside the house, there existed also, different forms of relationships between the couple and the other individuals. For example, the nucleus of the family had the closest ties both with their blood relatives – Dawn and Dusty's brothers and Dawn's mother – and Jean who was an affine (Dusty's sister-in-law), and also with Clara and her two children who were non-blood. These relatives formed the immediate extended family ties, and these were the people who were constantly exchanging material and emotional support. Outside of this immediate set of relations was another set of friends who were also considered as "brothers", and were the people who shared some practical support, but mostly friendship and leisure. Polly's childhood memory of the house " was like a kind of community once you get inside the front door. A big community. It was very friendly, and it was nice".

It was great for me, because as a little girl, I could go to the top of the house with the two attic rooms at the top. My uncle Peter, my dad's brother lived in one of them with his Jewish wife Jean, Auntie Jean. She wasn't practicing [Judaism], and I think her family ostracized her. They lived in one room. There was another Jewish girl who married a Jamaican living in the house, and the same thing, I remember her telling me that her parents wouldn't have anything to do with her, cause I used to go to everybody's room and hear all their stories. And there was Marjorie and the Trinidadian man Simon living in the front room.

So I'd knock on the door, and everybody would let me in, and I'd spend half an hour in one room talking, and playing with all their little things, you know, the ornaments. And Marjorie would tell me about Germany, and Simon would tell me about Trinidad, and they'd have their music on. And then I'd get bored and I'd go to another room, sit in there for a little while and...everybody was very welcoming. There was always lots to do, you know, and lots of people you could go and sort of talk to in the house. And I suppose everybody made a fuss, because me and my brother were the only children in the house at the time – except for the weekends when Auntie Clara's children, my cousins Leah and Sam would come and stay with us.

Then on Fridays and Saturdays all the 'boys', as they were called, all the grown men in the house would gamble. All weekend in our living room... In those days, children could go to the off license and buy booze, no problem with cigarettes. So they would give me the money so I'd go and buy a bottle of whisky, cigarettes and whatever else they needed. And they'd finish their gambling and there was a big clean-up operation in the living room, which I had to do. Any money that was found, like a two-shillings, or two-and six, I could keep it, sometimes quite a bit of money.

Inside versus outside the house

As with most communities, there was both cohesion and conflict between members within the house. Sometimes fights broke out between couples and other individuals over some disagreement. One of the Chinese-Jamaican brothers for example periodically lost his temper and ran around with a knife. This incited fear and fury, and sometimes resulted in fights "and people tumbling down the stairs". Mark recalled how frightened he and his sister Polly would become: "My heart used to race. I used to be so frightened that somebody would get killed, because it always sounded so violent". Furthermore, there was added tension from disapproving neighbours who had not been very welcoming to the Smith family when they moved in.

The neighbourhood and experiences of racism

When Dawn and Dusty bought their home and moved into their neighbourhood in the early 1950s, the neighbourhood was “predominantly white”. They were the only “black family” on their street until the mid 1960s, and as Dawn recalls:

Nobody in the neighbourhood would talk us. They put swastika on me door, shit on me door. Yeah, when I wake up in the morning, there would be all that on me door... ‘Get out you black bastards’ would be written in black. What could you do”? You just wash it off! What else could you do? Just go on as if you didn’t care. That went on for a good while. When I took the children out, nobody would talk to me.

Dawn’s way of coping with such racism was to ignore it as much as possible, and to feel proud of their achievement in securing a home, and proud of her family: “I just thought, ‘this was my house, this was mine!’ And I was proud of myself for having a house. Didn’t think of the colour of my husband. He was my husband, and we were together, and that was it. What they want to think outside is their bloody business”. Outside their difficulties with housing, Dusty who was constantly out working did not encounter such blatant racism as Dawn. For him the worst in the neighbourhood was down at the local pub, where the bartender refused to serve him drinks.

It was the children, however, who experienced the most frequent racism. Not only were the Smiths the only family of their kind on their street and in their neighbourhood, but their children were, according to Polly, the only “other” children in their school. Polly and Mark experienced all sorts of racial abuses from name calling – “nigga boy”, “nigga girl”, “half-caste bitch” – to being physically attacked at school, and having stones thrown at them as they walked home. At her primary school Polly did make some friends with the other girls. Although she was never invited to their homes, she sometimes brought friends home with her. However, she stopped inviting them home when one girl scorned the rice and peas and chicken she was having for dinner, and asked if she was

eating “kitty cat” (as in cat food) – apparently, there was a myth in the 1950s and 60s that “black people” ate cat food.

Additionally, because the mixed couples in the house found few clubs and pubs that would welcome them, they made most of their entertainment inside the house. This gave Dusty and Dawn the idea of setting up a nightclub in the basement of the house, where they held regular parties and invited other couples like themselves. This arrangement created conflict between the community inside the house, and the community and neighbourhood outside the house.

Disapproving neighbours were constantly calling the police whenever they had a large party that involved friends parking their cars on the road. Consequently, the house was regularly raided by the police who were looking for stolen goods and drugs. Polly recalls how the police often came knocking at the door and “stormed” in with their dogs:

My brother and I used to be asleep in the bedroom and the police dogs used to come into the bedroom and sniff at our faces, and we used to hide under the covers. And my mum would be screaming “Get out of there, my children are in there, there’s nothing in there”! It was quite terrifying, dramatic and everything.

Coping with racism

Although there was never any evidence of any illegal activities in the house, after each police raid Polly remembers finding it particularly “embarrassing to get up and go out and face the world, knowing that all the neighbours behind their twitching net curtains are talking about us”. For Mark, there was always “an element of trying to hold my head up high, looking as though nothing had happened, and knowing that everybody disapproved of what they perceived was going in the house. A kind of reconciling yourself with the rest of the world really”.

Dawn and Dusty found various strategies to deal with the discrimination their family experienced outside the house. Dawn's would be to ignore the verbal abuse from the neighbours, and clean up whatever "mess" was on their door and front lawn. But for Dusty, despite the discrimination his family experienced, his tactic, in his words, was to "try to fit in like a jigsaw, get in the puzzle". He wanted to integrate into the neighbourhood by conforming to the standards he observed. "I behaved myself as how I see people behave there". He never played loud music, and he kept a clean yard. Furthermore, he continued to be courteous and say "good day" to everyone he passed on the street, whether or not they responded.

Where the children were concerned, Dawn and Dusty advised them to "Fight back!" This was not always carried out without consequences. In one instance it led to an unexpected social mixing. After Mark had been pushed around and called "black" by a group of his schoolmates, one day he fought back and broke the tooth of one of the boys. That evening, the doorbell rang, and there was a "white woman" standing on the doorstep with her son, and he had one tooth missing in the front. "Look what your son did!" said the woman. "What happened?" asked Dawn. "He punched his tooth out!" said the woman. "Why?" asked Dawn. "There must be a reason why he did it, mustn't there?" Dawn called Mark who explained that the boy had been calling him names, to which Dawn asked the mother to imagine what names her son was calling Mark, and how she would react "if the shoe was on the other foot". The the boy's mother "gave in" and invited Mark for tea that same evening. With Dawn's permission, Mark followed, and that was the "breakthrough" to a lasting friendship between the boys. Eventually Mark went for tea nearly every evening, and the family took him with them on weekends away.

Mark also developed his own strategies to deal with racism at school. He tried to integrate by joining the football team which helped him to become "more

popular”, and “bond” with the other boys. For Polly, coping with the discrimination she experienced in school was a more difficult and “lonely” task. She remembers her school dances when the students “were predominantly white”, and they were dancing to the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. She wasn’t familiar with that kind of music, and felt like a “square peg in a round hole”. Furthermore, none of the “white boys” ever asked her to dance.

There was also the memory of her geography lesson when the teacher showed pictures of poor people in Ghana, and the other children in the classroom “were sniggering and laughing, and I remember feeling this deep sense of ‘Please let that stop! Oh God, don’t show that! Take that away!’” Polly felt “hurt and embarrassed”, but couldn’t share her feelings with anyone in her school. Fortunately for her, she had very influential teachers who not only encouraged her in her schoolwork, but also supported her against discrimination in the school. She was very bright, and that gained her friendship with some of the other girls who sought her help with their schoolwork.

The 1960s

We now move on to the 1960s, when the Smiths had been living in the big house for a decade. By now most of the people originally living in the house had established themselves economically and moved into their own homes. Dawn’s brothers John and Toby had married and moved, and Dusty’s brother had also moved out with his wife. The only family members left in the house were the couple and their children. Dawn’s mother Sue, her sister Clara and her two children continued to be regular visitors in the house.

Dawn and Dusty decided that the house was too large for just their family, and thought that running it as a guesthouse for temporary students learning English could prove economically viable. Still determined to maintain the ethnically

diverse and multicultural quality that was always a feature of the house, Dawn went down to the National Union of Students and placed a request for students from different nationalities. She requested two Spanish, two French, two South Americans, two Africans, and two Japanese students and so on, because she “didn’t want my house full of students from the same country. Didn’t care where they come from in the world”. She accommodated a maximum of fifteen students at any given time, with a maximum of two students per room. The students were responsible for making their own suppers, while Dawn’s main role as a proprietor was to clean their rooms and make their breakfast. She was soon in desperate need of help to run her bed and breakfast, and it was during this period that her “sister” Clara gave up her job to work full-time as a domestic helper in the big house.

Dawn’s enthusiasm for mixed social interactions seemed limitless. Very early on, she observed how inefficient suppertime had become for the students, as each of them took their turn to cook their individual meals, a process which lasted late into the night. She called a meeting with all of her student boarders, and recommended a system that not only made suppertime a more efficient event, but also into a “multicultural affair”. Dawn suggested that:

“Each morning at breakfast, what about all of you pooling your money, put it in the middle of the table. Everybody give the same amount. Two Spanish girls take the money, you go sometime today to buy enough Spanish food to feed everybody. Two French girls you wash up when you finished and tidy the place. Tomorrow, the two Africans, you cook for everybody, and the South Americans, you tidy up. Japanese, you cook the next night and so forth.”

This system created a kitchen with an endless array of multicultural cuisine in the house, and gave the students the opportunity to enjoy food that they never would have tasted in their own countries. Sometimes the students incorporated dishes from their different nationalities, and invited members of the Smith family to join them for supper. Additionally, Dawn had learned how to cook food from her

husband's traditions, and often combined her cultural foods with Dusty's. There were regular "feasts" in the garden which combined cuisines from all the different nationalities of the people in the house. The biggest feast of all was on the wedding of the two students who got married while living at the house.

Having student boarders also brought more social contact between people within the house and people outside. However, other factors also contributed to the increased social contact between individuals inside and individuals outside the house. To begin with, this was now the period when the influence of the Black Power Movement was significant among many people in Britain. Dusty became more interested in activities outside the home. In particular, he developed a strong political interest in the Communist Party, of which he had become a member. Through his affiliation with the party, he developed an ethnically diverse group of friends who visited the house, and whose houses he also visited.

Additionally, two other "mixed families" moved into the neighbourhood, and they became close friends. Their children also attended the school nearby. It was also during this period that Polly and Mark's school amalgamated with another school, which resulted in "an influx of people of colour". Consequently, more social mixing took place in the school, and they developed a diverse group of friends. However, these friendship affiliations did not always occur without resistance or disapproval from some parents and others in the general public. Such disapprovals were further fueled by the incidents of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during this period, and the racist slogan that came from the United States, "If you are not white, you are black". Mark recalled that among his group of friends, he had "a very good white friend", and often when they went out together, "we would get into problems with white guys, because they didn't like me being with him, or we'd get into problems with black guys, because they didn't like him being with me. So I used to get in lots of trouble because we were tight".

By this period, “black clubs” and “black music” had also become more popular, and both English and Afro-Caribbeans attended the dances. Polly often went with her English girlfriends, whose parents tolerated their daughter’s friendship with Polly, but disapproved of their association with “black boys”. This confused Polly who found the situation “insulting”, and couldn’t understand why association with her was fine, but association with her “black and other friends” was forbidden.

Increased contact between individuals inside the house and the wider community also occurred as a result of Dawn’s strategy (mentioned earlier) of ignoring racism. Over time the neighbours became more friendly, and Polly and Mark were more relaxed about going to the park and playing with other children. Additionally, the local pub owner had left, and Dusty had developed a friendship with the new one, and through regular visits, he had also developed a relationship with the other regular pub attendees in the neighbourhood, where he was known as the local comedian – a role he adopted possibly as a form of resistance/opposition to racism.

The 1970s

This social mixing between individuals inside and outside the house continued to increase with the 1970s. The 1970s also evinced major crisis and changes within the Smith family. To begin with, Dawn’s mother Sue fell ill, and when her doctor suggested that she should be placed in a special care home, Dusty protested, insisting “she is not going into no homes, she is coming home with us!” They took Sue home and gave her the room above their own bedroom, with its own bath and a television so that she could watch her regular sports programs. Dusty and Dawn became her main care-givers. Sue’s grandchildren Mark and Polly went up to see her in the mornings before they went off to school, and in the evenings they sat with her for a while and mainly talked about what they did at

school that day as they held her hands. Also, because she was very religious, they often read the Bible with her. She also had regular visits from her sons and their wives. Because Sue's door was always left open, she had constant visits from everyone in the house –including the students who called her “nan”. She was given a walking stick that she could use to knock on the floor when she was alone and needed help.

After nearly a year of being very ill, Sue died on Dusty's birthday with her head resting on his arms. Her grandson Mark recalled the day she died:

The night she died, we were all up there [in her room] sitting down. It was late, I think it was probably in the 11:30/12 o'clock hour, and me and my uncle Toby, we were holding her hand, while my father had her head in his arms. We were holding her, and she just opened her eyes, and she looked around, she looked around, then she just closed her eyes, and she was gone. My uncle Toby was at her side bawling, and I just sat there and held her hand, because I felt it. I loved her, and that was a bad day.

Sue's death upset everyone in the family, but for Mark who had just completed high school, and was not certain whether or not he wanted to go on to further education, her death could not have come at a worse time. He became “so upset and confused” that he left home and went to live in the West Indies where he stayed for a while.

The early 1970s found Polly still living at home. It was during this period that she met and married Geoff, a second generation Afro-Caribbean, and the father of her four children. For the first few months of their marriage they lived in the big house until they found a flat of their own. Polly had been working as a helper in Dawn's bed and breakfast after she finished school, and she continued to do so for a while after she got married.

It was also during the early 1970s that Dawn and Dusty went on holidays for the first time to Jamaica. Their visit lasted for a couple of months, and while they

were away, Polly gave birth to her first child, and continued to run the bed and breakfast. Mark also returned to England while his parents were away, and since there was no space for him in the house, he moved in with Polly and her husband and baby in Polly's flat. In the meantime, Dawn "fell in love" with Jamaica, and in particular with the home and property where they were vacationing. She convinced Dusty to go back to London, sell the big house and relocate there. It took them a couple of years to sort out their affairs in London before they moved. Eventually they sold the big house, stopped the bed and breakfast, and bought a house they had visited when in Jamaica. In the meantime, however, another crisis developed in their family.

Shortly after Mark arrived back in London from the West Indies, he met Sarah, and within a year they had a daughter Nancy (see figure 3:1). Although they did not live together, they had a tumultuous relationship. For numerous reasons, Sarah was deemed an unfit mother, and without having to go through the legal procedure of adoption or fostering that is the norm in Britain, Dusty and Dawn strategically convinced the Social Services to grant them guardianship of their granddaughter. Thus, we find Dawn now caring for her grandchild like her mother before her cared for her daughter Polly, but for different reasons. In Dawn's case she was a fit mother, but because of discrimination, she was unable to have Polly in their rented house, and therefore had to send her to Ireland to be raised by her grandmother. Caring for grandchildren is a common informal practice among Caribbean families – called "fostering" or "child-shifting" in the anthropological/non-legal sense, whereby a dependent or minor child is relocated to a household where neither of its birth parents resides (see Besson, 2002; Clark, 1999 [1957]; Goody, 1975; Gordon, 1996; Olwig, 1981) - but in Britain, such practice is usually done through legal procedures if at least one of the child's parent does not reside in the grandparental home. However, these Irish and Jamaican grandparents managed to bring up their grandchild without the formal legal procedures – itself another form of adaptation. Furthermore, after selling the big house and relocated to Jamaica, through a simply phone call, they received

permission from the Social Services to take their granddaughter Nancy to Jamaica with them.

From all accounts, the move to Jamaica was a big event that ruptured the family and created emotional conflicts that have continued into the present. To begin with, Dawn and Dusty's departure caused the dispersal of the close kinship network that had developed inside the house. Without the big house where family and friends had been brought together, family socialization on a large scale ended. Polly, who by now had two small children, saw her uncles and their families less, but fortunately for her, she still had her auntie Clara and her cousins Leah and Sam, and they became her main support network. Dawn and Dusty tried to keep in regular contact with their family back in London through phone calls and letters. They also had visits from various family members and friends at different times, and their son Mark eventually left London to reside with them for a while.

Even with this regular contact, Polly felt the loss of her parents greatly. She would have liked to have had their practical and emotional support while she was raising her children, and wished her children had close emotional bonding with their grandparents while they were growing up – especially since her husband's parents never lived in Britain. Life became particularly difficult for Polly when her marriage ended, due to her husband's abusive behaviour. She recalled this period as the “worst time in my life”:

When I left my husband, I had four children and no support. My parents were not in this country. I was on the run, I ran away from him, and I was frightened. We [she and the children] were living in a hotel in [north London] in one room, and my eldest son got fleabites the first week we were there in the bed. I was working at the time, but I had to give my job up because I couldn't cope. I started drinking little bottles of vodka to get me to sleep in the hotel every night... I'd think “I can't keep doing this”. I lost loads of weight, and all my hair fell out. It was horrible!

Feeding the children wasn't a problem. Because I was a single parent, I was getting income support. So I'd get a giro [a cheque. The state was paying for the hotel, and in the hotel, they'd give you breakfast. So I had

no outgoing bills. I was frightened, and living very kind of - I didn't have all my possessions with me - I just used to phone Leah every night and tell her what was going on – that's my cousin [fictive].

Then eventually, we got moved from the hotel into a hostel, and we were there for about a year...but I had my own kitchen in the hostel, so we were fairly comfortable there in the hostel. And it was in west London, near home [the home they moved out of] so the kids could get to school easier. That really was the most horrible time in my life, and I needed my parents, but they had left.

Throughout this crisis period, Polly's main support system was her auntie Clara and cousin Leah and her family. Dawn and Dusty remained abroad for twenty years. Polly eventually moved out of the hostel, did various jobs, went to university and earned a degree, and single-handedly raised her four children. During this time London had also become more ethnically diverse, and according to Polly, the feeling she had of being "different" when she and her brother were growing up had gone. The neighbourhoods in which she raised her children were "quite socially mixed: Greek, Asian, quite a few black people. There were plenty of other children for them [her children] to identify with, and we mixed with everyone".

Polly's children's memories confirm this impression of wider change. They had also gone to schools that were "ethnically mixed". Her daughter Anna recalled how largely unaware she was of ethnic differences among her peers, and was only reminded at times when some children in the playground used terms such as "golly-wog", or whenever she visited other people's homes and noticed the different smells of the foods they were cooking. But, she said, "overall, there was nothing stopping you from being friends with anybody". In primary school, she had an ethnically diverse group of friends. Things changed drastically for Anna, however, after she finished primary school and won a scholarship to a fee-paying private girls school in the mid 1980s.

The first day she turned up she was surprised to learn that in the whole school, there were only four “black girls” including herself. Anna’s experience in the 1980s was quite different from her grandparents’ experience in the 1950s, or even her mother’s in the 1960s. Unlike Dawn and Dusty and their children who had suffered colour prejudice, Anna was never made to feel excluded. If anything, she had become “a novelty” among her peers. The issue for Anna was about class - an issue that became hers but not her peers’.

Anna came from a working-class family where her parents could never have afforded to send her to that school, let alone paid the cost of other extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, it was while she was at this school that her parents separated, and Polly was shifting around in temporary one-room accommodations with her siblings. The other girls, most of whom had been in that school since primary, were, according to Anna, “upper middle-class girls, who had lots of money, who lived in huge houses, and had piano lessons, tennis lessons, tutors, went on holiday every year, and didn’t want for anything”. The knowledge of this, and the fact that Anna couldn’t afford the things that these girls had, bothered her for the whole time she spent at the school: “I felt like I didn’t like them, because they didn’t realize how lucky they were. They had no idea how privileged they were. They took it all for granted, and I felt that because of that, I just didn’t like them as people”.

Anna did make friends with the girls at her school, although she found some of these friendships “strained and difficult, lots of ups and downs”. The difficulty, was not so much to do with what the other girls thought about or did to her – although she felt that a few “undermined” her academic ability – as much as it was to do with her inability to overlook the class difference between herself and her peers. Despite these, she tried to integrate into the school environment. She excelled in sports and drama, did not cause trouble, and became the school comedienne, and her peers saw her as the “big character” who made them laugh a

lot. In Anna's view, this was her strategic mode of avoiding potential discrimination from her peers.

When Anna finished high school, she won a scholarship to the London School of Economics. There were a large proportion of foreign students here who according to Anna, tended to "stick together" in their own ethnic groups. By now, Anna, from a third generation of Afro-Caribbean and British parentage, who had been socialized among people from various ethnic backgrounds in her family, in her neighbourhoods, in her early schools, and from the clubs she attended, found the notion of socializing among one group of people "strange". So strange in fact, that even though there was an Afro-Caribbean society at her college, she didn't become involved because "the students tended to be from the Caribbean, and we weren't the same". The notion of being "Caribbean" had no real significance for Anna, except from the stories she had been told by her relatives from her grandparents' generation. Her friendship network was "very ethnically diverse". These were the people with whom she felt she shared common values and interests. In terms of values, hers were influenced in part by her parent's values – which were already shaped in part by British social values – but in a large part by the British environment in which she grew up at school and in her neighbourhood.

The 1990s

The 1990s saw the physical reuniting of the Smith family, and also the addition of more biological as well as non-biological relatives. After Dawn and Dusty left London in the mid 1970s, the family in London had grown only as far as Polly's children were concerned. Their son Mark had followed them to Jamaica, and while there he married a local woman with whom he had two more children. Back in London, through Polly's efforts, other members had also been added to their family. Shortly after Polly and Geoff separated, Geoff developed a relationship with another woman, Karen. They had a son together, Lloyd, but

shortly afterwards they separated. When Polly found out about Lloyd, she contacted Karen and invited her and her son to become members of her family. Although Karen and Lloyd were not biological relatives of Polly, they became regular guests at family get-togethers. This was important for Polly who believed that despite the issues between Geoff and the mothers of his children, the children should know their siblings, and be involved in each other's lives. This inclusive attitude again shows Caribbean influence in the development of creolized kinship attitudes in these London families. So although Geoff was no longer actively involved in the lives of his children nor their mothers, the mothers and the children had become a very close unit, participating in family events together, and providing emotional support to each other.

By the late 1990s, Polly's daughter Anna had fallen in love, and moved into her own house with Carl, whose parental cultural and social backgrounds are different from her own. Carl was born and raised in London of a French mother and an English father. Despite this, however, the two families have come together and extended the family unit even further. The extension on Carl's side is relatively small, including only his mother Kitty and her partner John, and his aunt Mildred [his father's sister]. Carl grew up as an only child. He has two stepsiblings by his father, but has never met them. His mother is also an only child, and his father had two sisters and a brother. His grandparents on both sides had died, and also his father. Before his father died, he had become estranged from his family – except for one of his sisters – due to ongoing family conflict. So although the family lived geographically close when Carl was growing up in London, family relationships were non-existent. As a result, except for his aunt Mildred, he does not include any of his father's relatives as members of his family.

For Carl, being part of an extended family was a first-time experience. He became incorporated into Anna's family with great ease, largely because, as with the majority of Anna's family, he too had been socialized in Britain, and specifically in London. As with Anna, Carl also socialized with people from

different ethnic groups in school and at work, and also made significant friendships with individuals from these different groups. He developed a wide interest in music and food from the friends with whom he associated. Culturally, therefore, he and Anna - and other members of Anna's family – despite coming from diverse English and Caribbean backgrounds, share more in common in terms of attitudes, beliefs, values, and interests than their parents or grandparents would have done even twenty years ago. He often got together with Anna's big brother and they have “musical sessions” and at family gatherings, he contributes greatly to the food preparation.

Carl's mother Kitty and her partner have also been incorporated into the Smith extended family. Although Kitty does not live in London, there are regular family get-togethers between the two families, and the two mothers, Polly and Kitty visit each other independently of other family members, stay in each other's homes and go on holiday together.

The physical reuniting of the Smith family happened when Dawn and Dusty returned to England in the mid 1990s. After living in Jamaica for twenty years, Dawn returned to have surgery, accompanied by her granddaughter Nancy who they had raised. While she was recuperating, Dusty flew to London to be with her. Shortly after he arrived, he fell very ill, and due to the nature of his illness, it became clear that it was more “sensible” to remain in London than return to their home of the last twenty years. Thus once again, they found themselves uprooted from the life to which they had become accustomed, and as an elderly couple, had to begin a new life all over again as they had done as young adults forty-five years earlier.

For the first few months, the couple and their granddaughter Nancy lived with Polly and three of her children – by now Anna had moved out into her own home – in a four-bedroom house. During this period, there were endless negotiations and adaptations, both practical and emotional among the family, in order to

accommodate to the new situation into which they were all thrust. However, such adaptations or compromises did not bring lasting solutions. Not only were there issues arising from the gap between the three generations living together, but there were also differences in value systems. To begin with, although Polly's children knew of their grandparents and their cousin Nancy through visits and photographs, the geographical distance meant that they had had no major influence in their lives. To the children, family only had an associational value where their grandparents and cousin were concerned. Emotional bonding was something that could only develop over time.

Secondly, a clash of values often occurred between Dawn and her daughter Polly. Dawn had grown up in a family where there were no strict gender role divisions – because her father died young, she and her brother left school early to work and help care for her family. However, she had raised her family with divided sex roles, which was common practice among Irish families in Ireland (see Arensberg and Kimball, 1968; Jackson, 1963). For example, while her daughter Polly was expected to help with domestic chores, her brother Mark was excluded from doing any such chores. But as a single working parent, Polly had not transmitted the values Dawn taught her in the same manner, because she didn't feel that they suited her family situation. Instead she raised her sons and daughters to perform similar chores. Additionally, she has replaced the strict forms of discipline that her parents practiced, with milder forms of discipline, including much more talking and reasoning with her children.

Dawn found the manner in which Polly ran her household difficult to observe without intervening. She felt that Polly's form of discipline was "much too soft". Hence, conflicts occurred between not only mother and daughter, but also between grandmother and grandchildren, and this delayed the bonding process between Dawn and her grandchildren even more. For Dusty on the other hand, bonding with his grandchildren took place much earlier and with greater ease. He avoided involvement in the running of Polly's home, and became the family

comedian, which according to him, was “my way of fitting in letting my daughter run her family the way she see fit. After all, she wasn’t harming the children”. Hence, to Dusty, his behaviour was a form of adaptation and accommodation to a situation in which he felt was beyond his authority.

After a few months of living with Polly, when it became clear that Dusty would never completely recover from his illness, the couple had to make drastic functional adjustments in their lives. The first stage was to find accommodation. Having uprooted unexpectedly from where they had settled, leaving all their material possessions behind, they were now reduced to depending on the state for accommodation and income support. They were given a one-bedroom flat by the council. They moved into the flat with their granddaughter Nancy. They received other forms of practical and emotional help and support from Polly – who lived nearby – Dawn’s two brothers and their families, and her sister-friend Clara and her daughter Leah. Their old friends from the big house – who were still alive – periodically dropped by to play cards and watch sports with Dusty. Dawn went out to work as a cleaner to supplement their income. Granddaughter Nancy also got a job and contributed to the running of the home. Nancy soon got married, and by the end of the 1990s she and her husband Tom had two children.

The 2000s

The year 2000 found Dawn and Dusty still living in London with no resources to return to the home they had left in Jamaica. In this century so far, the family has experienced sorrows and struggles, but also some joys. To begin with, Dawn’s “sister” Clara (fictive) died, and this brought great sadness for the whole family. A few family incidents happened during my fieldwork, and I observed (and sometimes participated in) the family *doing* kinship firsthand. The first was Dusty’s death.

A couple of weeks before Dusty died he was hospitalized. During this period, I was in regular contact with the family, speaking to Dawn as she went back and forth between the hospital and the flat. I visited Dusty in the hospital a few times, and observed the flow of other members of his family and friends who visited him. On the day he died, Dawn's brother John and her grandson-in-law Tom took care of all the details such as death certificate and arranged for his body to be taken to the morgue. In the meantime, other family members and friends from across the Atlantic were informed. The day of the funeral was a day of mourning, but it was also a great reunion. After the ceremony, everyone went back to Polly's house for what turned out to be the "biggest party" Dawn could remember since she and Dusty last hosted the wedding party for her students in the big house over thirty years before. All their blood relatives were there, including Dusty's two nephews who had been estranged from the family, their relatives through marriage, and some of the surviving friends of Dawn and Dusty's from the 1960s and their children. Friends and family also came from abroad. Polly's house was spilling over with people. There was a massive quantity of food, a mixture of various Caribbean and other European cuisines, prepared mainly by Polly's son-in-law Carl and Dawn's grandson-in-law Tom. Dawn and Dusty's son Mark pre-selected Dusty's favourite music, and I observed men in their seventies dancing with the energy of men forty years younger. If a stranger had walked in off the street, they would never have imagined that this event was in honour of a death. This sad event became a celebration of life, old memories, and family reunion. After much eating, drinking, reminiscing and sharing of life stories, the event ended with everyone singing Dusty's favourite song, *We Shall Overcome Some Day*. The event was a classic example of mixed sociability across generations both in terms of the family and friends who had come together, and in the kinds of food people consumed.

There were other events that I attended where I observed the Smith family kinship in action, such as the christening of Nancy (Dawn and Dusty's grand-daughter by their son Mark) and Tom's son Sid, and Polly's (Dawn and Dusty's daughter)

daughter Anna's marriage to Carl (a white Englishman). Anna and Carl's wedding was particularly striking, not only because of the way it brought the family together in celebration, but also as their union became a "bridge" that reunited Anna's father with the rest of the family. When Anna's father Geoff and mother Polly separated while Anna was still in her early teens, Geoff maintained very minimal contact with the family, and he had no relationship with Anna. When Anna and Carl became engaged Anna had still not developed a close relationship with her father, therefore, she did not tell him of her engagement. However, Geoff was told of the engagement, and he disapproved on the grounds that Carl was the "wrong colour". He phoned Anna's home and left threatening messages on the answering machine for Carl.

Eventually Geoff and Carl met, and after a short period, they grew comfortable with each other, and forged a close relationship, partly through their shared interest in music and home renovations. Geoff and Carl spent many hours renovating the couple's home, during which time he confided in Carl about many things including his marriage and separation with Polly. Seeing the closeness between her father and her partner was "quite emotional" for Anna, and she decided to forgive him for the past, and "re-forge" her own relationship with him. In the event, Carl became a kind of a link in the relationship that developed between Anna and her father.

Two years had passed since Anna and Carl became engaged, and they decided to become legally married. For Anna, it was very important that both her parents participated in her wedding celebrations. She invited her father to give her away on her wedding day, but because her parents hadn't had the most amicable relationship since they separated, she and Carl devised a strategy whereby they chose a place in the Caribbean that was "neutral territory" for everyone. Therefore, everyone needed to adapt to the new environment in a cooperative manner. They chose a French Caribbean island where neither parents had ancestor connections, and where the language and the food were different. They

rented a large cottage where everyone stayed for two weeks. Because of economics, only Anna's parents, her brother and sister, Carl's mother Kitty and her partner John, and Carl's best friend – who was also his best man - went to this Caribbean island.

Their strategy, according to Anna and Carl, turned out to be a “brilliant experience”. In terms of food preparations for example, Polly and Kitty (Carl's mother) bought the food in the little shops and markets, and they alternated the cooking with Geoff. Kitty's other role was to maintain a certain level of ease and friendliness between Polly and Geoff through humour. From various accounts, everyone had a “good time”, and Anna felt that her strategy succeeded in “bridging the gap” that had developed between her father and the rest of the family. Additionally, this event illustrates a creative example of social mixing that transcends national boundaries.

Upon their return, the couple held a reception in London, which included all their family and friends who were not at the wedding ceremony in the Caribbean. I attended the reception, and again had the opportunity to see the family *doing* kinship. The event was large, with lots of different kinds of food – Caribbean, Indian, Chinese, English - all prepared and served by various family members. In attendance was a whole range of kin, from the four generations of Smith blood relatives, to half-blood and non-blood relatives such as Polly's ex-husband's son Lloyd, and his mother Karen, her cousin Leah and her family, along with a host of other fictive kin and friends. Everyone seemed to know each other, and the newlywed couple looked very happy, milling around and socializing with everyone (see photos at the end of this chapter). As the event came to a close, the hall was cleaned in what seemed like a flash, as there was an overabundance of help from the guests.

During my fieldwork in 2002-2003, the Smith family gained another addition with the birth of Polly's grandson. Polly's son Joe had a baby, Toby, with a

“friend” Sheila, whom he felt “tricked” him into getting her pregnant, because Sheila is an older woman who “desperately wanted to have a child” (see figure 3:1). As a result, Joe is unhappy about the situation. Although Sheila has taken some responsibility for her pregnancy, and is economically and emotionally capable of taking care of the baby, Polly, who is very proud to be a first-time grandmother, has moved forward to become a very active grandmother. She has taken the baby and Sheila into her family, and has gone to meet Sheila’s family in Ireland. Baby Toby’s christening was another event that brought the Smith family and Sheila’s family together.

The Smith family and kinship network in 2003

The Smith family today is not only extensive, but its family network includes a complex set of relationships, based on contact and support over time and geographical distance. Within the larger extended family, people keep in regular contact by phone calls, letter writing, and regular visits. Additionally, it is expected that everyone will be there to offer help and support in times of need. However, family members also have different notions of who their closest relatives are, depending on physical time spent together and the intensity of their emotional bonding. These are the people between whom the most support is exchanged.

Now that Dusty has died, Dawn considers her closest family members to be her brothers and their wives and children, her daughter Polly and her four children and grandchild, her son Mark and his wife and their two children, her granddaughter Nancy and her husband and two children, and her husband’s aunt Lucy, her sister Clara’s daughter Leah and her husband and child, and Clara’s son, and a friend whom she met while she lived in Jamaica. Although Dawn sees these people as her closest family members, among these members she feels closest of all to her granddaughter Nancy and her husband and children. Unlike

her children and other grandchildren from whom she has spent periodic times apart, she raised Nancy from birth, and they have never spent any time physically apart. Additionally, unlike Polly who works outside the home and has little physical time to spend with her, Nancy is a stay-home mother, and visits Dawn every day after her children go off to school. Nancy is also the one who shares most of Dawn's values.

Polly also makes further family distinctions within her closest kin network based on emotional bonding and mutual support. Furthermore, although she includes within her closest kin network most of the people Dawn does, there are differences between the two of them (see figure 3:1 at end of chapter). For example, Dawn includes the aunt of her granddaughter Nancy's husband, while with Polly, the extension does not go beyond Nancy's husband. Also, Polly's family network extends to include her ex-husband and the mother and child of his outside relationship, while Dawn excludes them based on past conflicts over the issues surrounding Polly's separation. Polly indicates her closest kin as who are "always there, who I can pick up the phone and call anytime for help, and they will be there". These include her mother, her children, her brother, her cousin (fictive) Leah, and her niece Nancy.

Summary and Conclusions

As with the process of creolization, more generally, the Smith family demonstrates an on-going, multi-dimensional, non-homogenizing process of constantly re-creating, adaptating and negotiating social and cultural processes. This complex process results from the blending and incorporating of different racial and cultural traditions occurring between individuals over changing historical contexts and conditions. As with the interracial creolization in Caribbean kinship that began during slavery (see Chapter 2), The Smith kinship patterns through interracial relationships, provide mediating biological and social

links between different sets of families, facilitating the reproduction of different “race”/class lines (Green, 2006:16). And as with the process of creolization, the process of kinship among the Smiths has not occurred without conflict/struggles, resistance, and accommodation. In effect, as with the West Indian Creole kinship system, which began during slavery as a result of the denial of the right to establish socially recognized families and lineage among the slaves, the Smith kinship could be seen as a Creole kinship system which began in 1950s racist London in the big house, as the result of a parallel denial of the right to establish socially recognized families by mainstream British society. From this type of kinship system with its fluid and complex web of interactions, emerged new forms of family relatedness involving biological as well as non-biological relatives.

The process of kinship that took place inside the big house was not solely shaped by the wishes of the Smiths, but was also moulded by constraints in British society of that time. Dusty and Dawn, uprooted (voluntarily) from their families of origin, came to London hoping to find a better life. In many ways, the social atmosphere in London was alien to both of them. Due to social sanctions against their union as individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds, they had to create strategies to exist first as a couple, and later as a family. Over time, not only did society have an impact on their lives, but they also influenced the people in their neighbourhood. For example, through Dawn and Dusty’s strategies for dealing with racism, over time some of the neighbours became more friendly, to the extent that the children began to socialize in each other’s homes and in the park without disapproval.

The dynamic process of kinship for the Smith family occurred on many levels – as with the dynamic process of creolization. First of all, in terms of uprooting and finding new ways of adapting to the context and situation in which they found themselves, this occurred three times for Dawn and Dusty. First in London in the 1950s, where they devised strategies for coping by creating a “multi-cultural

community” in the big house, through mixed sociability of people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The couple uprooted a second time when they moved to reside in Dusty’s home of origin, Jamaica. Here again they had to find new ways to adapt and integrate into what was now a new society not only for Dawn, but also for Dusty. Having left his home for thirty years without returning, not only had he changed, but the society had also changed in many ways over that period. According to Dusty, “I was out of touch, I couldn’t cope. It was not my style of country”! Most of the family he left behind had either died or migrated, and they had to develop new forms of relationships in this *new* context.

The couple’s final uprooting was involuntary, and proved to be one of the most difficult times in their lives, due to declining health and lack of resources. This time, adaptations, negotiations and coping strategies were required not only by the couple, but by other members in their family. Living in Polly’s home with limited space proved practically and emotionally challenging for all. There was the issue of space to deal with, but also issues concerning value systems – partly due to the differences between the three generations under the same roof – and issues of bonding and forging and re-forging relationships that time had erased. Dusty and Dawn continued to find ways of adapting out of necessity, after leaving Polly’s house and moving with their granddaughter into a one-bedroom flat. Again, as has always been the nature of the Smith family, they found ways of coping with the help of their extended family – biological and fictive. Dawn went out to work to supplement their income support, and family and friends provide emotional and practical support.

Finding creative solutions on “neutral territory” as a part of doing kinship is an aspect of the Smith family that has also continued through the generations. Dawn’s granddaughter Anna’s wedding strategy aimed at “bringing the family together” was successful indeed. Her father has since been reunited with the rest of the family, and has rekindled some kind of special bonding with Anna’s mother Polly. He makes regular visits to her house where he cooks meals and repairs

things around the house. He has also become more active in the lives of his and Polly's two last children who are still in university.

As with the process of creolization more generally, the process of kinship and family relatedness among the Smith family is ongoing and flexible. Their family and kinship network began as an elaborate set of relationships over fifty years ago, and has continued on its complex path four generations later into the present. It began with blood and non-blood relatives, and has developed as such, plus a complex set of affines (relations through marriage – in laws). For example, in the 1950s the family network began with Dawn and Dusty, their children Mark and Polly, Dawn's mother Sue, Dawn's two brothers John and Toby, Dawn's "sister friend" Clara and her two children Leah and Sam, and other close friends of the couple. Over the next few decades, the family network extended with the addition of the spouses of Dawn and Dusty's siblings, the spouses of their children, and Clara's children, and the spouses of their friends – affinal relationships. Interestingly, during this stage of the family extension, the network did not include the families of the spouses. The reasons varied from racism to geographical distance. The wife of Dusty's brother Peter, for example, was ostracized by her own Jewish family, who could not accept her relationship with Peter, a Jamaican. The family of Dawn's brother John was also not interested in having a relationship with the Smiths. The families of the other spouses were simply not living in London, or even in England at the time, so that, continuing close family relationships was much less easy.

The next stage of the extension generated a much more complex set of relationships and family connectedness. This is the stage during which the grandchildren of Dawn and Dusty formed conjugal relationships, and brought into the family more relationships through marriage (affinal relationships). Unlike discontinuities with some extended affines during the first stage of the family extension, during this next stage, relationships of affinity were possible for a couple of reasons. First, by this stage, the families of some of the spouses of the

Smith grandchildren, like themselves, had been born and raised in Britain, and more specifically in London, and were therefore living geographically close. Secondly, not only had British social attitudes changed, which resulted in some degree of tolerance towards mixed relationships such as Dawn's and Dusty's, but by the second and third generations, members of the Smith family had been socialized in a similar way as their partners, so that although they came together from different ethnic ancestry, over time their values have become more similar than the values of their parents. Thus, we find that even though there might be differences and overlaps in values between generations, through negotiations and adaptations, members have found strategies – though not always suitable for all – to accommodate each other.

The use of humour/comedy as a strategy is a feature that runs through the generations in the Smith family, which might be seen as a mode of resistance and accommodation. In the 1960s we find Dusty becoming the comedian in his local pub where he was initially made to feel unwelcome because of his colour. Thus, the use of comedy may be seen as a form of resistance to racism, and also as a form of accommodation, or what Dusty himself described as “fitting in” or “getting into the puzzle”. In his later life when he and Dawn moved back to England and lived temporarily with their daughter Polly, while Dawn and Polly clashed over family values and roles, Dusty avoided such conflicts, and became instead the “family comedian”, which indeed earned him closer bonding with his grandchildren. His granddaughter Anna also used humour as a way of integrating into her all white girls school, where according to her, “I wasn't a trouble maker but a big character who made people laugh a lot”. Although on the surface Dusty's comedic tactic appears simply as a form of accommodation, it could be viewed in terms of what Foucault calls “a plurality of resistances” (1978:95-96). In his granddaughter Anna's case, the use of humour could be viewed as a conscious or non-spontaneous strategy set in place to avoid the possibility of later having to resist or oppose racism.

Another striking feature of the Smith family that finds parallel with the Creole Caribbean family is the central role women play in making kinship. In the early stage, we saw Dawn coming forward to gain guardianship of her granddaughter Nancy from her unfit mother – though informally as in the “fostering” practice in the Caribbean. Later we saw Polly being progressive in making kinship through her active relationships with her ex-husband’s “outside” child and the child’s mother, and the mother of her grandson and the mother’s relatives. This inclusion is symbolic of the importance not only of blood ties, which has always been important to the Smith family, but also to the openness and flexibility to non-blood ties, which has also always existed within the family. Finally, in the current generation, it is through Polly’s daughter Anna’s efforts that her father has rejoined the family.

The extensions of kinship found in the Smiths’ family are not common to the English kinship system, where “the genealogical depth is shallow and the range of kinship ties narrow in its categories” (Firth, 1956:62). Neither are they common to the Irish kinship system, which very much resembles the English kinship system (see Arensberg and Kimball, 1968). Instead, the extensions of kinship found in the Smith family are paralleled by the Caribbean Creole kinship system. R. T. Smith, in illustrating the dynamics in West Indian kinship ties, stresses the consanguineal (biological) tie between the child and each “side” of his family: “Even if the couple have never lived together and break off sexual involvement immediately, a relationship usually develops between the partners and their relatives...A child is always taken to meet the kin of his missing parent, and it is usual for the mother of the child to develop friendly relations with the mother of the baby’s father” (Smith 1988:45; Horst and Miller, 2006). However, in the case of the Smith family, instead of the child and its mother developing a relationship with the parents of the child’s father, the relationship is developed with the children and ex-wife of the child’s father. Thus even the concept of bilateral kinship is here broadened to include non-blood kin.

Such transformations in London have not been limited to the Smith family. The dynamic process of creating and re-creating kinship through the social interactions and relationships which began in the big house has spread out over the four generations to mutually influence change in the wider society. For example, by the 1970s when Dawn and Dusty's daughter Polly married and moved out of the big house, the neighbourhoods in which she lived and raised her children were no longer ethnically segregated, and from her account, had a "good social mix where everybody was friendly". The experience of "being different" that she and her brother had growing up in the neighbourhood where the big house was located had disappeared for her, and did not exist for her children (except for Anna's experience at her "all white" school). Having overcome the experience of racism as a child, Polly herself has come to feel "very enriched by the cultural mix" not only within her family, but also by her neighbourhood and her society in general.

For Polly's daughter Anna, as a girl, the idea of segregation and sociability with a single group of people was "strange" for her. So much so, that she experienced "a kind of culture shock" when she entered high school and realized that she was the "poorest" and one of only four "black" girls in the whole school. By the time she got to university, she refused to join the Afro-Caribbean Society there, because its members were largely foreign students from the Caribbean, and although she has Caribbean ancestry, having been born and socialized in London, she felt she didn't share much in common with the Caribbean students: "We weren't the same". Anna and her white English husband Carl believe that they are "culturally very similar". They believe that they and their peers are of "a culture that can assimilate" more easily than the culture of Dawn and Dusty's generation. This is evident in their shared tastes in food, clothing, music, etcetera, and in their values and attitudes to life, despite their different skin colour.

In sum, this chapter shows the process of kinship and family relatedness in one family, the Smiths. It demonstrates aspects of the creolization process: shifts in

contexts, shifts and overlaps in ethnicity and class, the various strategies devised to facilitate accommodation, the central role of women in making kinship, and continuities, modifications and discontinuities in family practices and values. Far from being fixed, the Smith kinship system is an ongoing and dynamic process of rupture – voluntary and involuntary – and integration, incorporation, adaptation and accommodation, and filled with experiences of conflict and joys, and the ongoing creative culture-building strategies developed by its members. The chapter that follows addresses some of the same themes, but in particular, it looks more in-depth at family relationships between biological and non-biological relatives, and explores the significance of children (siblings, nieces, nephews and grandchildren) in the forming of links between families, and across generations, again in one family: Gobi's family. It also looks at the significance of women as maintainers of the kinship network - a theme which runs throughout the thesis – partly in order that their children will have connections with their wider family network.

Key to figures

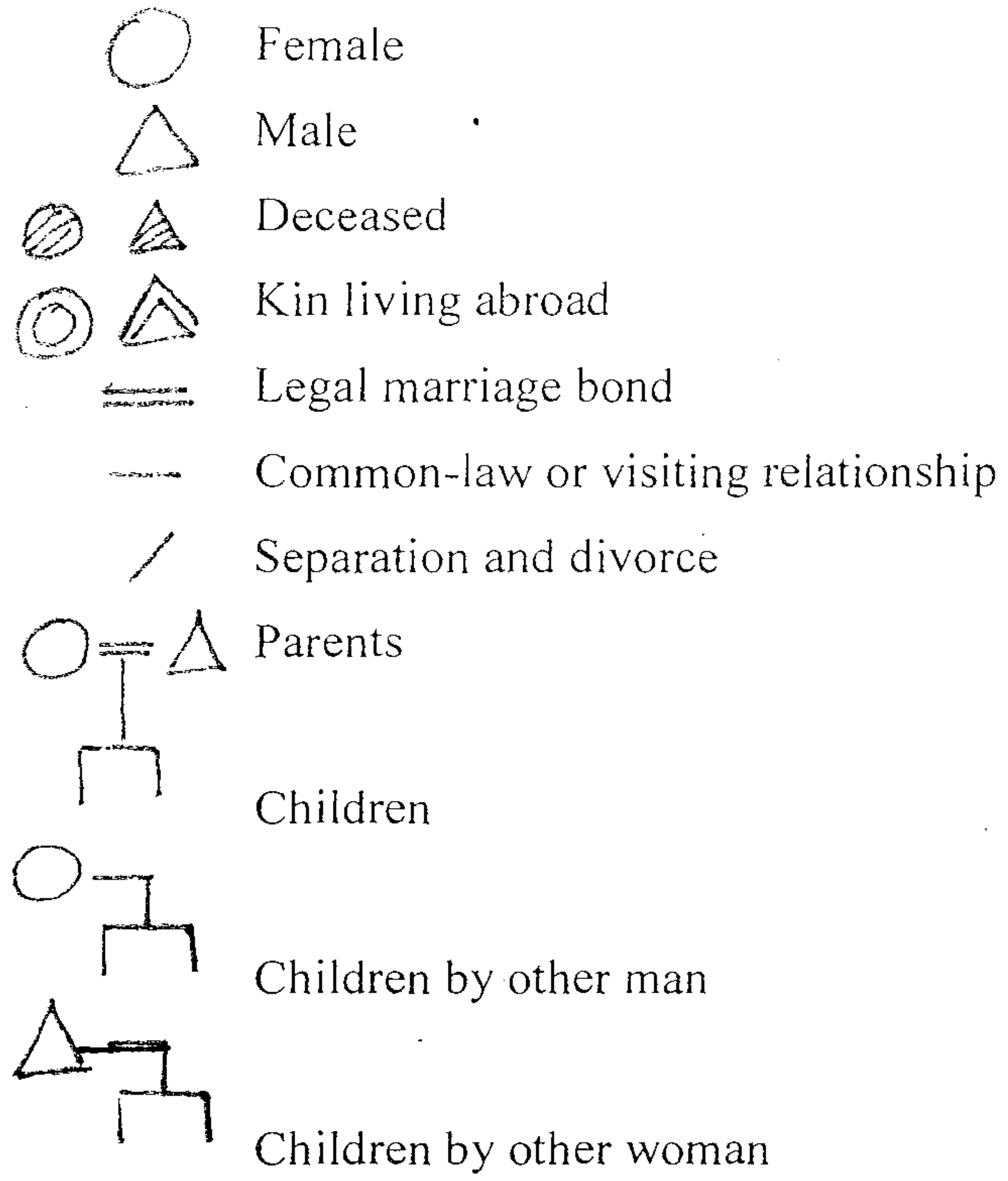
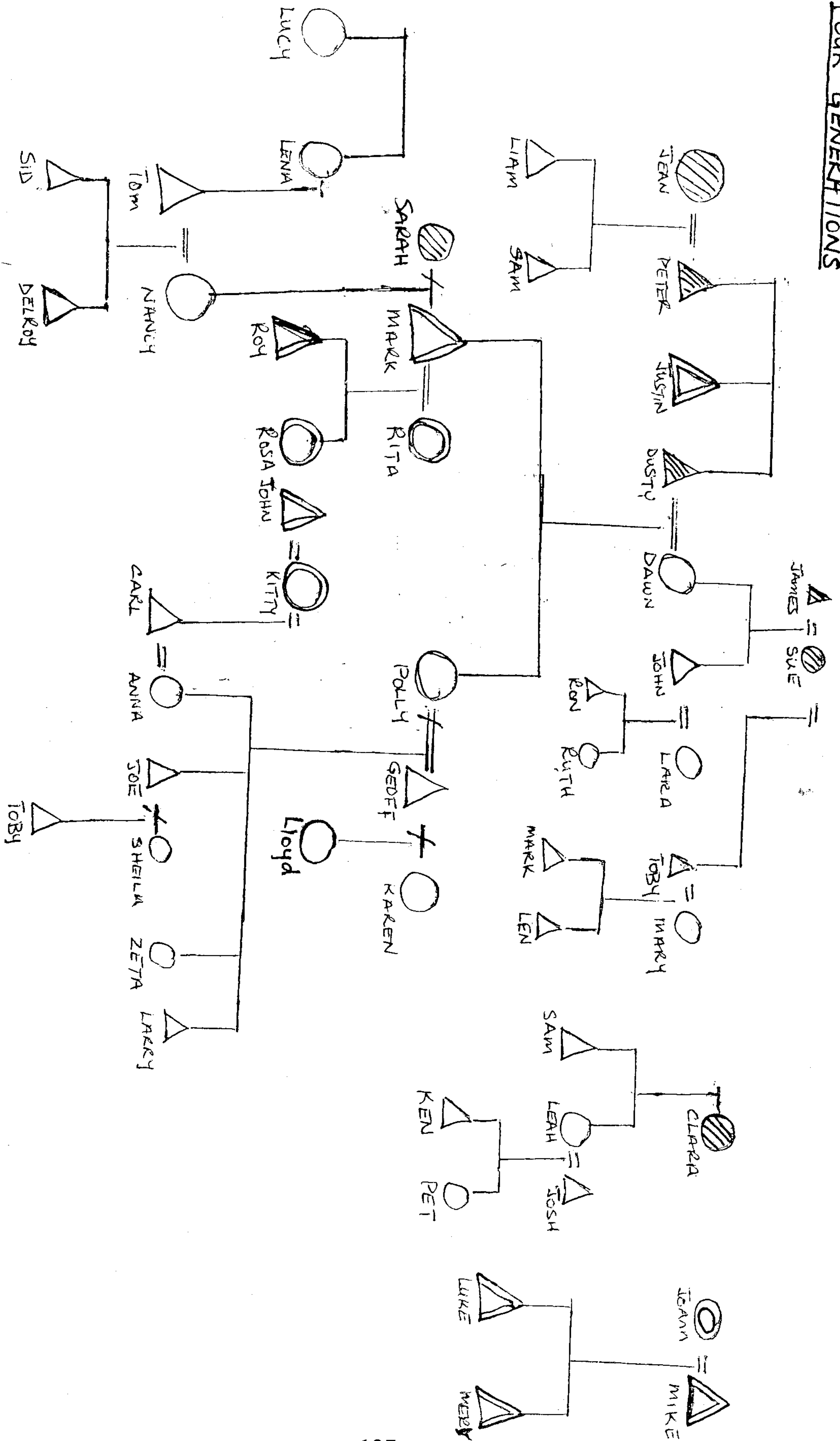
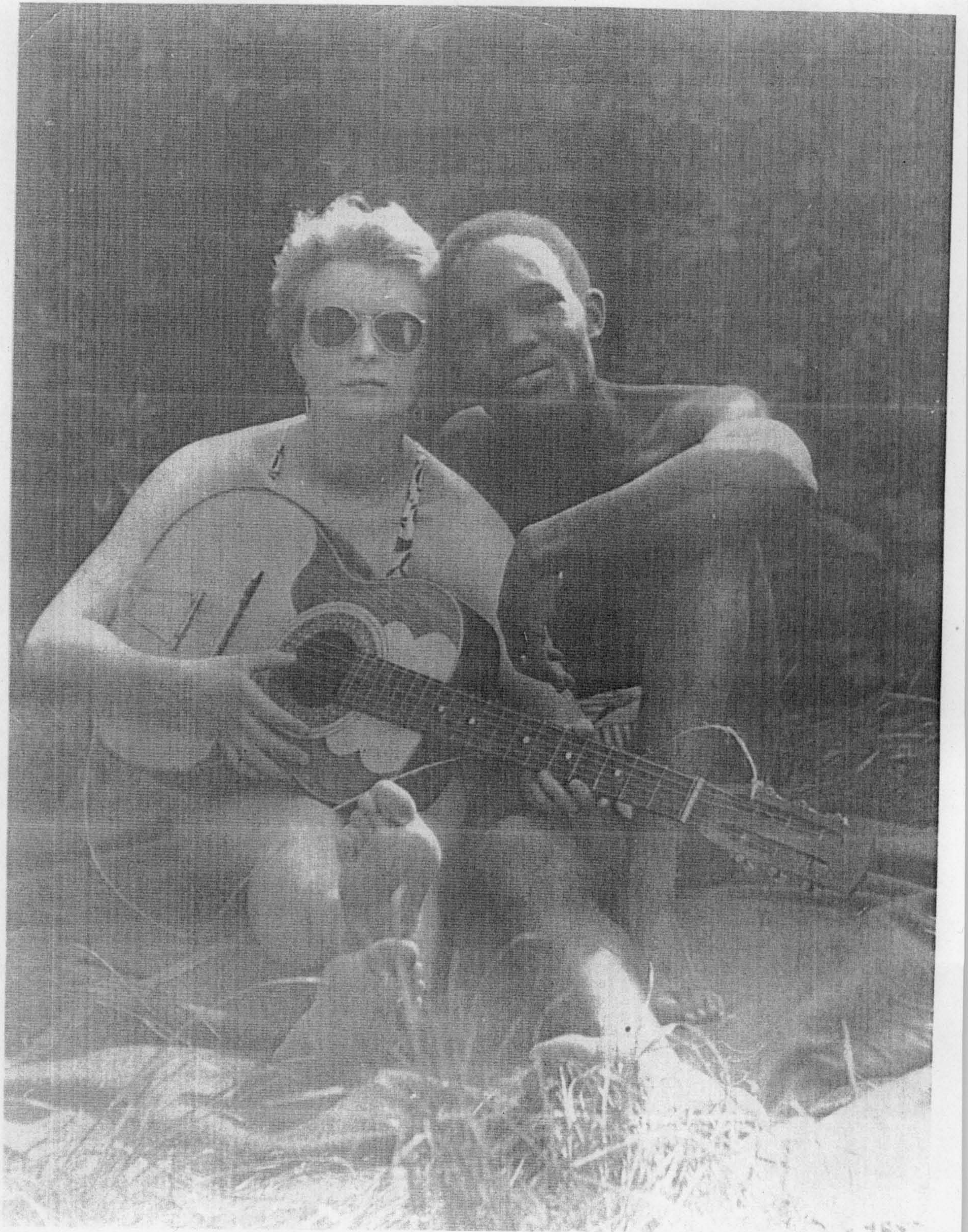


FIGURE 3:1 THE SMITHS
FOUR GENERATIONS





DUSTY SMITH, SOON AFTER ARRIVING IN ENGLAND IN THE 1940s



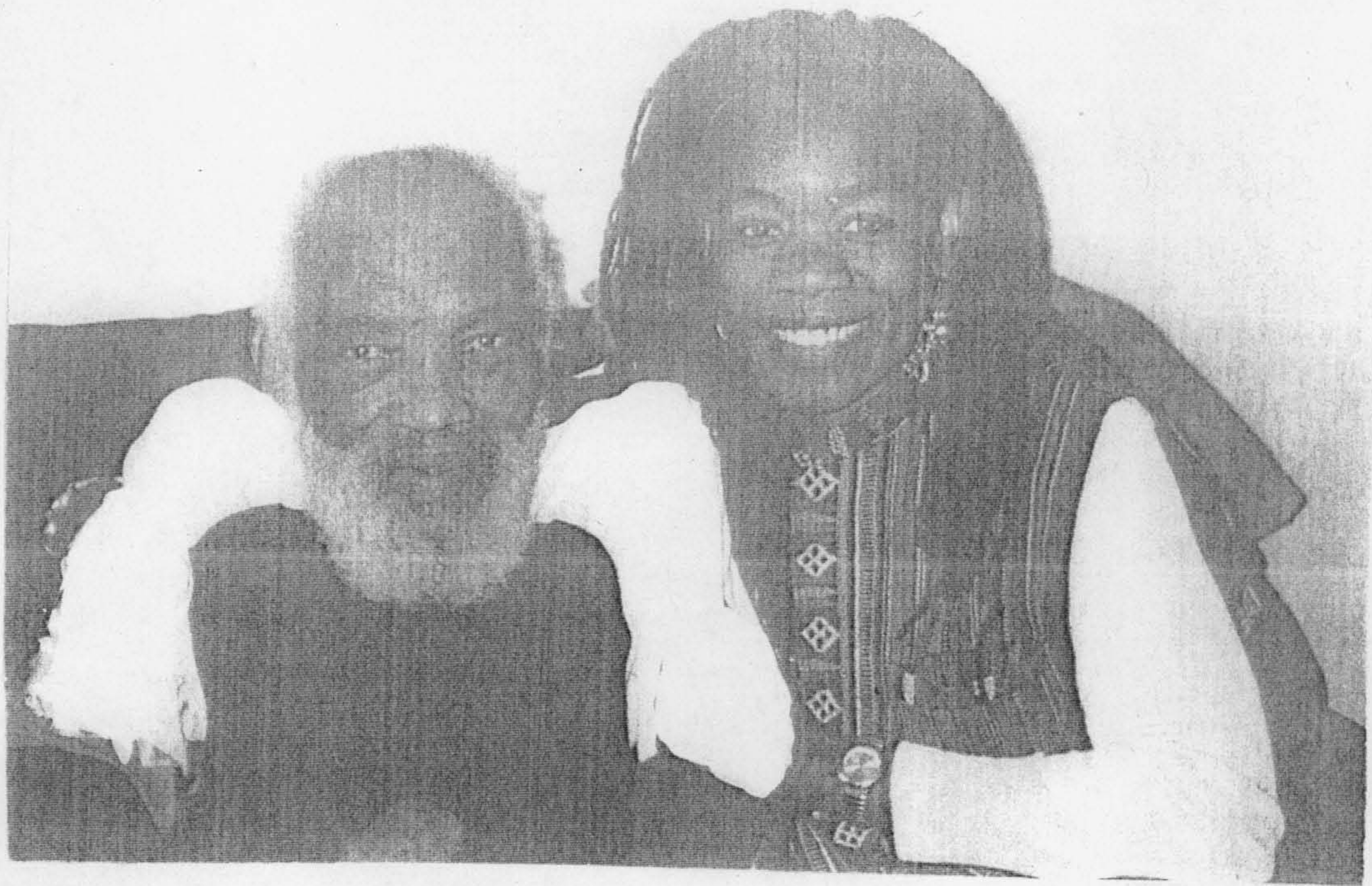
DAWN AND DUSTY, 1950



DAWN AND DUSTY ON THEIR WEDDING DAY



DAWN AND DUSTY, 2002



DUSTY AND RESEARCHER, 2002



RESEARCHER WITH DAWN, HER DAUGHTER POLLY AND 3 GRANDCHILDREN



NANCY'S HUSBAND TOM

DAWN'S BROTHER JOHN + GRANDNEICE NANCY



DAWN WITH GREAT GRANDSON SID



ANNA ON HER WEDDING DAY WITH MOTHER POLLY (2003)



ANNA WITH HUSBAND CARL ON THEIR WEDDING DAY



POLLY'S CHILDREN LARRY + ZETA WITH HALF BROTHER LLOYD
AT ANNA'S WEDDING



LLOYD WITH HIS MOTHER KAREN AT ANNA'S WEDDING



DAWN CELEBRATING HER 75th BIRTHDAY



DAWN WITH BROTHER JOHN



POLLY WITH SON JOE AT DAWN'S 75th BIRTHDAY



DAWN'S BROTHER JOHN WITH GREAT GRAND NEPHEW DELROY



DAWN WITH "NEECE" LEAH



LEAH AND POLLY

Chapter 4

Extending the links: the agency of women and the significance of children in the creation and maintenance of kinship

“It goes on and on and on as it grows and grows... All the children are my children. They all belong to me, and I have the same responsibility to all of them. Part of that responsibility is to keep them together” (Gobi Clark, reflecting on her extended family as we sat late one evening in her kitchen over a cup of tea).

In the last chapter we saw how people who come together from different ethnic and social class backgrounds defined their family relationships based on the amount of physical time spent together, the degree of emotional bonding, and the extent to which help and support are exchanged. We noted the emergence of an approach to doing kinship among the Smith family that is akin to Caribbean kinship relationships. As is common among many Caribbean families, Dawn and Dusty's daughter Polly has included within her family network the “outside” child of her ex-husband, and also the child's mother. There was also the inclusion of the non-blood relatives of the mother of Polly's grandson.

This chapter is concerned with relationships in Gobi Clark's family and again the incorporation of biological and non-biological relatives into the family network. It explores the crucial role of women in the maintenance of the kinship network. It also looks at the significance of children (siblings nieces, nephews and grandchildren) in forming the links between families.

As with the last chapter, I shall focus in this chapter on one family, that of Gobi Clark, exploring dynamics that are not particularly unique to this family, as there are similar examples running through other families in the research. Nevertheless, I again caution against generalizations, as one family's experience and handling of the same phenomenon might be different from another family's.

However, by focusing on one family, I am better able to draw out some of the complexities involved in these families. During my fieldwork, I met most of the people whom Gobi included in her family network, with the exception of her aunt Vicky and her nuclear family, her sister Misty and her nuclear family, and Gobi's second partner Randall's mother who died in 2000. The first part of the chapter will draw on various family members accounts of family practices and relationships between generations. This sets the stage for the second part on "current family relationships", which concerns the practices I was able to observe during my fieldwork. It was only through this combination of family stories and observed practices that I felt able to grasp some knowledge and understanding of the manner in which kinship and relatedness developed in this family.

Gobi's family background

Gobi comes from a white English family who originated in the north where she was born in the mid 1950s (see figure 4:1). Her parents moved the family (she has one sister, Misty, who is a few years older) to a large estate in the southeast countryside just outside of London when she was five years old, but remained in contact with her northern grandparents. The estate housed a residential school for disabled children, and her father Tony worked there as a science teacher, and her mother Judy worked as a housemother. The move meant that for the first time Gobi and her sister came into contact with people from different ethnic groups.

Five years after moving south, Gobi's father died, and two years later her mother also died. The two sisters went to live with their "aunt" Vicky – actually their father's cousin – in southwest London. Aunt Vicky and her husband Nick had four children and a very large house. Nick worked as a senior personnel with the Ministry of Defense, and as a result, visitors were not allowed in their homes. Gobi and her sister found living with their aunt "very strange and restricting". According to Gobi, "I was an outdoor child who had grown up in a school for

handicapped children. I went to school, I came home, and I had a family of a hundred disabled kids. I climbed trees with kids with no arms and legs, and ran down hills with them in wheelchairs. Therefore, living with aunt Vicky and her family was not my cup of tea". Gobi's sister Misty stayed for a year and then went off to university. Gobi continued to live with her aunt until she was sixteen and then she left to work as a cleaner in a hospital. She lived in the residential housing in the hospital until she was seventeen, and then she started working as an auxiliary nurse.

First husband Headley

Gobi met her first husband Headley in school at the age of fifteen while she was living in London with her aunt Vicky. When she began work as an auxiliary nurse, she left the hospital residence, and went to live with Headley and his family (Headley was still living with his parents). Like Gobi, Headley's family originated in the north of England (see figure 4:2), but unlike her "middle-class" family of origin, Headley's family was, in Gobi's terms, "working-class". In London Headley's parents Rita and Dennis lived in a council house, and when Gobi moved in with the family of five (Headley has a sister and a brother), she recalls feeling "more at home than in the big house that I lived in with my aunt, which was just a house, not a home". She felt Headley's parents were like "substitute parents", and she developed a close and lasting relationship with his family. After working for a couple of years as an auxiliary nurse, Gobi travelled for nearly two years, after which she came back and enrolled in a nursing course. After two and a half years of nursing school, she and Headley bought and moved into their own home. They soon became married, and had two children, Laura and Rupert.

Family relationships

During this period, Gobi and Headley remained in regular contact with Headley's family. According to Gobi, his parents Rita and Dennis were the "ultimate grandparents who adored the two children Laura and Rupert". However, within three years of marrying, Gobi and Headley divorced. According to Gobi, after she had her first child, Headley "demanded" that she quit her job and become a "full-time mother and wife". After their second child was born, Gobi suffered from postnatal depression, and their relationship became conflictual to the point of divorce. Because Gobi was not working and still suffering from depression, Headley was granted custody of the children, with the condition that they spent the weekends with Gobi.

Headley remarried Esther (see figure 4:3) very soon after the divorce, and they moved with the children to the countryside outside of London. Gobi continued to maintain a "fairly good" relationship with Headley's family, and took the children to see their grandparents occasionally when she had them on the weekends. Family get-togethers on birthdays and on high holidays such as Christmas continued with Headley's parents and his two siblings Patsy and Mark. Family relationships with Gobi's family of origin also continued to some degree. By now her sister Misty had married a Swiss and moved to live abroad. Before Misty moved abroad, she was involved in a conflict with the northern part of their family, and Gobi "got caught up" in the conflict. As a result, she hasn't been in contact with those family members since. Gobi took the children on regular visits abroad to see her sister and her new family, and she continued to visit her aunt in London.

During the first three years of living with Headley and his new wife, his daughter Laura became chronically ill, and was hospitalized with suspected appendicitis. After repeated examinations, it was decided that "she was making herself sick" and that the best place for her was to be with her mother. Hence, she went back to

live with Gobi when she was eight years old, and “has never set foot in her father’s house since”. Rupert also eventually moved back to live with his mother Gobi in his mid teens.

Life with partner Randall

Soon after the divorce from Headley, Gobi met her second partner Randall, who at the time ran a business as a music retailer. The couple met at a musical event, and were introduced by a mutual friend. Randall’s family originated in the Caribbean, and his parents Angela and Richard migrated to England in the early 1960s (see figure 4:4). Before migrating, his parents had four children in the Caribbean. A few years after they arrived in England, they sent for two of the children, Randall and his brother Phil. The other two children were left in the Caribbean, one of whom later migrated to Canada. While in England Angela and Richard had a daughter Phyllis. In England Richard worked for British Telecom until he retired, and Angela did manual labour until she retired. Angela died in 2000 and Richard is still alive.

Family relationships

Shortly after they met, Gobi and Randall established an intimate relationship, but they lived separately while visiting each other’s homes regularly. Once Gobi and Randal’s relationship was established, relationship with her aunt and her sister changed. According to Gobi, her sister Misty (who had been living in Switzerland, and with whom Gobi and her first two children Laura and Rupert previously spent holidays), refused to “accept or accommodate” Randall: “I wasn’t suited after that, cause I was now with a black man. So I’ve been cut off from her, no contact”.

Gobi's relationship with Aunt Vicky continued, but to a lesser degree than it was before she met Randall. To begin with, visits to aunt Vicky's were less frequent, and they usually involved only Gobi and her children Laura and Rupert. Gobi recalled the only visit to her aunt's where Randall was present:

We were invited to a family tea, and Randall came with me Laura and Rupert, and she'd [aunt Vicky] also invited the vicar for tea. We were put in another room to eat, because it was assumed we couldn't converse with the vicar for tea...So that was strange, because Randall, who was brought up in a completely churchy family, probably could have quoted every verse in the bible better than the vicar could have done. Certainly better than my aunt and sister could have done. It was difficult.

Randall never visited aunt Vicky's again, nor developed a relationship with her and her family.

Gobi's relationship with the family of her ex-husband Headley had also taken a downturn, as "they disapproved" of her relationship with Randall. However, Headley's parents Rita and Dennis continued to maintain an active relationship with Headley and their grandchildren Laura and Rupert, who were at the time living with Headley.

Living together

When Gobi's son Rupert was in his mid teens, he left his father's house and moved home to live with Gobi. Randall also moved into Gobi's home at the same time. Before Randall met Gobi, he had been involved in a relationship with Mona (who was also Caribbean of origin), and they had two children, Christa and Randy (see figure 4:4). When Randall parted from Mona, he and Mona shared custody of the children. At the time he moved into Gobi's home, Mona had been convicted for an offence, and was sentenced to prison. Hence, Randall brought Christa and Randy who were eight and four respectively at the time to live with him and Gobi. Mona was released from prison twice, but never long enough to

raise her children, so in Gobi's words: "It was either they went into care or I kept them. So I kept them! I inherited them and brought them up. I became their mum". And this she was able to do informally, without the involvement of the Social Services, suggesting a creolized form of family arrangement in a new context where such arrangements usually involve the law.

"My family comes as a unit or not at all"

After Randall and his two children moved into Gobi's home, family relationships with Gobi's aunt Vicky became even less close. Her aunt Vicky continued to invite Gobi's two children to her house, but her two "inherited" children by Randall were never invited. Hence, Gobi's nuclear family was never invited as a "complete family". According to Gobi, her aunt "never accepted my two black children when I took them on". Gobi was not satisfied with the dynamics which had developed among her family, but decided that she would "put up with the situation, given the fact that they are my only relatives close by". Therefore, she continued to allow her first two children to visit her aunt whenever they were invited. The dynamics of their relationship changed even more when her aunt Vicky's son Raymond got married, and Gobi and her first two children were invited to the wedding, but not her partner Randall or the other two children. Gobi refused to go or to send her children Laura and Rupert, on the grounds that "my family comes as a unit or not at all". This situation created a conflict between Gobi and her aunt, and for a period of time, there was no contact between the families.

Meanwhile, Gobi's relationship with her ex-husband Headley remained non-existent. Their daughter Laura also only saw her father whenever they met at her grandparents' home, such as at Christmas or other holidays. Their son Rupert continued to visit his father and have a relationship with him, though not a close relationship with his step-mother. Although Gobi had become "somewhat

remote” from her ex-husband Headley’s family, his parents Rita and Dennis were still very active in the children’s lives while they were living with Headley. When Laura and Rupert moved back to live with their mother, Headley’s family rebuilt their relationship with Gobi, and welcomed all her children. Consequently, visits to Rita and Dennis included all four of Gobi’s children, and at Christmas and birthdays, presents were distributed equally among all four children. Additionally, all four children call Rita and Dennis “nanny” and “grandpa”.

Relationships with Randall’s family are also strong and more extensive – partly because it is larger. Randall’s mother Angela, who was a “strong Baptist”, took all four children to church on Sunday mornings while she was alive. After church every Sunday afternoon, the rest of the family went to Angela’s house for what they all described as “the Sunday dinner ritual” of rice and peas and chicken. To all the children, Angela was “grandma”, and if any of them misbehaved, Rupert recalled how they would all be “told off” in the same manner by Angela.

Family relationships with Randall’s family also extended beyond Britain to relatives in the Caribbean and North America. There are regular contacts via e-mail, letters and phone calls. Gobi, Randall, and all the children had been to the Caribbean to spend time with his relatives, and his sister in Canada visits the family in England regularly, and sends presents to all the children.

Gobi and Randall’s birth child

Fifteen years after Gobi and Randall came together as a couple, Gobi became pregnant, and during the pregnancy they parted. According to Gobi, she “simply became tired of his drinking”, and one day after she came home and found him “passed-out” on the sofa, left him there, and moved out. Gobi took all four

children, and continued to raise Randall's two children without legal intervention while their mother went in and out of prison. In her view:

By now they were my children. I had brought them up. He had a drinking problem and there was no way that I was going to leave them with him. They call me mum, and all my children get on like sisters and brothers – they play, they fight. They call each other brothers and sisters.

Thus, with help and support from Randall's relatives, Gobi kept and raised the children as her own.

Parting with Randall, however, was only on an intimate level, because Randall continued to provide support for his children. He continued to visit the family in their new home, and helped the children with their homework. He also continued to do the “manly” chores around the home such as cutting the lawn and fixing things. Additionally, he and Gobi continued to provide mutual help and support to each other. Four months after the couple parted, Gobi gave birth to their baby Julia. The children recalled how “delighted” they were to have a new baby around, and Gobi's daughter Laura who was seventeen years old when Julia was born, remembered feeling for the first time, that her two step-siblings Christa and Randy, “were really my brother and sister because we now have the same little sister”. According to Christa who was fourteen at the time Julia was born, “I felt like our family was different and special, because we had all the colours of people in the world in our family”.

Life with partner Courtney

Two years after parting with Randall and having Julia, Gobi met Courtney while she was out one night with a friend at a club. Courtney's family originated in the Caribbean, and his parents had migrated to Britain in the early 1960s and sent for him three years later (see figure 4:5). Courtney has seven brothers and sisters all

living in London. Until they retired, his father worked for London Transport, and his mother as a cleaner. When Gobi met Courtney, he was a law student at university. After meeting at the same club a few times, Gobi and Courtney developed a close relationship, and for the first few months, their relationship developed even further, with Courtney making regular visits to her home. Gobi became pregnant very early into the relationship, and they decided that Courtney should move in with Gobi. Courtney lived with Gobi for a year, and Gobi told me that during this time, "he came and went as he pleased. He'd more or less be here, then maybe Friday night he's be off, and then you wouldn't see him till Sunday". When Courtney decided to move his belongings into Gobi's house, Gobi went over to his flat to help him with the move. When she went into his flat, she saw various pictures of children on his wall, and he told her that three were his children, and the others were "just family".

Eventually Gobi found out that Courtney had been involved in a simultaneous relationship with another woman, and that all the children in the photos on his wall were actually his children by various women. When this information was revealed to her, she was eight months pregnant with Courtney's child. She immediately packed up all of Courtney's belongings and took them to the home where he was spending time with the other woman. Gobi recalled arriving at the house where he was playing dominos upstairs with his mate. She knocked on the door and a woman answered: "Does Courtney live with you?" I asked, and she said, 'Yeah'. So I said, 'Well you might as well have his washing, his bloody books, the whole fucking lot!' He comes running downstairs, and I just left them there, and never heard from him for quite some time".

Trudy is born

A month after Gobi and Courtney parted, Goby gave birth to their daughter Trudy. It was her fourth birth, and she had decided to have the baby at home. Courtney, who for a long time had been suffering from drug addiction, had fallen into a deep depression, and was unable to be present at the birth of his baby. His brother Mathew went to Gobi's aid, and provided emotional and practical help and support during the birth. Mathew continued to provide help and support to Gobi and the children for a few weeks until she regained her strength. Her older children also helped to care for their younger sister. When Trudy was five weeks old, Courtney went to see his baby for the first time, but didn't see her again until she was two years old, when he went to her second birthday party. At the birthday party he convinced Gobi that he was "clean" of his drug addiction, and they decided to rebuild their relationship. This time their relationship lasted for a week, and then Courtney left. Two years later he turned up again, stayed for a week and left again. Their relationship has continued on that pattern into the present. In the meantime, Courtney has admitted to having nine other children with various women.

Family relationships

The birth of Trudy created another link in the extended family network. Although Courtney maintained minimal contact with Gobi and the baby, Gobi, determined to ensure that Trudy would know her father's family, made contact with his parents, and eventually got to know his seven siblings, and many of his siblings' numerous children too. His family has welcomed her family, and all her children call Courtney's parents Betty and Daniel "granny" and "grandpa". Gobi regularly took her children to visit granny Betty and grandpa Daniel at their home where they would come into contact with the rest of Courtney's family of origin. Granny Betty "jumps" at the occasion to baby-sit Trudy and her sister Julia

whenever Gobi needed help. Courtney's younger brother Mathew, who provided emotional and practical help to Gobi when Trudy was born, continued to be in very close contact with her family. Gobi became particularly close to Courtney's only sister, whose children were similar in age to Gobi's two last children. The two women visited each other's homes independently of other family members, and the children spent lots of time playing together.

Family relationships between the other two sets of family (the family of Gobi's first husband Headley, and the family of her second partner Randall) continued, and with all the visits and get-togethers between families, Gobi was often left "exhausted". In her words:

It got manic at times. Having a mixed family like mine is very rewarding in a lot of ways...the different food, the different attitudes to life, the many hands to help out whenever you need help. But on the other hand, it can be bloody hard work sometimes! So many people to see! Sometimes you also get burdened with the problems of some family members, and because I am a social worker, I am expected to contribute to a resolution. But I guess that is part and parcel of being part of any family really. Mine is just very, very large!

On the other hand, Gobi's relationship with her own family of origin changed only slightly. With her sister Misty it remained non-existent. Aunt Vicky continued to extend partial invitations to Gobi's nuclear family. After Gobi's last two children Julia and Trudy were born, Vicky included them in family invitations, so that according to Gobi, she continued to invite "the two white children, and now the two mixed-race ones were also invited, but not the two black ones". Furthermore, there were the usual comments regarding how "good" she (Gobi) was at "breeding", along with other stereotypes regarding her choice of partners. Nevertheless, when her first two children were old enough to travel without an adult, Gobi would send them and occasionally her last two to visit aunt Vicky, but since her "inherited" children were not invited, she refused to go along herself.

Other links were added to the family network, as Courtney's children all came to know each other through the various family visits and get-togethers with his family. Furthermore, Gobi developed a close relationship with two of the mothers of Courtney's other children, and especially as their children were close in age, they often joined together in leisure activities with the children. The mothers have also taken the children camping away from the city independent of other family members.

The young adults

Gobi went back to work when her last two last children were still babies and her four older children were still living at home. While she was at work, the older children provided a lot of help with their two younger siblings. As young adults, her daughters Laura and Christa and her son Randy moved into their own homes. However, they continued to visit their mother and their baby sisters regularly and provide care for the babies when necessary.

Laura moved into a flat with her partner Charlie, but nevertheless, she continued to provide care for her small siblings while her mother was at work. When she had her own two children Lucy and Marcia – very closely together – she brought them to her mother's home during the days when Gobi worked, and she described the experience as “a family daycare”. This “family daycare” continued until Gobi's last two children were old enough to attend school. Since then, Laura has gone to equestrian school and become an equestrian teacher. Laura's first daughter Lucy is now at primary school, and she cares for her second daughter Marcia during the daytime, and teaches equestrian lessons in the evenings.

Gobi's daughter Christa went to college and studied social work, and now works as a social worker for the same organization as Gobi. When Christa was twenty years old, her birth mother Mona who by now had been out of prison and had a

four year-old daughter Gabriella, was again convicted along with the father of her baby, and they were both sentenced to prison. The Social Services intervened and proposed that little Gabriella be placed in care. Christa, who was by now working and living in her own flat, negotiated with the Social Services to foster her baby sister. For her, the idea of her sister going into care was “unthinkable as long as I was willing and able to help”:

No matter what stupid things my mother does she is still my mother. It is not my sister's fault that she was born. My brother [Randy] and I were very fortunate to be saved from social services and given a chance when mum [referring to Gobi] stepped in. Now that I am in a position to do the same for my sister, I would fight whatever authority it takes to keep her in the family. We are her family. Why should she be farmed out to strangers when we are right here?

Here we see a transgenerational creolized form of child fostering among extended family members, beginning with Gobi, and continuing with Christa.

During the year of my fieldwork, Gabriella was nine years old and still in Christa's care while both parents were still in prison.

Gobi's son Randy left home in his late teens. He never went to higher education, and lives on his own working as a house painter. Her son Rupert went to college and trained as a plumber, and did his apprenticeship with his father Headley who is a heating and plumbing engineer. He continues to work with his father. Additionally, Rupert encouraged his sister Laura's partner Charlie to become a plumber, and at present they work together. Rupert hasn't left home, and has a partner Ruby with whom he spends time between their two homes.

Current family relationships: “It goes on, and on, and on”.

So how do the links that have extended Gobi’s family into such a wide network function to maintain the network? Up to this point this chapter has described family relationships and practices as told primarily by Gobi’s family. The second part of the chapter will describe the family relationships and practices I observed during my fieldwork. It begins with family relationships between Gobi and her children and her family of origin, and continues with the family relationships between each of her partners and their families of origin, and culminates with the relationships among the children.

Relationships with Gobi’s family of origin

During my fieldwork, I became aware of the minimal contact and family relatedness that existed between Gobi and her family of origin. I never met any of her family from the north of England, and to my knowledge, she and her children never made any kind of contact with them, nor have they made any contact with her. I also had not met Gobi’s sister nor her aunt Vicky or any of her family.

I recalled the evening I visited Gobi at home and the phone rang. Gobi answered the phone, and said, “Oh, hello aunty Vicky!” Their conversation was very brief, but after she hung up, Gobi told me that aunt Vicky phoned to say that she was visiting a friend close by [two miles away] but due to time constraints, she was unable to come and see her and the children. However, she had something for the “little girls”, and will leave it with her friend for Gobi to pick up. “She sings the same song all the time” Gobi said. “It’s always the same. Only a couple of miles away, but too rushed to come by. Nothing new”. I asked her if her sister Misty and her children had ever visited her in her house, and she replied with a chuckle: “You must be joking! My sister lives a very posh life with her rich husband in

Europe. I live in a council house... she wouldn't bring her children here, this [pointing to her surrounding] is all way beneath them".

As I have never met aunt Vicky nor Misty, I asked Gobi if she would ever seek any form of help from her aunt and her sister. She replied emphatically, "I would rather die than go to any of them for help. They are not that kind of family to me. They are my family in name, but not in terms of what family do for each other. We don't have that kind of relationship".

Relationships with ex-husband Headley and his family of origin

As we may recall, Headley is Gobi's first husband and the father of her first two children Laura and Rupert. After six years of marriage, Gobi and Headley divorced and their children went to live with Headley and his new wife Esther. While the children were living there, a major conflict developed especially over Esther's mistreatment of the children. Eventually, both children returned to live with Gobi. As a result of the conflict, there has been no form of family relationship between Gobi and her ex-husband and his wife. During my fieldwork, I met Gobi's ex-husband Headley (once) and his parents Rita and Dennis and his siblings Mark and Patsy during the visits I made to Rita and Dennis' home. I never met Headley's wife Esther, and Rita told me that there were a number of reasons for that. First of all, Esther and Headley live in the countryside outside of London where she raises horses. They do not have any children together, and she spends her time raising the animals. More importantly, after Gobi's divorce when Laura and Rupert went to live with Headley and Esther, Esther physically and emotionally abused them, and this caused a rift in family relationships. Rita and Dennis whose only grandchildren were Laura and Rupert at the time, became caught up in the conflict with Esther. Consequently, there has never been a close relationship between Esther and Headley's family of origin.

When Laura went back to live with Gobi at aged eight, Esther forbade her to come back to her father's house. Consequently, at twenty-five years of age, she has not been back and her children have never been to her father's house. Contact with her father is limited to once per year at Christmas time when they come together at Rita and Dennis' home. This is also the only time Headley sees his grandchildren Lucy and Marcia. Laura has not seen her stepmother since she left her father's home, and Esther has never met Laura's children.

Headley's brother Mark and sister Patsy never had any children. Hence Headley and Gobi's children are Rita and Dennis' only blood grandchildren. Rita and Dennis have very active relationships with Gobi and all her children. Now that they are elderly and less mobile, their family comes to see them. Although Gobi and all her children, whatever their colour are usually welcome at Rita's and Dennis', of the adult children, it is Gobi's daughter Laura who most often visits her grandparents (weekly), bringing her two children and sometimes her two younger sisters Julia and Trudy to see their "nanny" and "grandpa". According to Laura, "We are the only grandchildren they've got, and my children are their only great-grandchildren. They have always been there for me and my brother, and it is important to me that my children know their nanny and grandpa". I accompanied Laura a few times to visit her grandparents, and I indeed observed the familiarity and ease among grandparents and grandchildren, including the fond affection between Rita and Laura's two younger siblings, Julia and Trudy.

After Gobi had her children, family relationships between her and Headley's parents were never based on the exchange of practical help and support. For example, Rita and Dennis were never asked to provide any kind of care for their grandchildren, nor had Gobi gone to them seeking financial assistance. Their relationships were more of an emotional kind. For example, Rita and Dennis provided emotional support to Gobi after her divorce from Headley, and now it appears that Gobi's children bring emotional comfort to their grandparents. According to Rita, "they keep us going, the little ones".

Relationships with partner Randall and his family of origin

Recall that Randall is the father of Gobi's two "inherited" children Christa and Randy, and her daughter Julia. The couple had a fifteen-year relationship, then they parted, and the children all remained with Gobi. At the time of my fieldwork, Randall and Gobi had parted as a couple for eleven years. However, they maintained a close non-intimate relationship, which involves mutual emotional and practical support. He continued to provide care and support to the children. Due to Randall's alcohol dependency, he occasionally loses his job and becomes homeless. Although his parents have been willing to have him live in their home during those times, according to him, "I prefer to be with my children, because at least I can make myself useful by doing things for them. Being around them also gives me the courage and a reason to stay off the bottle". Therefore, Gobi would invite him to live with her and the children. Whenever he was living in her home, he conducted himself in a manner that was familiar to the family. For example, he helped with household chores, and his presence around the house made it appear, according to Gobi's son Rupert, "like he never left". The summer of my fieldwork was one such period when Randall had been staying with the family for three months, due to an alcohol-related accident which left him physically hurt. During this time, I observed the dynamics in Gobi's home between Randall, Gobi, and the children.

I had promised Gobi's last two daughters Julia and Trudy that I would take them on a day's outing. The day would entail going to the Science Museum in the morning, going back to my flat for lunch, and then to a movie matinee in the early evening. I aimed to arrive at their house before Gobi left for work at 8:45, but only made it at 9:00. I rang the doorbell and Randall opened the door holding on to a kitchen towel. He told me that Gobi had left, and that the girls were having their breakfast. I went into the kitchen where he offered me a cup of coffee. We sat at the table with the girls who were eager to talk about the day's events. After we were all finished, I offered to help clean up the dishes while the girls finished

getting ready, but Randall declined my offer, and said, "I'll take care of that later. You just go and wait for the girls out there [in the living room], they shouldn't be long". When I entered the living room, there was a very large pile of laundry, which had been washed and was waiting to be folded. I hadn't sat down two minutes, when Randall came in, turned the television on, and sat down in front of the basket of laundry and began to fold the clothes. I made a comment about the amount of laundry, and he replied, "There are five of us in this house at the moment". About twenty minutes later the girls came running down the stairs, and we took off for the day.

After an exciting, exhausting, and expensive day out, I took the girls home. We arrived around 8:00 in the evening, and when the door opened, like a magnet, the smell of cooking pulled the girls straight into the kitchen. By now Gobi had come home from work, and Randall had prepared a Caribbean dish of fried dumplings, fried plantains and fried fish. I was invited to join the family for supper, and while we ate, the girls recounted the day's events to their parents, and soon afterwards, they departed upstairs for bed. Randall remained in the kitchen and cleaned up all the dishes, and Gobi and I went into the living room where she soon said to me, "Now you've seen for yourself what I have been telling you. When he is here, he is like a part of the furniture, like he never left. And later tonight, when we all go to bed, he will just crash here on the sofa". When Julia and Trudy were ready to go to sleep, they both came downstairs kissed Gobi, Randall, and myself goodnight. At around 10:30 I left and went home.

"She was more the keeper of the family"

Because Randall's mother Angela died in 2000, I never had the opportunity to meet her during my fieldwork. However, she was still very much alive in the family discourses. From the stories people told, it appears that she was the kind of grandmother who expected her children and grandchildren to come to her.

According to Randall, his mother's philosophy was, "My family comes here [to *her* house]"! All six of Gobi's children remembered Angela as "a very strict granny, *very strict!*" (Christa emphasized), who would scold them all equally if they misbehaved. Unlike the freedom of space which they had in Gobi's home, at granny Angela's house, they were only allowed to play in the television room, and the main sitting area where all her ceramic figurines and crocheted doilies were, according to Christa, "just for show". Despite these restrictions, they spoke fondly of their regular Sunday visits to Angela, and the big pots of rice and peas she had cooking on the stove. Julia recalled how everyone would all sit at the table to eat, and all the adults would be telling stories about "back home":

We would all be at the table, my granny, my grandpa, my uncle, and my mum and my dad and us. Granny and grandpa and my dad and my uncle would be the main people talking. They always told the same stories about the people and the places from 'back home', and when one of us [children] would ask about these people back home, they would be talking in their patois and laughing so loudly that they wouldn't even hear us. So we were quiet at the dinner table most of the time. Also, most of the time, we couldn't talk at the table because granny was so strict, she would say, 'Children shouldn't speak at the table'!

The children also recalled spending some of their summer holidays with their granny, and how she would take them all to her Baptist church on Sundays full of mainly "black people". Trudy remembered being "very bored, because we couldn't talk. And we got so hungry by the end, yet when church was over and we were ready to leave, granny would take a long time to introduce us to all the people in her church". One of the fondest memories the children had of granny Angela was how at Christmas she would give all six of them the same amount of money for them to buy their presents. Apparently, Angela felt that buying things for people was a "waste of time and money". Her rationale according to her son Randall was that, "if you give the money to the person they can buy exactly what they like". Gobi also recalled how "reliable" Angela was when she (Gobi) needed any form of help with children.

It appears that family contact on this scale ended after Angela died in 2000. According to Gobi, “she was more the keeper of the family”. Indeed, on the visits I made to the house, I did not experience any of the vivacity that was described to me. Since Angela’s death, her youngest daughter Phyllis has divorced from her husband and moved back into her parents’ house, partly she said, to provide emotional support for her father. The house as I saw it had been converted into two separate dwellings with Randall’s father Richard living on the ground floor, and his sister Phyllis on the second floor. Once I visited Richard with Gobi and her two youngest children Julie and Trudy, and twice I visited with Gobi’s “inherited” daughter Christa and her younger sisters Julie and Trudy. Each time I visited, we sat at the kitchen table and had tea and biscuits. Conversations were usually limited to Richard asking why the children hadn’t phoned him or come to see him in the week before, with Gobi responding, “You can pick up the phone and call too you know!” It was obvious how bored and somewhat ill at ease Gobi’s children were, especially the two youngest ones. I asked Gobi after my first visit to Richards house, “Why don’t you and the children visit him as much as you did when Angela was alive?” She told me that since Angela died, Richard has “slumped” into a mild depression, and has essentially isolated himself. He does not leave the house to go anywhere. Furthermore, the children have grown uncomfortable around him, because they have to be still around him when they visit, and even having the television on “irritates” him. Hence, they have limited their visits to every other week, with regular phone calls to “see how he is keeping”.

Recall that Randall’s parents Angela and Richard had left four children behind when they migrated to Britain from the Caribbean, and only Randall and his brother Phil later followed. His sisters Joyce and Eva were left behind, and his parents had another daughter Phyllis after they arrived in Britain (see figure 4:4). Of the two sisters left behind, Joyce remained in the Caribbean, and Eva migrated to Canada. Of Angela and Richard’s children, only Randall and his brother Phil have children. I never met Randall’s sisters in the Caribbean and Canada, but I

was told many stories about the very active transnational family relationships, the regular exchange of e-mails, letters and phone calls. I was present several times when Randall's sister Eva called from Canada to speak with Gobi and the children. I was shown many items of clothing and toys by Gobi's last two daughters, who showed me clothing and toys that were sent to them by their aunt Eva in Canada. Gobi's other children also recounted stories of presents they received from Eva. I saw many photographs, both on the kitchen wall and in photo albums of trips to the Caribbean to visit Joyce. From the stories and evidence from photographs, it appears that Gobi and the children have maintained closer relationships with Randall's siblings abroad than they have with his sister Phyllis and brother Phil who live in London. Things changed even more after his mother Angela died. As we saw earlier, before she died, the family came together every Sunday for "Sunday rice and peas dinner". The explanation for the reduced contact by Randall's sister Phyllis and his brother Phil according to Gobi, is that "they are professional people with very busy lives".

The difference in the degree of contact and family relationships between Randall's siblings abroad and those in Britain might, as Randall implied, be related to time constraints on the part of his "professional" siblings in Britain. Another possibility is that increasing acceptance in British society has led to "a process of de-Caribbeanization" or "creolization-in-reverse" (James and Harris (1993:265) among the children of Caribbean migrants in Britain, and hence a decline in the Creole kinship traditions that the migrants brought to Britain. However, such kinship practices and networks are still significantly maintained transnationally among migrant relatives, despite being scattered between the continents (see Bauer and Thompson, 2006; Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001; Levitt, 2001; Horst and Miller, 2005; Miller and Slater, 2000; Olwig, 1993). Thus, although the effort that Angela put into maintaining family relationships might have declined among her British-born children, they continue among her Jamaican-born children who live in North America, and who themselves are first generation migrants there. Equally significantly, Gobi, who has no contact with

her own sister abroad, is actively involved in a transnational relationship with Randall's siblings – for her case a form of creolization.

Relationships with partner Courtney and his family

Courtney and Gobi lived together for one year, and Courtney is the father of Gobi's last child, Trudy. The couple lived together for a total of one year, separated when Gobi was pregnant, and very briefly resumed their relationship when Trudy was two years old. According to Gobi, this has been the pattern of their relationship since 1996. At the time of my fieldwork, Gobi and Courtney had resumed their relationship, but on non-intimate level, and they lived in separate homes. I met Courtney on a few occasions at Gobi's home. On a couple of weekends I arrived at Gobi's house to find that Trudy was away with her father and his other children (Courtney has nine children altogether with various women, and over the years, the children have all come to know each other). Besides Trudy, I have only met three of Courtney's other children. The interaction I observed between the children was one of fondness and familiarity. Not only have Courtney's children come to know each other and form sibling bonds (calling each other "sisters" and "brothers", and interacting with a familiarity stronger than friendship), but Gobi and two of the children's mothers, Evelyn and Barbara have also developed very close relationships. I have met Evelyn and Barbara, and I was struck by the rapport between the three women. Although no practical help as such is exchanged between them, they regularly coordinated get-togethers between their different homes where all their children come together. From their accounts, it appears that Courtney maintains his relationship with his children, and relates to all the mothers in a similar manner.

Relationships between Gobi and Courtney's family of origin were also very strong during the period of my fieldwork, but the strength varied among different family members. I met Courtney's parents Betty and Daniel, his younger brother

Mathew, and one of his sisters Sue, and four of Sue's other five children (see figure 4:5). His parents have been divorced for years, and they live separately. However, whenever I visited his mother Betty's house, his father Daniel was always present. Puzzled by the closeness I observed between them, I asked Courtney about his parents' relationship, and he told me that "they still see [implying intimately] each other". Additionally, Daniel had been ill, so Betty was caring for him. It appears as though Daniel and Betty are also the kind of parents who expected their children to "come" to them. I have never seen them at Gobi's home, and Gobi could not remember the last time either of them visited. Thus, it was either Gobi or Courtney who took the children to see their grandparents. Visits and phone calls to these grandparents are not as regular as the other two sets of grandparents. However the children all call them "granny" and "grandpa", and according to Gobi, Betty is "always ready and willing to give help whenever you need help. I could phone her up now and say, 'I'm going away for ten weeks, you've gotta have Trudy', and she would have her".

Gobi and her children have more frequent contact with his younger brother Mathew, and his sister Sue than with his other siblings. Mathew was the brother who attended the birth of Trudy and helped Gobi during the first few postpartum weeks, and he has remained close to her and her children ever since. Courtney's sister Sue is the sister with children similar in age to Gobi's last two children, and with whom Gobi's children spent their earlier years socializing. However, now that the children are older and the mothers are working, time together is limited, so get-togethers are less frequent.

Gobi's relationship with her grown children

Now that four of Gobi's children are grown up and have their own lives (for some their own families), what forms of relatedness do they have with their mother? Gobi has expressed her struggles and her concerns to me regarding the kind of

parental model she has followed, and her hope for their future in their own relationships and family lives:

Sometimes I'd like to jump off, but I can't. It's okay, it's rewarding, considering the partners I've had. It's easier without a partner. There is more time for the children. But it is a struggle. It's a struggle working full-time. You try to be everything. There are times where I've worried about what they figured about men, because I tend to fix cars, do household things, and they've not got any good role models. I hope they are able to build good relationships at some stage, cause it would be very sad if they ended in the same way that I did [laughs]...

I live an extremely hectic life, but I'm not that materialistic, compared to the rest of my family [of origin]. And I suppose the work I do [social work] is all consuming. You are always looking after other people's needs, and sometimes neglecting your [her] own family's needs...

Despite the life I've had, I think my children have a pretty good experience really. I think they've got the best of both worlds, although they too have their own struggles. I think it could be quite hard for them sometimes, because society makes them feel like they don't belong to either world. But I hope they can get past the stereotyping, not just in society but also within families, because my own sister became anti where I was and cut me off. Maybe as more and more people become mixed-race with more and more people of all different races mixing up, and we all look more alike with bigger ears or smaller ears, then we'll start picking on something else. For now anyway, my family certainly enjoy the diversity. The food... they certainly get out and about. They are constantly meeting people from all different cultures.

Here Gobi makes some very interesting points on gender and kinship: First, her comment on her life without a partner: "It is easier without a partner. There is more time for the children". From this it might appear that she no longer feels the need for a partner and male figure in her children's lives. In her work on *Gender, Family and Work in Naples*, Goddard concluded that "women's identity are enmeshed in ideals of the family and in their sense of fulfillment in family life...[and] having a child was generally considered to be the most important event in a woman's life." (Goddard, 1996:201). However, from my many conversations with Gobi, her feelings do not entirely correspond with this view. Although her investment in her children is a primary objective in her life, she also

wishes that she had a “consistent” partner and a “stable” male figure for her children. Moreover, she does not find life without a man entirely fulfilling, and misses the intimacy that comes from having a stable partner.

Gobi’s situation corresponds more closely with the phenomenon described as “matrifocality” among many Caribbean families (see Smith, 1988; Barrow, 1996). Matrifocality is an “adaptive mechanism” whereby women in particular, devise certain survival strategies “to cope with inadequate and uncertain male support in circumstances of poverty, unemployment and male migration” (Barrow, 1996:73). In Gobi’s case, her “matrifocal” position arises from a combination of divorce, and inconsistent male support from the fathers of her children. For although ex-partner Randal sometimes offers help and support around the house, his alcoholism renders him unreliable. Hence, her circumstances left her with little choice but to “be everything” (according to her) to her children.

Another noteworthy point in Gobi’s account is that she does not express herself in terms of her own hardship, or as Goddard found among women in her Naples study in terms of “sacrifice” (Goddard, 1996:183-203), although she is clearly investing a lot of time and effort in others at home and at work (as a social worker). Instead, her expressions convey ideas about good mothering, while at the same time, her investment in the extensive family links may be seen as compensating for the isolation she and her children might have suffered from not having a steady partner, and lack of support from her family of origin.

Despite Gobi’s concerns about her children, from my observations, they all appear to have close relationships with her. While she does indeed have a very busy work schedule with little time to visit her grown children, her house is the hub of the family activities. Most times I visited her home, one of her elder children was either present, or calling on the phone, or spontaneously dropping in. Gobi’s daughter Christa works with her as a social worker, so they are in daily contact. Christa is caring for her younger sister Gabriella while their birth mother

Mona is in prison, so she also has a very busy life. However, there were many a time when I was at Gobi's home, and Christa and young Gabriella dropped by. Strikingly, Gabriella also calls Gobi "mum".

Gobi's birth daughter Laura also visits occasionally during the week, and regularly on Sundays, bringing her two children. In the past when Gobi's youngest children were smaller and Laura was home more with her own children, she sometimes helped to mind her younger sisters when necessary. However, now that she works full-time and the younger children are in school, visits to Gobi's apart from Sundays need to be arranged, due to time constraints.

Gobi's son Randy neither has a partner nor a regular job, and makes frequent visits and phone calls to Gobi's home. Her son Rupert works full-time as a plumber, and lives with his partner in Gobi's home. According to Gobi, "he has become the main male role model for the kids". He is the person who does the more physical activities around the house, such as laying floors, painting walls and fixing plumbing and light fixtures. Rupert will not do laundry, but when Gobi gets held back at work, he will either cook, or take his younger siblings out to supper. He also helps his mother sometimes by taking his younger sisters to their after-school activities.

From my observations, Rupert appears fulfilled by his role as the male head of the household, despite Gobi's anxiety about a lack of positive male role model in the family. When he walks through the door from work, he announces his arrival – often bearing little treats for his younger sisters - and almost demandingly requires an acknowledgment. For example, on one of my visits, I stayed till late into the night talking with Gobi, long after the two younger children had gone to bed. Rupert arrived home at 10:00 and charged through the front door yelling, "I'm home! Where is everyone?" After saying hello to Gobi and myself, he went upstairs to the girls' room and woke them up to ask about their day. When I asked him afterwards why he woke the girls up, he replied, "I just like to know

how they get on during the days”. His behaviour implied to me a sense of responsibility and fulfillment as the primary male in the house.

I have kept in regular contact with some of the families in my research even after I completed fieldwork, and Gobi’s is one such family. About five months after I completed my fieldwork, I was in Gobi’s neighbourhood and decided to pay her an uninvited visit. When I arrived at the house, I found her daughter Christa and Christa’s sister Gabriella there. When I asked for Gobi, Christa told me that Gobi was away, and she was minding her two younger sisters. Gobi’s absence was due to the fact that she had turned fifty, and her children Christa and Rupert had treated her to a week’s holiday in India. In the meantime, Christa had moved into the house with her younger sister Gabriella (the sister that she is raising), so she could assist Rupert in minding their younger sisters Julia and Trudy while Gobi was away.

Although Gobi’s children do help with their siblings and the house, and gave their mother a grand holiday for her birthday, Gobi does not express the need for requirement of any form of reciprocity from her children – for even when Laura babysat the young children, Gobi paid her. Thus, one is inclined to analyze her behaviour in terms of negative reciprocity (see Mauss, 1966; Horst and Miller, 2005). However, I believe that the effort that she puts into doing kinship implies a latent form of reciprocity. Although she told me that she sometimes gets “exhausted” by all the activities and responsibilities of her large extended family, she has also said that the effort she makes “for the children to keep in touch with each other” is worth the “joys it brings to my family as a whole”. Thus, from her efforts, she gains satisfaction from creating a wide and active kin network for her children and for herself.

Indeed I have seen some of the effort she has put into bringing her children together. For example I have arrived on some Sundays to find her cooking for what seems like the whole afternoon, huge pots of food for what she termed

“open door Sunday for whoever turns up”. And although I never experienced anything like the “sit-down Sunday dinner” which they described at her ex-partner Randall’s parents’ home when his mother Angella was still alive, I did observe all the children coming in at various times throughout the Sunday and helping themselves to the food Gobi had prepared.

This very laid-back and flexible approach to Sunday dinners is a modification in Gobi’s current family. As a child, her family had formal commensal Sunday lunches with just the nuclear family. In Angela’s house, Sunday dinners after church included the extended family, and although her house was not very large the occasion was formal. The family ate together at her grand dining table which occupied the length of the dining-room. While the older relatives reminisced, the younger children had to sit quietly and “behave”. Gobi’s house is much smaller, a three-bedroom council house with a combined kitchen-diner. Hence, rather than arriving after church and eating together, her children’s different lifestyles now mean they cannot arrive at the same time. Thus, Sunday dinner now has an open-door, individualistic approach, bringing modifications to family practice to accommodate both shifts in house-space and in family members’ lifestyles.

The type of food itself has also been modified to suit the different palates in Gobi’s current family, another Creole adaptation. Unlike the “English” food that she grew up eating, and the “Caribbean” food that Angela prepared, food in Gobi’s house is a mixture of English, Caribbean, Indian and Italian cuisines, that she has learned to cook from different family members and friends – another creole adaptation.

Sibling relationships

During the course of my fieldwork, I had various insights into sibling relationships, not only between Gobi's children, but also between her children and their siblings' siblings, and between Gobi and the siblings of her ex-partners. As we have seen throughout this chapter, Gobi's relationship with her only sibling, her sister Misty, ended when she divorced her first husband Headley and came together with her second partner Randall. Their relationship was never repaired. On the other hand, over the years, Gobi had developed various forms of relationship with her partners siblings. The relationships she developed with her first husband Headley's siblings were weakened after her divorce. She still maintains contact, but only to a minimal degree, and there is no form of help or support exchanged between them. She has maintained very close relationships with two of her second partner Randall's siblings, a sister in the Caribbean, and another sister in Canada. These are the sisters with whom she regularly communicates, and who send regular presents and financial help to her and her children. She also has close relationships with two of her partner Courtney's siblings. One is his brother Mathew who assisted her during Trudy's birth, and the other is his sister Sue with whom Gobi spent lots of time together when they were bringing up their children of similar ages. Mathew has continued to be an active "family friend" who according to Gobi, "is like the brother I never had". He brings gifts not only for the children, but also for her, and will offer help to her if she needs it. Gobi and Sue spent more time together, and exchanged help when their children were smaller because they only worked part-time then. Now that the children have grown up, they have taken full-time jobs, and along with the continued demands of family lives, they are physically together less. However, they continue to phone each other regularly, and periodically take their children together on camping trips. There is not a lot of practical help exchanged between these women, but there is an understanding that mutual support may be activated when necessary.

Sibling relationships between Gobi's children vary in form and intensity, reflecting variations in their shared experiences, and shared parental bonds. To begin with, there is the special relationship and bond between Gobi's birth children and her "inherited" children. There is also the relationship between her "inherited" children and *their* siblings by their birth mother. There is also the relationship between Gobi's last two children and *their* siblings by their father. As an outsider to the family, I found it very striking how all the children from the different extended strands relate when they are together. I shall try to convey these sibling relationships through little vignettes of the different situations I observed on various occasions.

Beginning with Gobi's six children, if we recall, her first two children Laura and Rupert are from her marriage to first husband Headley, her second two children Christa and Randy are her "inherited" children by her second partner Randall, who is also the father of her fifth child Julia, and her last child Trudy is by her partner Courtney. The forms of relatedness I observed between all these six children are strikingly close. In the absence of each other, they all refer to one another as "sisters" and "brothers". There was the situation that I described earlier, of the outing that I had with Julia and Trudy. After we returned to my flat, the girls drew pictures of their family while they watched television and waited for the lunch I was preparing in my kitchen. When we sat down to lunch, we discussed the pictures. Trudy's family had a much larger number of people than Julia's family picture, and when I asked about the difference, Trudy very enthusiastically told me that her family is larger, because she has fourteen brothers and sisters. "Fourteen brothers and sisters?" I asked surprised, since at this stage in my research I hadn't thought of the links between siblings, I asked her to place her siblings. "Well", she said, "there are five from my mum, eight from my dad, and my sister that lives with Christa [little Gabriella who shares the same mother as Trudy's sister Christa]". "But you neither have the same mother nor father!" I replied. "That doesn't matter!" they both replied. "She lives with our sister, and they are sisters, so we are all sisters, and we play together all the

time. Our mum is her mum also” Julia replied. “How so?” I asked her. “Because she calls my mum ‘mum’” said Julia. “And Gabriella and I are the same age. We are both nine years old, and we wear each other’s clothes and everything”, added Trudy. Under the circumstances, I asked Julia how come she didn’t include Trudy’s eight siblings by her father, and she replied, “But they don’t live with us, and I am not related to their mothers. So they are like my cousins. Trudy spends more time with them, and I spend time with them too, but mostly when we go camping or something”.

Although Gobi’s three grown children, Laura, Christa, and Randy live nearby, they have very busy lives, therefore, they were not around as often as Rupert and the two smaller children. However, I have been there at times when Christa dropped in and Julia and Trudy just leaped at her in large embraces. Greetings between the older siblings were never embraces, but more slapping on the shoulders, or some comment – sometimes jokingly – about their appearance. The younger children were mainly the ones around which activities were centered.

Relationships between Gobi’s “inherited” children Randall and Christa and their blood sibling is also remarkable. Randy and Christa share one other sibling, nine year-old Gabriella by their mother Mona. As we might recall, Christa at present is caring for her sister Gabriella while their mother is in prison.

Lastly there is the relationship between daughter Trudy and her eight siblings by her father. Since these siblings have all come to know each other, they often spend weekends together at their father’s home. Additionally, Gobi has maintained a close relationship with two of the mothers of the children, so that they occasionally take the children out together camping and doing other leisure activities.

Summary and Conclusion: “My family is who is around me”

This chapter shows how Gobi’s highly complex family is created primarily by the agency of women, and is activated through the links between the children. For despite the separation of parents, or the separation of children and their parents (as in the case of separation and divorce, or in the case of the parents going to prison), the separation of the siblings is avoided at all possibility. By keeping the siblings together, relations between families are maintained. It is primarily the women in Gobi’s kinship network who are the active maintainers of family relationships, and the significance of children is symbolic to the maintenance of the network. As Gobi herself put it, “All I do is make an effort for the children to keep in touch with each other”. The phrase, “she was more the keeper of the family” was said by Gobi about her ex-partner Randall’s mother, but is a common theme that relates to the women in the family.

Beginning with the separation of Gobi and her first husband Headley, it was the efforts of Gobi and Headley’s mother that kept the link between the two families. When the mother of her partner Randall’s children was sent to prison, Gobi took the children so that the siblings would not be separated, but also because she felt that it was important that they remained “connected” to their father. Gobi has also been active in the formation and maintenance of the sibling and family relationships between her last daughter Trudy and Trudy’s father Courtney’s family, and also has active relationships with Courtney’s other children and their mothers.

This pattern of maintaining the extended family link that has been created by the existence of children has continued transgenerationally with Gobi’s daughter Christa. When Christa’s little sister Gabriella was about to be placed in care by the Social Services, because her parents were in prison, Christa, in the spirit of her Caribbean father and her white English mother’s creolized kinship practice, took over the care of her younger sister. By doing this, the closeness between the

siblings was maintained, and the ties within the family that Gabriella had grown to know were maintained. To Gobi's daughter Laura, family maintenance is also important. Laura regularly visits her father's parents, because she believes that, "it is important for the children to have a relationship with their great-grandparents, and for granny and grandpa to know their only great-grandchildren".

Finally, it became clear after the death of Gobi's ex-partner Randall's mother Angela, that she (Angela) had been the "keeper" of his branch of the family. While she was alive, family relationships were active and contacts were frequent. After she died, these were minimized, and the children no longer related in the same manner with their grandfather, as when their grandmother was alive.

Gobi's keeping of Randall's children (informally) after they parted because their mother was in prison is a form of Creole child fostering (sometimes called child-shifting) that is common among Caribbean families. In Chapter 3 we saw Dusty and Dawn Smith also informally fostering their granddaughter Nancy. In Gobi's case the practice is "inherited" by a white non-biological family member. Gobi has strategically managed to keep the children without the formal involvement of the law, and instead, informally, with the support from the child's extended family network. Furthermore, this Creole child fostering that began with Gobi has continued transgenerationally with her daughter Christa who now takes care of her younger sister while their birth mother is in prison.

Another feature of the Creole family that operates in Gobi's family is the role men play in linking the chain of kinship, "contradicting the idea that unstable conjugal unions expunge males from kinship networks" (Smith, 1988:79). In his work on West Indian kinship, Smith found that when an unmarried couple have a child, the child's father's kin become incorporated into the kin network of the mother and child. Moreover, even after the relationship ends between the parents, the relationship between the child's mother and the relatives or the child's father

(particularly the baby father's mother) continue (Smith, 1988:45). Thus, as with the Creole families, we find that although Gobi has separated from her three partners, she maintains strong relationships with their relatives. She even goes a step further to build relationships with the mothers of her ex-partners' other children.

The links that are formed among the children are also interesting. These links occurred not only through blood relations, but also through non-blood relations. The links created through blood relations are interwoven from the different and complex parental strands, thus creating an uneven number of siblings for each child. Of Gobi's six children, four are her birth children, and two of them are her "inherited" children from the same birth mother. The first two of her children by her first husband share the same biological father, her two "inherited" children and her third birth child have the same biological father, and her last child (her fourth birth child) has a different father from the other five children. Concurrently, interwoven into these sibling sets are further sibling linkages, extending sibling relationships beyond the nucleus of Gobi's home. Thus, four of her children have siblings both inside the nucleus of their family and beyond it. While her "inherited" children Christa and Randy share the same father as Gobi's birth daughter Julia, they also have two sisters with whom they share the same birth mother, and with whom they have very close and active relationships. Additionally, Gobi's youngest child Trudy has eight other siblings with whom she only shares her biological father, and with whom she also has active relationships. Thus, of Gobi's children, Trudy has the largest number of siblings to whom she is related by blood (eleven). But for all of them, there are also as many possible non-blood linkages with step-siblings.

It is this crossing of biological and non-biological siblingship that forms the essence of Gobi's kinship network. Family relations cannot be traced exclusively – or even easily – through genealogical relations of filiation (relations resulting from parental line of descent), or alliance (relations between families through

marriage). Instead, relations are more easily traced through the ties, or connections between children, grandchildren, and siblings. Additionally, as with the creole family the use of kin terms is based on personal experience rather than on descent.

Gobi's family demonstrate what Carsten (1997) observes from her study of kinship in a Malay fishing community, that, "siblingship above all connotes unity and similarity" (p. 25). Although the range of siblings in Gobi's family are not brought up inclusively in one house as with the families in Carsten's research (Chapter 3), they too have incorporated difference into similarity. Coming from different parental strands, they incorporate difference into similarity by the links that are created between siblings, and also by the links they create through their connections between their various parents and grandparents, and other relatives. As we have seen throughout the chapter, forms of relatedness are similar between Gobi's children and their three sets of grandparents, whether they are blood related or not. The children all call their grandparents "grandma" or "granny" or "grandpa". To the children Gobi is "mum", and to each other they are "sister" and "brothers". Moreover, as with Carsten's Malay families, sharing space and daily life is a crucial aspect of the siblings in Gobi's family. This is evident in their interactions and the degree of intensity and frequency of interactions over and above genealogical ties.

As with Carsten's (1997, 2004; 1995) Malay families, the house in Gobi's family plays a crucial role in the making of kinship. While some of the features of Carsten's Langkawi house do not apply to Gobi's family, her suggestion that houses in Langkawi are strongly associated with women and children accords with Gobi's family. For Gobi, houses, feeding, women and sibling sets are all intimately bound up with each other and with the way kinship is lived and conceptualized. Originally it was the house of Gobi's Caribbean mother-in-law Angela which provided a context where family members came together regularly on Sundays to share food and family stories and issues. After Angela's death,

although Gobi's house is smaller it took over as the context for practicing family traditions, albeit, traditions that have been transformed to adjust for space and individual lifestyles. For example, Gobi has continued the tradition of Sunday dinners, but unlike the formal approach to commensuality that she grew up with and that Angela practiced, Gobi has adapted a Creole approach to Sunday dinner, replacing the formal aspect to a more individualistic approach. Gobi's house also provides a context for continuity for relationships, not only with her ex-partners, but also with their other children and the children's mother's.

Although Gobi has a large extended kinship network, members in the network do not relate to each other with the same degree of closeness, contact, and support. How do we interpret these distinctions? The difference in the forms of relatedness in this kin network is akin to the difference which Bourdieu (1977; 1990) describes between "official kinship" and "practical kinship". Bourdieu argues that kin relationships have different "functions" or "uses" for different members within the "group". Hence, there is "official kinship" which is based primarily on genealogical ties and ties through marriage, and the uses of kinship among the group are reserved for "official situations in which they serve the function of ordering the social world and legitimating that order" (1977:34). In other words, official kinship functions as a form of "representational kinship" which serves as self-representation among the group (1977:35). "Practical kinship" by contrast, is a kinship network which includes "not only the set of those genealogical relationships that are kept in working order (which I shall call practical kinship) but also all the non-genealogical relationships that can be mobilized for the ordinary needs of existence (that is, practical relationships)" (1990:168).

Among Gobi's family of origin, her sister Misty and her aunt Vicky could be described as official or representational kin. Relationships with them do not serve any practical function. Gobi refers to them as "only family in name, and not the kind of family who do things for you". Due to factors such as class and colour,

social divisions have kept Gobi and her aunt and sister apart. This is evident in the manner by which Gobi's sister Misty ended their relationship when Gobi became involved with her Caribbean partner Randall, and the fact that her aunt Vicky will only invite Gobi's birth children to her family occasions, but not her two "black" children. Thus, aunt Vicky's behaviour suggests that genealogy matters over non-blood, but this formal view has been reinforced by colour prejudice.

For Gobi and other members in her kinship network, forms of relatedness are not contingent upon blood ties, class, colour, nor geographical proximity, but are based upon the history of their relationships, their shared experiences, and the practical and emotional support among family members - which may be activated or mobilized by the group members through their connections whenever necessary. However, there are different degrees of relatedness among the different strands of her kin network. Thus, she relates more closely to the family of her ex-partner Randall's family, partly because they have a longer history together, but also perhaps most importantly, because they have worked the hardest and most consistently between them to maintain family connectedness. But in the final analysis, family and kinship are to Gobi, "who is around me", and with whom she feels most comfortable and there is mutual support. The large display of family photos on her kitchen walls is evidence of her view. Gobi's concept of "my family is who is around me" seems to apply also to her children's perception of family. The case of Trudy and Julia on our day's outing is a case in point. The pictures of the family that the girls drew included only those members of their family that they saw regularly, and with whom they have regular contacts.

In sum, due to the lack of emphasis on the importance of children and siblingship in English/British kinship studies, it is difficult to compare the situation that exists within Gobi's, and many of the families in my London research. The significance of children and siblings as the main links connecting the kinship network in my

research has some resonance with Carsten's (1997) work on Malay kinship, but is very much more akin to the situation found in many Caribbean families.

Key to figures

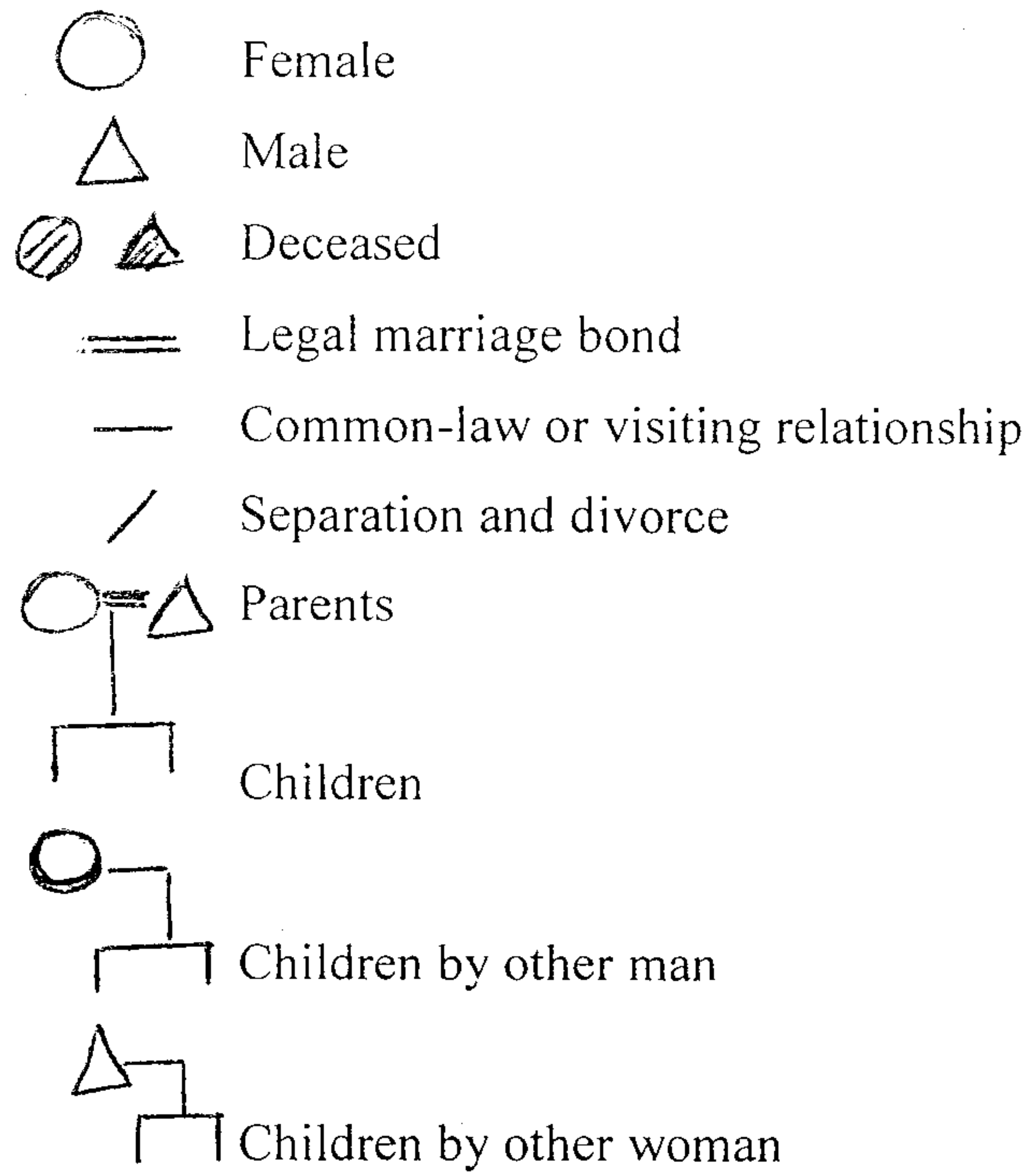


Figure 4:1 Gobi's family of origin

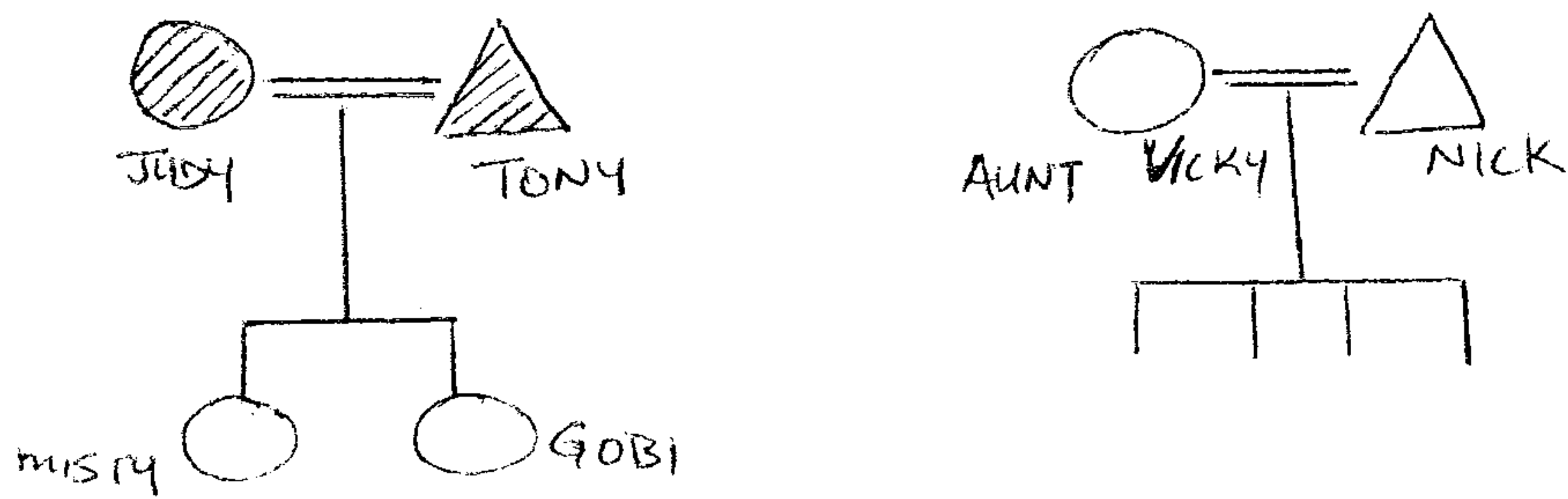


Figure 4:2 Headley's family of origin

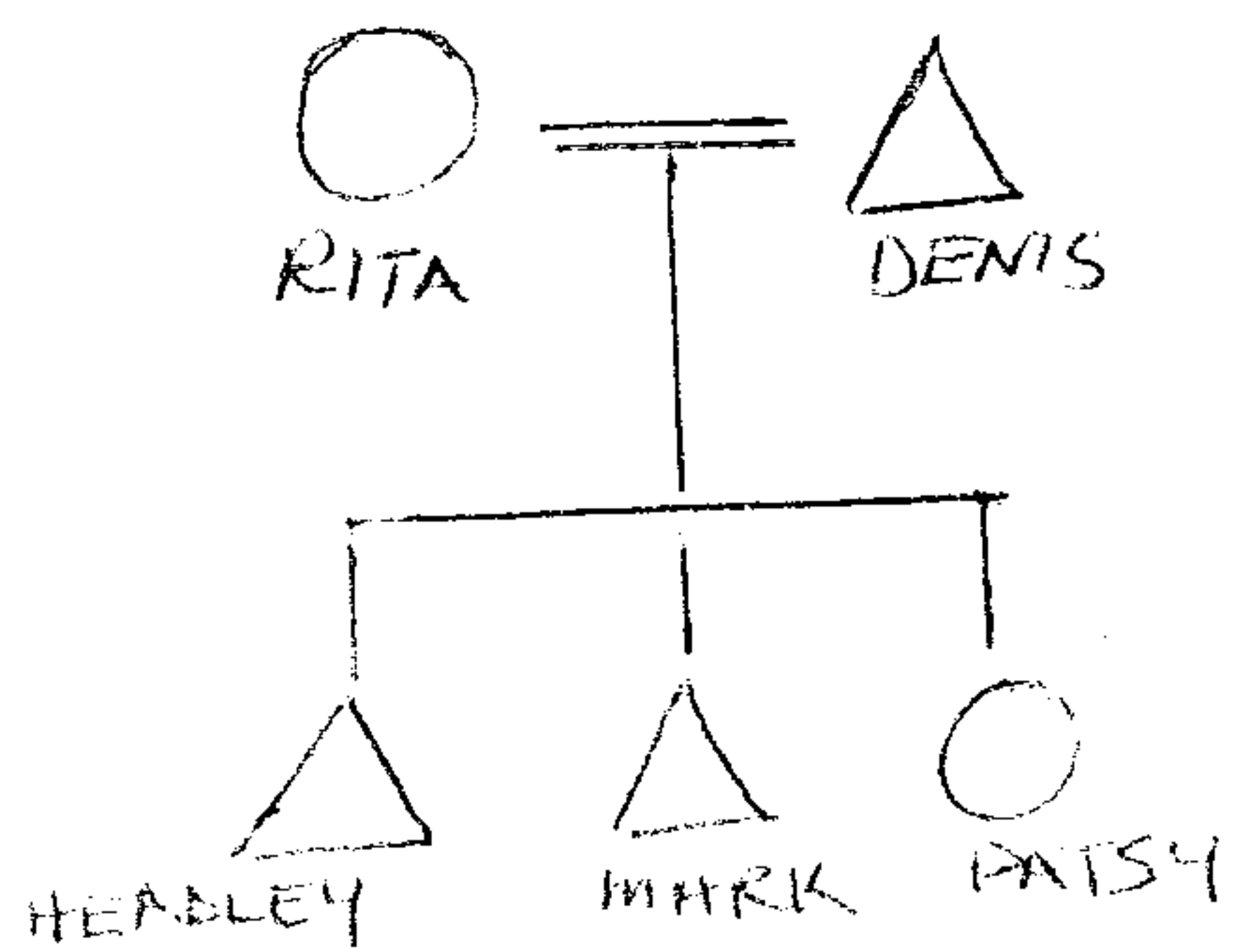


Figure 4:3 Gobi and Headley's extended family

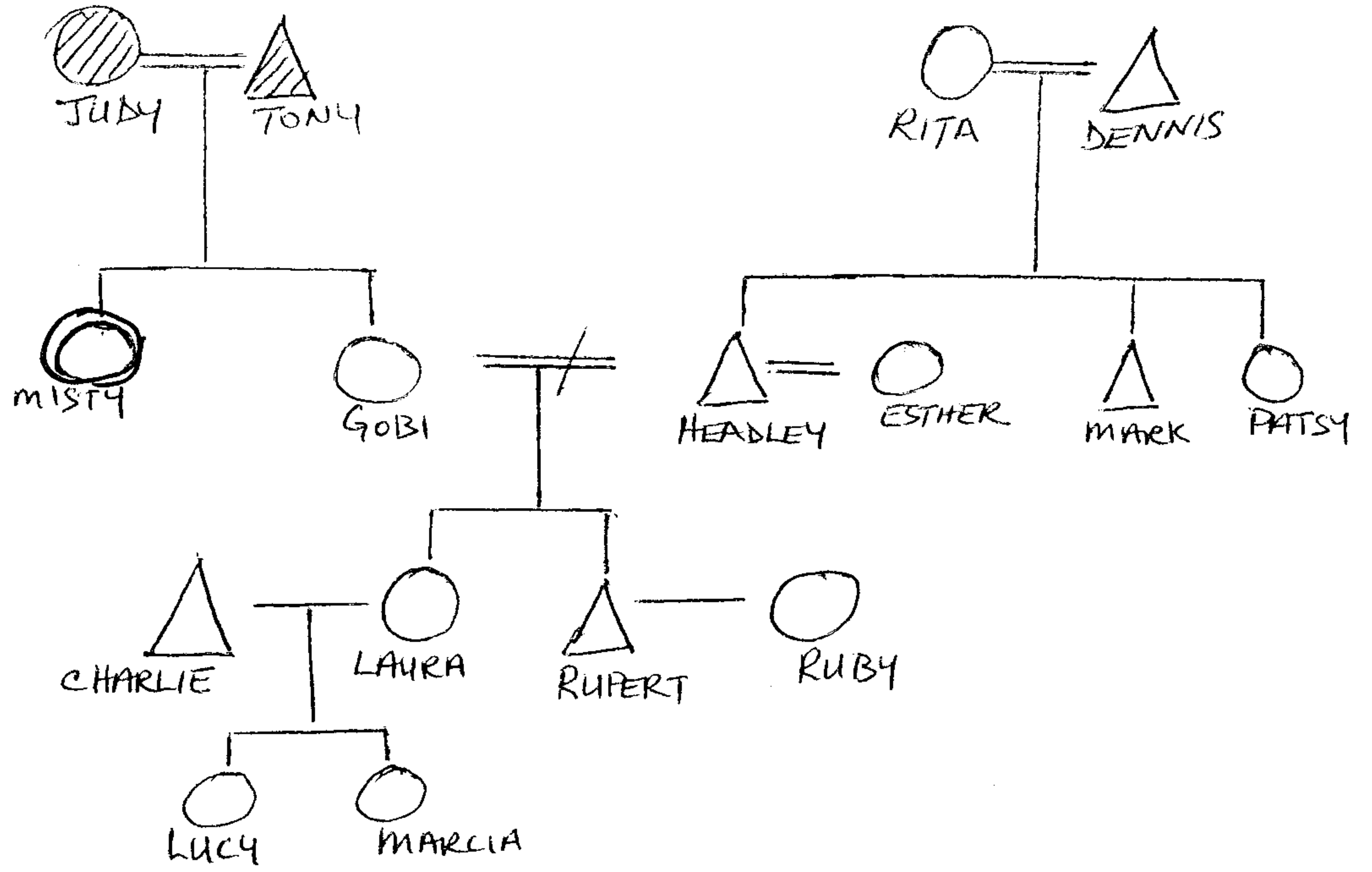


Figure 4:4 Randall's family

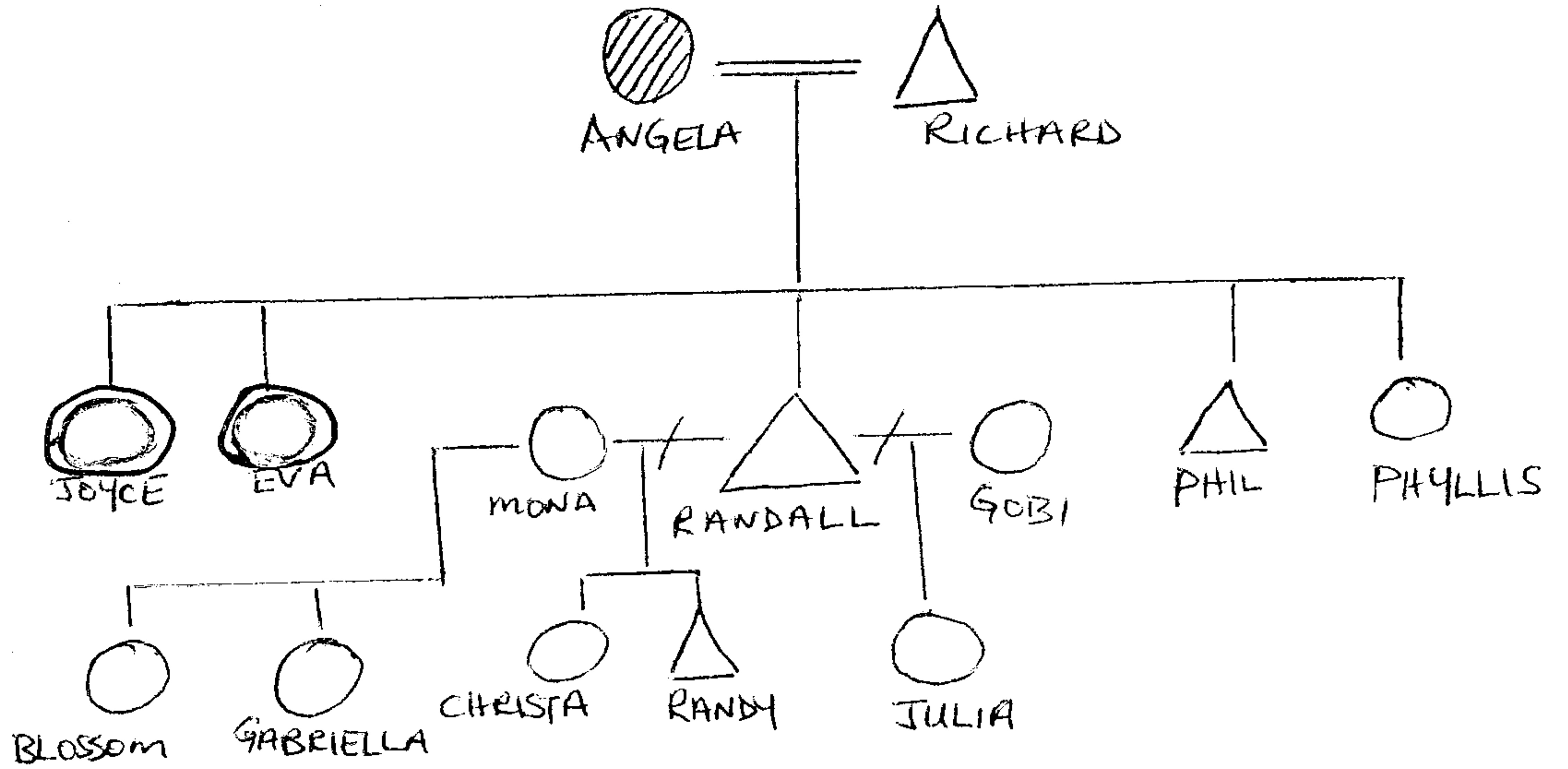


Figure 4:5 Courtney's family

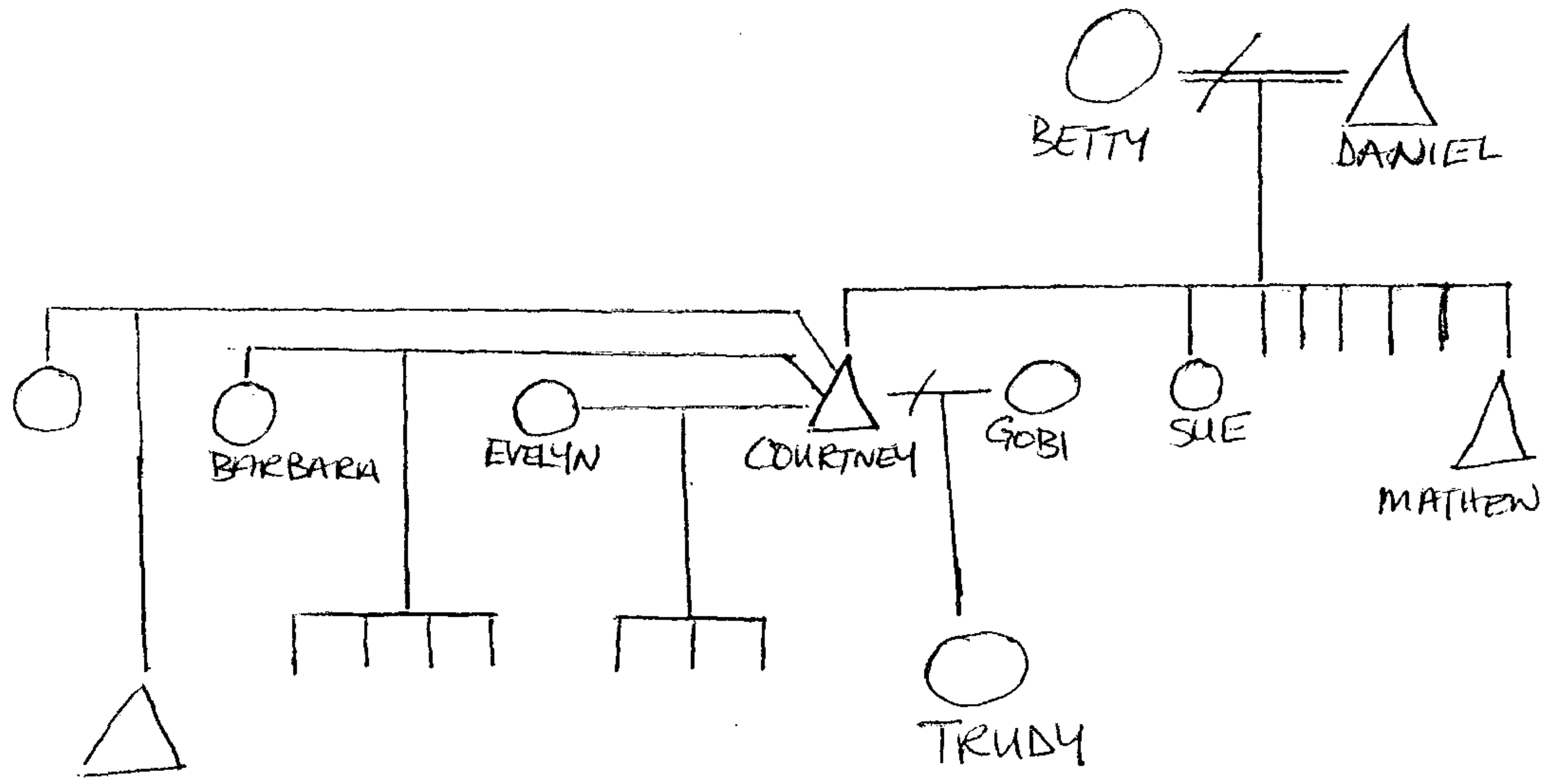
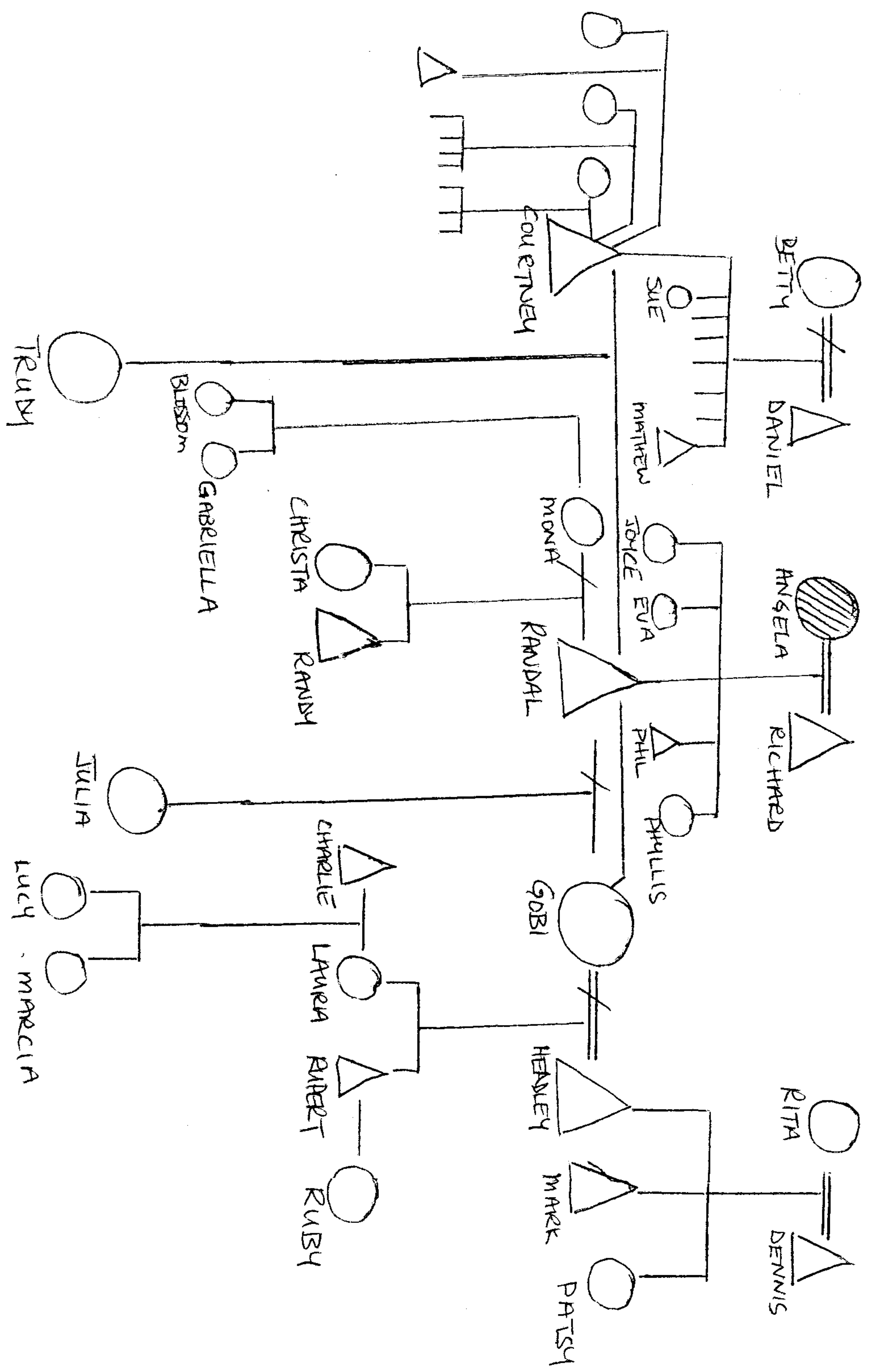


Figure 4:6 Gobi's extended family



Chapter 5

Kinship histories: The significance of family history in the creation and maintenance of kinship relations

In the preceding chapter I described how – like many families in the research set – the children in Gobi’s family are crucial to the creation and maintenance of kinship relations. I also showed how the women in Gobi’s family are the primary actors in maintaining relationships among the extended family, and they do this partly for the purpose of “keeping the children together”. This chapter explores further, but with another family, the central role of women in making kinship, but in different ways. Central to this chapter is the endurance of kinship relationships over time and space and during crises, and how obtaining life stories and kinship histories can be as essential as contemporary observation in reaching an understanding of these patterns. This chapter will again focus on one family, the extended family of Verna and Ken Morgan.

Very early on in my research, Verna and Ken promised to invite me to their next extended family gathering, for, as Ken described it, “a taste of our family”. Two months after being introduced to the couple and their children (and also Verna’s siblings Jude and Kate, and Kate’s daughter Ashley), Verna called one evening to invite me to a family dinner at a restaurant in central London. She gave me no detail other than the place, date, and time of the dinner. It was a grey November afternoon and being unfamiliar with that part of London, I gave myself ample time to get to the restaurant. Upon arrival I recognized Verna and Ken sitting at a large table with various other people, some of whom I had previously met at the couple’s home – such as their children and Verna’s siblings – and others whom I had never met before. I walked up to the table and was introduced to all by Verna, who also introduced everyone to me: “This is Eve, Ken’s mum, his father Tylor, his sister Maggie, his brother Junior and his wife Dolly and their son

Malek, his brother Lucas and his partner Lola, and my brother Jude and sister Kate, and the children you've met before. My father and Page should be arriving soon." Verna offered me a chair next to her, and although I was bursting with curiosity to find out what the occasion was about, I constrained myself from asking. However, Verna, who must have perceptively sensed my curiosity, explained to me that the occasion was a double birthday celebration of Ken's sister Maggie, who had turned forty, and of Verna's brother Jude, who had turned twenty-two.

It wasn't five minutes after I sat down, that there was a sudden hush followed by "gosh", as everyone at the table looked towards the door of the restaurant. My eyes followed their gazes to the two figures that walked towards our table, one of whom was indeed an image to behold. It was that of a very tall, dark, and impressive-looking man with dreadlocks draped down his shoulders, ending just above his waistline. On top of his long locks, he wore a dark brown leather cap, similar to a baseball cap, but with much more material, creating a fuller puffed look around the sides, with a band that girthed it all around his head. He also wore a very attractive brown leather bag slung diagonally across his shoulder, and as my eyes followed his attire downwards, I was struck by his open-toed, epic style sandals. As he walked towards our table, Verna stood up and embraced him. She then turned to us and said, "You all know my dad and Page". To me she said, "Elaine, this is my father Lionel and his partner Page." I acknowledged the introduction and introduced myself. As the celebrations continued, and it was clear that there would be no other late arrivals, I began to think about some of the other relatives of Ken and Verna's I had heard about, and wondered why they were not present. However, as this was not the occasion, to my mind, to be inquiring about the missing relatives, I spent the evening observing the personalities of the individuals around the table, and the relationship dynamics between members.

Verna's father Lionel stood out not only as a man with a very commanding presence, but he also had a big personality, and related to the majority of the others around the table with great ease. Ken's mother Eve (who had been divorced from Tylor for fifteen years) also demonstrated a great vivacity, and related with apparent ease to all. Ken's father Tylor on the contrary appeared uneasy, and after the final course was eaten, he kept looking at his watch, until eventually Eve turned and said to him, "You know Tylor, I'm sure that the others would understand if you had to leave". Tylor took that as permission to leave, and said goodbye to all. After he left, the party became even more alive with individuals telling various family stories. The most noteworthy moments in the storytelling, however, were the stories about Verna's mother Chantal when she was alive. Chantal had died four years earlier, but her memory was still fresh in the minds of everyone, and with each of these stories, the atmosphere seemed suddenly overcome with a sense of great sadness. Finally, Ken's mother Eve, who according to her, "had such a special relationship with Chantal, we knew each other's souls", reminded everyone that "Chantal might have passed on in the flesh, but her true spirit and her being is still living within us. I am sure she is right here now with us, and wouldn't want this gloom hanging about!" After this, everyone drank "to Chantal", and it felt as if the sadness had lifted.

At the end of the evening, I left with a multitude of questions going through my head, including the reasons for missing family members, the uneven relationship dynamics I observed among different members, and the significance of Chantal to the family relatedness. Among these questions, however, my overarching questions were: firstly, why was Verna's mother Chantal who was no longer physically alive, "still living within" this family in such a significant way? I wanted to find out more about the significance of Chantal's enduring influence in the making of kinship among this family. And secondly, what had been the effects of the many breakups and new unions on kinship relationships in Ken and Verna's family? It soon became clear to me that answers to these questions were not going to be gained through participant observation alone. I also needed to

explore through in-depth interviews, the family histories of both Ken and Verna's family.

I have already argued in Chapter 2 that although participant observation is a key element in fieldwork, people's oral narratives and explanations of their family histories expand our understanding of the practices we observe. Thus, oral narratives through formal and informal interviews and casual conversations were not only useful in providing background and social texture to their family relatedness in the present, but also effectively addressed the questions I pondered in my head as I left the family dinner. In particular, this approach brought Verna's absent mother Chantal out of obscurity through the many voices who share memories of her, and highlighted how their shared images of her have, to a large degree, informed their collective experiences in their relationships as kin.

Verna and Ken Morgan

Verna was born in Birmingham in the late 1960s from a white English mother Chantal, and a Jamaican father Lionel. Verna went to local primary and secondary schools. At seventeen she met Michael, and within their first four years together, she had her first two children Damian and Patti. Shortly after Patti was born, she and Michael moved their family to London. Soon after arriving in London, Verna enrolled in university to study for a bachelor degree in drama. Two years after enrolling she parted with Michael and moved into her own flat with her two children. Then during her first university year, Verna met Ken Morgan, who was enrolled in the same degree course.

Ken was born in the late 1960s in a small seaside town in Kent to English parents, Eve and Tylor. Ken attended primary and secondary schools in Kent. When he was nineteen, his parents separated, and he went to live near his sister Maggie in Brighton. At twenty-one, Ken left Brighton to study drama in London, and there

he met Verna. Approximately seven months after meeting her, he moved into her home to live with her and her two children, and two years later their son Jonah was born. At the time of my research, Ken and Verna had been living together as couple for nine years.

Verna and Ken's kinship history 1950s – 2003

Verna's family of origin (figure 5:2 at end of chapter)

Verna's mother Chantal died four years before my research was conducted, so that the family history told here comes from Verna and her siblings Jude and Kate. Some of the events they recounted are stories told to them by their mother and father. There are also stories from their father Lionel, and from Verna's husband Ken and his mother Eve.

Verna is the first of the three children of Chantal and Lionel Jones. Verna's mother Chantal was born in the mid 1940s in Birmingham, England, the last of seven children of Irish Catholic parents Myra and Simon MacNab who migrated from Ireland to Birmingham in the late 1920s (see figure 5:2at end of chapter). From the family story told to Verna and her siblings, Myra and Simon originated from two "warring families" of working-class backgrounds in Southern Ireland, and in the early 1920s when the couple came together in their late teens, they were discouraged from having a relationship by their parents.

Combined with the disapproval over their daughter's choice of partner and the lack of job opportunities at that time in Ireland, Myra's parents sent her and her sister to America "to start a new life", where jobs had been arranged for them in a soap factory. However, during the boat passage, Myra discovered that she was pregnant, and had to choose between landing in America where she would possibly go to the workhouse as an unmarried young mother, or going back to

Ireland to marry Simon. She chose the latter, and according to Verna and her siblings, “that was the end of her new life, and the beginning of a horrible life with Simon”.

Simon and Myra had their first two children in Ireland before migrating to Birmingham. In Birmingham Simon worked as a tailor and Myra worked as a cleaner at the university and in private homes. According to the family stories, Simon went to work during the week, and on the weekends he “would drink his pay before he came home”. He was never home very much, and would sometimes disappear for “days on end, here and there”, when the family had no idea of his whereabouts. Consequently, it was essentially Myra who raised their children. Both from the stories told to them by their mother and other relatives, and from their memories of their own experiences as little children, it seemed that Simon was “a difficult man who was an alcoholic, and who was violent and physically abusive to his wife and children”. Simon died from a heart attack when Verna was seven years old, and Myra died the next year from a stroke.

Although Myra took Chantal and her siblings to church three times every Sunday, Chantal “couldn’t wait to give it up”. According to Verna, Chantal was very vocal about “leaving behind her religion”. She felt “repressed by Catholicism” which in her view was about “guilt, and confession, and cleansing of the soul”. And she indeed never returned to church after she left home at the age of fifteen. Neither did she christen any of her children.

Verna’s father Lionel was born in Jamaica in the late 1940s, the first of two children of Boysie Jones and Evadney McKenzie. But Lionel has four other siblings, because his mother Evadney had five children altogether by different fathers (see figure 5:2). Although Evadney ran her own successful hairdressing business in Jamaica, during the early 1950s when post-war mass migration from the Caribbean to Britain was still in full swing due to Britain’s labour-thirsty economy, she took the chance to migrate to Birmingham, “to give her children an

even better life” and the opportunity, she thought, of a better education. Evadney left Lionel and three of his siblings, Jenny, Joyce, and Milo in the care of their extended family in Jamaica. Lionel’s father Boysie also migrated to Britain during the same period, but lived separately from Evadney. Soon after migrating, Evadney secured a job as a hairdresser, and within a couple of years bought her own home, and set up her own business on the ground floor of her house. She also had a another child, Manzie, within the first two years of settling in Birmingham. By the mid 1950s when Evadney saved up enough from her business, she sent for Lionel, Joyce, and Milo to live with her. Her first child Jenny stayed on with family in Jamaica, and later (in the 1960s) migrated to America.

The 1960’s – 1970s

Chantal meets Lionel

In 1960s Birmingham there was an Irish community in Sparkbrook and also an Afro-Caribbean community in Handsworth (Benson 2005:155; 216). Thus, it was not unlikely that Chantal and Lionel might come together as young adults, after they had already experienced mixed-sociability in their schools and elsewhere. Furthermore, by the time Chantal met Lionel, she already had “black” friends, and had been highly influenced by Jamaican reggae and ska, and American soul music, and would only attend dance clubs where these kinds of music were played. It was while she was at one such Birmingham nightclub one night in the late 1960s that she met Lionel who was working at the club as a singer. They developed a relationship and moved into a flat to live together as a couple. From Verna’s account, based on what her mother told her, Chantal’s father and her brothers were not pleased when she “hooked up with a black guy, so there was a bit of conflict when they first got together”. Moreover, Lionel’s lifestyle as a musician did not help to alleviate the disapproval among Chantal’s brothers.

According to Verna's brother Jude, "As a musician dad went off and left mum alone with us a lot. That was the problem that some of her brothers had, that he wasn't traditional, he didn't do what they did with their wives".

Indeed, all of Chantal's siblings became upwardly mobile from their poor Irish backgrounds. They all went to convent schools "where they were humiliated by nuns and priests", and except for Chantal who went to university as a mature adult, none of her siblings went on to higher education. However, they all secured regular jobs – some owned their own businesses – got married and bought their own homes.

Despite her family's disapproval, Chantal and Lionel continued their relationship. A year later Chantal became pregnant, and the next year she gave birth to Verna. Although Verna was a "planned and wanted child", immediately after her birth, Lionel "disappeared" and didn't return until six weeks later. From Verna's account, it appeared that Lionel was always "coming and going" throughout her childhood. She remembers that, "my dad was never a permanent fixture in our home. One day he would be home and everything would be fine, and the next day he would be gone, and we wouldn't see him for weeks".

Despite Lionel's unpredictable behaviour, according to what Chantal told her children, she wanted to be married legally to him. Hence, "she would ask him regularly, and he would regularly turn her down". However, Chantal never gave up "hope", and eventually she legally changed her last name from MacNab (her birth name) to Jones (his birth name), because as she told Verna, she "loved" and "adored" him and "wanted to marry him". In addition to her deep love for Lionel, the feminism of the 1960s and 1970s had not obliterated the assumptions about marriage and family and gender relations that the churches, the schools, and the media exemplified and continued to promulgate. Life was difficult for mothers and children from unmarried families (Benson, 2005:128). Hence, as Chantal told her children, having the same last name gave the impression that they were a

married family, and made life much easier when dealing with doctors, health visitors and school authorities. Thus, although Chantal rejected religion and religious attitudes and tried to be innovative in her behaviour and practices, her decision was also very much influenced by traditional attitudes.

Life continued with help and support of family and friends

Not only was Lionel not living with his new family on a constant or regular basis, but he also did not provide regular support for them. In order to survive, Chantal did cleaning and child-minding jobs while also receiving income support. Although members of her family of origin were not very pleased with her choice of partner, they had come to accept it. However, after Verna was born, their feelings of disapproval resurfaced when they saw the situation Chantal was in. As a Christian family, their views were, according to Verna, “you got married and through hell and high water, you stick to together”. Therefore, Chantal’s situation was “abominable”, and they couldn’t understand why Lionel was behaving the way he did. Yet despite their feelings, Chantal and her siblings remained in close contact, and they offered various forms of help and support to her and baby Verna.

Help and support from Chantal’s family of origin came mainly from her brothers. Due to advanced age, ill health, and lack of finance, her parents were incapable of providing any practical help. Verna remembers as a little girl, her uncles would come to her house pleading to Chantal to leave Lionel: “Why are you still with him? There are so many good white men out there who could marry you. Why do you stay with this man?” Before leaving, they would give her money to buy food and to help with the bills.

Chantal had also become closely aligned with Lionel’s family network, and according to her children, had become closer to Lionel’s family than he was

himself. In particular, she had developed close relationships with Lionel's mother Evadney and his siblings who lived in Britain, and there was mutual exchange of help and support between them. From what Chantal and Evadney told Verna, it appears that Evadney was so "disappointed" with her son's "unreliable" behaviour towards his new family that she offered Chantal money and said, "Go to America with the child. Lionel would never be there for you. He will never be anything for you. Here is some money, go and make a life for yourself". However, Chantal refused, stating, "I'll stick it out". Through her struggles, Chantal kept in close and regular contact with Lionel's family, whom she saw more often than she saw Lionel.

Verna remembers that as a little girl, her mother took her on the bus every other Saturday to visit her grandmother Evadney (they visited her maternal grandmother Myra on alternating Saturdays). Her two young uncles, Milo and Manzie who, at the time lived with "Big Gran" would meet them off the bus at the end of the road. Because Lionel often had extended visits with his mother, sometimes when Chantal and Verna hadn't seen him for a while, they would find him there when they visited. Verna recalls how she was both terrified and fascinated by her grandmother Evadney, who also commanded a lot of respect from her grown children. They all addressed her as "Big Gran".

These regular visits to Big Gran's had a lasting impact on Verna's and Chantal's lives. It was Big Gran who taught Chantal to speak Jamaican patois and to cook Jamaican food, and she always cooked a big meal when they went to visit her on Saturdays. On major holidays such as Easter and Christmas "she would put on a feast". It was due to Big Gran's influence that, according to Verna's brother Jude, "my mum could drop the old patois and cook a mean [really good] rice and peas".

After dinner Big Gran would retire to her bedroom until the evening when she got dressed to go to bingo. Meanwhile, she would have all that she needed brought to her by her children. She had a stick which she used to bang on the floor and her

children would run to her aid. When they visited her, Verna remembers how it was important that she went up straight away to see Big Gran:

She'd be laying on the bed, and she would have the little tight cap on her head, with a row of wigs on her dressing table. And she'd have her nightie on, and she'd be very big busted, long nails, long talons. She was glamorous. I mean, her dressing table was fascinating to me. There were thousands of bottles and potions, and then these wigs on heads, and I'd wonder which one would she put on tonight to go out.

She'd always do my hair, cause my mum didn't really know how to do my hair. And I dreaded it because of course, my mum just left my hair. And so she would just sit on the edge of the bed and I would have to sit on the floor, and she would literally lock my head between her knee, and she would get the ultra sheen [hair oil] and a comb, and all the tears. I was terrified! I wasn't allowed to cry, so I'd have to hold the tears in, and my head would be going like on fire. I mean my eyes would be like that [bulging her eyes, laughs]. But then she would plait my hair and then I would love it.

Big Gran also visited America and Jamaica twice a year, and Verna recalled Chantal taking her every time to see her grandmother off at the port or airport. Verna remembered fondly how she couldn't wait for her grandmother to return, since she always "came back with dresses. I'd have a whole new wardrobe, cologne, and hair stuff that you couldn't buy here then for my hair".

The relationships between Chantal and Lionel's siblings are also memorable. Verna recalled how before her father's sister, Jenny, emigrated to America with her family, there were lots of help exchanged in the form of babysitting between Jenny and Chantal. This practice also meant that Verna got to spend time playing and interacting with her cousins. After Jenny and her family moved to America, she and Chantal maintained contact by telephone. On Jenny and her family's yearly visits to England, she brought presents for Chantal and Verna. After Lionel's other sister Joyce had moved to Wales, Chantal took Verna to Wales every summer to spend the school holidays with aunt Joyce. Additionally, Lionel's two younger brothers, Milo and Manzie, paid frequent visits to Chantal's

home, offering help around the house, and taking Verna out to the films and to the park. Verna recalled how during the early years while Chantal couldn't drive, her father's brother Milo "would come every Friday evening in his little yellow Fiat and take us shopping".

The 1970s

In the 1970s, when Verna was eight and Chantal was pregnant with her second child with Lionel, Jude, they moved to Overflow, a new satellite community fifteen miles out of Birmingham near Tamworth. Part of the attraction for Chantal was that they moved from a high rise flat to a "little house with a garden". Chantal was very active here in building up the local residents association, the over sixty-five club, and a play scheme for young children, and made a new network of friends through these activities. With her closer friends, she had an "open door" policy just as she had with her family. Verna recalls two neighbouring couples, both known as "auntie" and "uncle", who had keys to their house, and with whom Chantal exchanged help and support, for example in looking after Verna.

For Verna, the immediate impact of the move was less happy. Moving from Birmingham to Overflow, she remembered "suddenly feeling different". Most of all at her primary school in Tamworth, where she was "the only black kid", and was taunted by other children as a "blackistani".

Jude is born

Five months after moving to Overflow, Chantal's second child, Jude was born. This baby was a "longed-for son", and Lionel, proud to have a son, began to come home and stay longer with his family. At this time Chantal would sometimes say

to Verna, “This [a son] might be what he needs to make a proper life for us”. But after a while, Lionel resumed his old pattern of coming home only intermittently. Chantal went to work for one of the construction companies as a secretary during the days, and at nights cleaned their offices. After Jude was born, she took up child-minding during the days with three, sometimes four other children, and at nights she cleaned offices. When she worked at nights, it was primarily little Verna who took care of Jude. However, the family friends on the estate were always there “keeping an eye” on them.

When Chantal began working two jobs, her financial situation improved, so that she no longer required financial help from her extended family back in Birmingham. However, she continued to maintain contacts with members on both sides of her family to the same degree. Although she didn’t drive, she took the children every weekend on the bus from the village into Birmingham to visit their relatives.

Understanding the relationships between the two sides of the family

Chantal maintained what Verna and Jude recalled as “quite equal” relationships between her family of origin and Lionel’s family of origin. However, forms of relatedness were kept separate between the two families. Although there were mutual contacts between both sets of family – for example, Easter, Christmas and school holidays were shared between the two families - in Verna and her siblings’ recollection, as children growing up, there was never any family gathering when both sets of families were present. With regards to forms of help and support exchanged between the families, despite Chantal’s brothers’ attitudes towards her choice of partner, they continued to provide help and support to her whenever it was necessary. However, this was more in the form of physical or practical help, whereas from Lionel’s family it was both practical and emotional help.

Verna and her siblings had their own explanations for the difference in family relatedness between the two sets of families. Jude believed that it was due to the differences in religious attitudes and social class backgrounds between the two sets of family. His father's family were non-religious and came from a lower-middleclass background, while his mother's family were "strict Catholics" and came from a "poor" background. So his father's family were "more relaxed" about Chantal's position, and therefore more able to provide emotional support to her. Verna agreed that her father's family was more accepting of Chantal's position, but thought that difference was not just due to contrasts in religion or social class. At an emotional level, because Chantal's brothers already disapproved of her life with Lionel, the "fact that she never knew when my dad was turning up, and no one knew where he was from one week to the next" made it more difficult for Chantal to explain her situation to her brothers. Lionel's family, on the other hand, had more sympathy: "They didn't judge her, and she could go to them for emotional support".

The differences in religion do indeed seem less important when it is remembered that, in practice, Chantal's father was not a model husband and father himself – an alcoholic who sometimes disappeared for days. On the other hand, in terms of transgenerational influence of kinship patterns, we must note that from Lionel's family, his mother Evadney who provided the most emotional support to Chantal, had five children by four men, two of whom she legally married. Her own experiences may have taught her to be more open to different forms of doing kinship. For although Evadney recognized that her son would never settle down with his family, she accepted Chantal's situation and welcomed her and her children, while providing practical and emotional support from the very beginning.

Crises in the family

Verna remembers the latter part of the 1970s as the period when one family crisis occurred after another. A year after moving to Overflow, Chantal's father Simon died. That same year Verna was told by a cousin that her parents were not legally married. For her, although her father Lionel did not live with them most of the time, because her mother took his last name, and his "things" were also in her mother's house, meant that they were a "married couple". She thought "this was the way most families lived":

He didn't live with us. He had his clothes, he had his hi-fi and his records at our house from as long back as I can remember. And all through my childhood, one day he'll be there, like he might come home from work on a Tuesday evening and be there, and be around, and it would be ... normal, and I'd go to bed and I'd say "see you in the morning". And I'd get up and he'd be gone, and I wouldn't see him, he wouldn't reappear for three weeks, then he'd just turn up.

Up until I was about seven, I thought everybody's family was like that. I thought all dads just came, stayed for a few days and went. I never knew it any differently. But I do recall, I have memories of my mum phoning around. She would phone my grandma, "Do you know where Lionel is?" She'd phone his brothers, "Do you know where Lionel is?" She would phone friends. I think this is why my grandma said, "Go, go to America and leave him". But to her [Chantal], he [Lionel] was still her man, they were still a couple.

Verna recalls being confused by the revelation that her parents were not legally married, and that "most families" did not have the same living arrangements as her family did. Moreover, even from an early age she thought, "I wasn't going to have a man like that".

The next year Verna's grandmother Myra (Chantal's mother) died, and Verna remembered the sorrow that resulted within her mother's family, particularly including her own grief, because she had become very close to her grandmother.

With Chantal's parents now both dead, Saturday visits to Big Gran (grandmother Evadney) became a weekly event (as opposed to alternating Saturdays). Now that Chantal worked long hours during the week, Saturday was her only day for the weekly shopping. So Big Gran's house became a familiar place where the children could stay and be taken care of by their grandmother and other visiting family members of Lionel's family while Chantal shopped. Then at the end of the 1970s, a year after Chantal's mother Myra had died, Big Gran (Evadney) became very ill, and was bedridden. "Terrified" as Verna was of Big Gran as a child, she remembers developing a very close relationship with her during her illness. Thus, instead of the "painful" experience she remembers of Evadney combing and plaiting her hair, it was Verna who later combed Evadney's hair, read the Bible to her and told her stories.

Evadney died the following year bringing great grief to all her children, but as Verna recalls, to her mother Chantal most of all. Chantal, who at the time had been pregnant with her third child by Lionel, went into deep mourning for Evadney, and few days after Evadney was buried, she went into premature labour and delivered baby Kate. According to Verna, Kate's birth was a memorable event that "replaced the loss of Big Gran with joy in a short space of time". Thus, despite the family losses of this period, the 1970s ended with a new addition to the family.

The 1980s: New discoveries and awakenings

There were more family crises in the 1980s, beginning with the appearance of Lionel's father Boysie and his integration into the family, followed by the parting of Chantal and Lionel, and ending with Chantal going to study at university. Soon after 1980 while Lionel and Chantal were still a couple, Lionel's father Boysie made contact with him for the first time. Boysie had migrated to England from Jamaica, but came separately from Lionel's mother Evadney, and they had

never lived together as a couple. From Lionel's account, it appeared that when Boysie migrated to Britain, he never contacted Evadney nor any of his sons (he had Lionel and Milo by Evadney in Jamaica. See figure 5:2). It appeared that part of Boysie's objective for contacting his son was to "make up for lost time". But according to Lionel:

It was too late by then to be a son to him, because all these years I knew he existed, but as far as I am concerned, he could have been any of the old men I see on the street of [Birmingham] that I pass by everyday. I don't know the man, and I have no feelings for him, neither love nor hate.

Furthermore, by the time they made contact, Boysie had become "very closed up", and evaded any questions asked in attempt to find out about his life.

Lionel himself pointed to his upbringing and the lack of a father as a model in his life, as being partially responsible for his own behaviour towards Chantal and his children. However, he also pointed out that although he was not living with his family on a regularly basis, he continued to be active in their lives. Indeed, Verna does substantiate his claim, stating that he was a significant influence in her life, especially in dealing with issues of racial abuse towards her and her siblings, and in particular he was very involved in her education. Hence, given that Lionel kept in contact with his own children and was active in their lives, he saw the situation as different with his father. He therefore had difficulty accommodating his father as a member of his family.

With Verna's three other grandparents gone, and her father unwilling to accept Boysie as a family member, what avenue did Boysie, the only remaining grandparent have into Verna's family? According to Verna, it was her mother Chantal, the main person maintaining the link with Lionel's family, who welcomed Boysie as another important link for her children. Chantal kept in frequent contact with Boysie, who at this point was living alone, and took the three children to see him regularly.

Approximately two years after Boysie was introduced to the family, he had a heart attack. After he was released from hospital, he needed care, and with no other family member willing to support him, Chantal took him in to live with her and the three children. Six months after Boysie was living with the family, it became clear to Chantal that he needed more care and support than she could offer. Consequently, she found him sheltered accommodation, while continuing to visit him very regularly, with and without the children. In addition, on high holidays such as Easter and Christmas, and on the children's birthdays, Chantal brought Boysie to her house to participate in the celebrations.

The parting of a long and complex couple-relationship

Not long after the introduction of Lionel's father Boysie to the family it was revealed to Chantal and the children that Lionel was involved in another "significant" relationship with a woman called Sandra. Chantal and Lionel parted as a couple, and although Chantal found the parting "painful" the couple remained friends. Chantal also maintained her relationships with Lionel's siblings and his father Boysie.

Chantal goes to university

Soon after parting from Lionel in the mid 1980s Chantal enrolled in university to study a Bachelors degree. It is not surprising that given her own circumstances, she was drawn to social work, specializing in Child Protection. With Verna now in her mid teens, she was able to give more childcare help to her two younger siblings while her mother studied, and Chantal completed her degree within five years. Chantal soon secured a job working with single mothers in Birmingham, became better off financially, and bought a car.

Verna leaves home

In the late 1980s when Verna was in her late teens, she met her first partner Michael, an actor, (see figure 5:3), while she was working for an acting company in Birmingham, running drama workshops. She became pregnant a year after they met, and because she “always felt different as a black person living in Overflow”, when Michael suggested that they moved to Leeds, she accepted, and moved out of her mother’s home to live with him. A few months before she gave birth to her first child Damian, her grandfather Boysie died. So again, as with the end of the last decade, the loss of one relative was replaced by the addition of another. After Damian’s birth, Verna moved back home where she felt “safe”, to live with Chantal for a while. She said that Chantal gave her all the emotional and practical help and support she needed, and taught her everything she needed to know about being a mother. When she felt strong and comfortable enough, she moved back into her home with her partner. Despite Chantal’s busy schedule with work and her two younger children, she continued to visit Verna regularly, offering various forms of help and support to her and the new baby.

The 1990s: More uprooting, ruptures, family additions, and a major crisis

After the birth of their first child, Verna and Michael’s relationship became “very volatile”, and she moved back to live with her mother in Birmingham due to Michael’s “violent behaviour”. However, shortly after she moved she realized that she was pregnant with their second child, and upon telling Michael, he came to Birmingham and persuaded her to return to Leeds. At the time, Michael’s job as an actor was taking him regularly to London, and after their second child Patti was born, they decided to leave Leeds for London.

In London Verna enrolled in university for her undergraduate degree in Drama. With all her family left behind in Birmingham, and no supportive network in

London, life became very challenging for the young family. Geographical distance meant that physical contact with other family members was severely limited. However, her mother Chantal found ways to overcome the distance. She called Verna daily and visited her once every month for a few days, and every half term and holidays, bringing food and other gifts. Chantal also took Verna's children to Birmingham on occasions to see other relatives, and also to allow Verna some child-free time to study. Whenever Verna's children became ill, Chantal, "at the drop of a hat" drove to London to care for them. Chantal also insisted on maintaining the relationships between Verna and her siblings despite distance. Hence, whenever she spoke to Verna on the telephone, she made a point of engaging the siblings in conversation with each other. She also brought them with her on her trips to London to visit Verna.

Contacts between Verna and other family members were not as frequent as with her mother and her siblings. Her father Lionel and his siblings telephoned and visited her periodically, and often sent birthday and Christmas presents for her children. Letters with photos were also regularly exchanged between Verna and her paternal relatives. Among Verna's maternal relatives, there were no such exchanges, and contacts only occurred whenever Verna returned to Birmingham. However, because Chantal maintained contact with her family of origin, Verna was always informed about these family members on her maternal side. For example, when her uncle Delroy returned to live in Ireland, it was Chantal who told Verna, and when her uncles Errol and Keith, and her aunt Tiny died, it was Chantal who informed her so that she could return to Birmingham for the funerals.

Two years after moving to London Verna and Michael's relationship had, in her words, "become intolerable". Michael was born into a Jehovah's Witness family and was non-practicing when they lived together at first, but had rejoined the church when the couple moved to London. According to Verna, he began to impose his religious views on her, and when she wouldn't accept them, it became

obvious that their relationship would not survive. The couple parted but maintained “a friendly relationship for the sake of the children”, and also shared in the responsibilities of bringing them up.

Verna meets Ken

While Verna was in the process of parting with Michael, she met Ken at the college where they were enrolled in the same Drama degree, and after parting from Michael, she and Ken developed an intimate relationship. After six months of courtship, Ken moved into Verna’s home with her and her two children. Over the next few months Ken met various members of Verna’s relatives including her mother Chantal, her father Lionel, her uncle Milo (Lionel’s brother), a cousin, and her brother Jude and sister Kate as they dropped in periodically to visit. Although members of Ken’s family had become informed within months of his moving in with Verna, none of them had met her and her family until Ken and Verna graduated a couple years later.

The two families meet

It was now summer 1995, and also graduation day for Ken and Verna, and they had each been given two tickets by the college to invite members of their respective families. Ken invited his mother Eve and his father Tylor (who had been separated for several years). For Verna’s family, two tickets proved insufficient, and her whole family showed up. Ken’s mother Eve vividly recalled this first meeting at the graduation event:

That was a bit of a shock. We [she and Tylor] hadn’t divorced yet, but we were well and truly separated... but there was no problem about that. The problem came when we met up with Ken in his gown, and he’s saying “Verna is over there, I want you to meet Verna, but she is waiting for her family”.

The college normally says two tickets, so Ken had two tickets, and he gave them to Tylor and me. Of course Verna's family don't take notice of tickets, so eventually he said, 'Her family has arrived, now come and meet them'. So there is this group of people, and he said, 'This is Verna', and Verna came forward and said, 'Oh, I really wanted to meet you'. And she just smiled, and when Verna smiled I just completely melted of course, and that was it.

There was her father with his dreadlocks, there was Jude her brother, and her sister Kate, and there was Verna and her two little black children, and her white mother who is Chantal. So that was one hell of a thing for us to take in right there on the spot. There were just so many people... it was such a hoot really.

We had to go in, and when we came out of the ceremony, we all gathered again. They got picnics and Tylor and I wondered around. At one point Tylor was standing talking to Lionel [Verna's father]. Now Lionel is a fine figure of a man. He is a very handsome guy. And after that Tylor and I went off to have a cup of tea, and he said to me, he said to Lionel, 'Where do you come from?' And Lionel replied, 'Birmingham'. 'Ah Birmingham, right', Tylor replied. This is Tylor talking to Verna's father. Anyway, he said 'Well I don't think much, I think Ken's got very peculiar taste, that's all I can say'. So I said 'Well, you can't comment on how other people are attracted. I think you've got very peculiar taste' [implying his choice of partner]. So that sort of shut him up on that.

After that first meeting, Eve recalled feeling "strange" about the situation and its implications. Therefore, she decided that if indeed this was going to be a "serious relationship" between Ken and Verna, and one in which she would be included, she needed to explain her background and her concerns to both Ken and Verna. She took the occasion to explain her position when Ken and Verna invited her to their house for supper one evening shortly after their graduation. She explained her concern regarding Ken's motivation towards the relationship, wondering whether "the fact that Verna had two mixed-race children gave a sort of exotic dimension", which in her opinion would have been "the wrong reason". She tried to make Ken aware of the responsibilities involved in "taking on a woman with children". That he couldn't "just walk away" from the relationship like he had done in his past relationship when conflict arose, but this time he had to "stick at it" and try harder to resolve whatever conflicts may arise.

Eve's concerns were not only based on Ken and Verna's relationship, but also because she was already trying to cope with her own ambivalence over the changed environment she had encountered on her return to live in London. Let us briefly review Eve's kinship history in order to gain some insight into her feelings from her own narrative.

Ken's mother Eve, a former secretary, was born in the suburbs of London in the mid 1930s. Eve was the only child of her parents Veronica, a domestic worker and child minder, and Robert, an orderly in a mental hospital (see figure 5:1). As a girl, Eve recalled how her "working-class" mother had "middle-class aspirations to get respectability". Eve's mother had worked as a domestic worker for rich families, had "picked up all the trappings" she observed among the families she worked for, and tried to "pass them on" to Eve. Veronica read the same books to Eve that were read to the children she cared for, sent Eve to ballet and elocution lessons, and discouraged her from certain behaviour such as standing on street corners talking to her friends. She also occasionally took her to shows and classical music concerts. In 1948 when Eve was eleven, Veronica sent her to a Grammar school for girls that had only been recently converted from a private fee-paying school to a state school, that according to Eve, "it still had certain aura of the girl's private school".

When Eve was sixteen her father retired from work with ill health, and her mother suggested she leave school to help support the family. Since Eve hadn't been enjoying school, she "didn't mind in the least". So she commuted to and from London for secretarial work in a large chemical company. There she learned typing and shorthand. After a year on this job, she left the company to work for an architectural practice. Here she met her husband Tylor. They married in the late 1950s and moved for eight years to London, during which time they had their first two children Maggie and Junior (figure 5:1). They had enough money from Tylor's salary as an architect to buy their own house.

The mass migration from the Caribbean to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s was already affecting their neighbourhood of south London. For Eve, who “only saw black people in the pictures on screen, and in books of African tribes where there were always the dirty little boys because they had no clothes on”, living in London among Caribbean people was a “strange” experience. She and her husband decided to relocate their family to a seaside town in Kent. Their last two children Lucas and Ken were born in Kent. Eve recalled her feelings of ambivalence at the time:

We were living in [south London] in the fifties, and quite suddenly, there was a lot of immigration, and it started impinging on us. West Indian families started moving in, and of course immediately the property value started going down, so you worry a bit about that. And you could tell their houses by the colour that they painted their walls. And they used to sit out on their front door steps, and use their front garden, which was very un-English and the men never took their hats off, and they were always around in these hats, and they were very sinister...I was quite nervous. Strange, not knowing how to behave, nervous...

I didn't know about my husband, I think both of us had every wish not to get involved in colour prejudice. We thought Enoch Powell was dreadful. But most of the black people that I saw around me, we didn't have things in common. So I never met any black people through normal, you know, doing the same things as I did, having the same interests as I have. It just didn't happen...

And then we moved down to Kent, and when we moved down there, it was like going back in time. And we did do some thought questioning on this, because we could see that this immigration was going to change areas of London, and we felt we were running away from it. But really why we moved was not because of that, it's because we couldn't stand the noise from the neighbours at the back, and the neighbours at the front. It was a very small garden, and it was very noisy, and we just got seduced by this house by the sea where there was no neighbours in front, no neighbours at the back [laughter]...But we did talk about it, and did have this feeling that we were going deliberately, moving away from where there was gonna be problems.

Certainly it was quite a heavy influx. But when I moved back twenty-odd years later, I was very surprised to see how in fact, [where they lived in south London] didn't become like Brixton... White people were at that

time afraid of becoming a minority in their patch. That's what the fear is now [where Asians have moved into white areas]...And I'm afraid there was a lot of fear about the value of your house going down, because these people that behave in this strange way are moving in. There was a lot of fear.

In the late 1980's Tylor separated from Eve. By the early 1990s when all their children left home, Eve returned to live in London. She secured a job as a sales person for a chemical trading company, and studied painting in her spare time.

When Eve returned to live in London over twenty years later, she found that the Caribbean population had spread even more to various parts of the city, and she also had feelings of ambiguities about the situation then:

When I moved back to London, having had twenty-two years in Kent ...I'd been living in this very small town, very conservative in every way, and you get used to that. And when I moved back to north-east London, there was this huge black presence. This is before Verna and I met each other and everything. So coming back and getting used to living alone for the first time...when I moved up here...was the first time I actually lived alone in a house.... The culture was very different. So I was going home and travelling a lot, and there were all these black young men who insist on wearing black, and black baseball cap, and hanging around in groups, and I was uncomfortable, and I was questioning myself a lot about why I felt uncomfortable.

I think that whether I noticed the black groups more than the white groups, or whether there were more black groups than there were white groups of youngsters around at nights, I don't know. But I worried about the fact that I found them sinister. And it's the body language thing, and it's a getting used to a new place thing. And I hadn't worked all that out, and then I'm confronted with Verna. So I told her, I can remember saying that I come from a white middle-class background, and that's been my experience up to now. And I don't think that I am prejudiced, but I am strange with it. So I thought the only way we were going to be able to build on it all is if I was completely honest with her.

Verna and Ken recounted the story told by Eve, and according to Verna, that was the beginning of a very "open and honest relationship". Over the next sixteen months, Verna's siblings, Jude and Kate, and their mother Chantal were

introduced to the rest of Ken's family. However, the extended family dynamics and relationships really began to develop after Verna became pregnant and she and Ken had their first child, Jonah.

Baby Jonah is born

Jonah was born to Verna and Ken in 1996. Although neither Verna nor Ken had regular jobs, they were both working as freelance drama teachers in schools and small theatre companies. During the week the couple organized their schedule so that at least one parent was home with the children. On Saturdays, however, they both worked with a drama group, and while they hired a sitter for the two older children, Eve cared for baby Jonah. According to Eve, she and Jonah developed a "very special relationship" from this very early age, and she quickly embraced grandmotherhood in a manner she never thought was possible. She spoke of how becoming a grandmother of little Jonah brought a new experience to her life, and made her more comfortable living in London again:

I remember pushing Jonah around south London, which is pretty black, and feeling that it's like having a badge. That I was let in somewhere.... I felt really tough, because black women would look in the pram and they would talk to me. So I thought "Oh, that's nice"! I felt that knowing that family made me a lot more comfortable with all the other black people that I've met since....I am really proud of the fact that I can be part of a black family, that I have this mixture. Yeah, it's something I'm proud of. And I always love to show my photographs of Jonah first, and watch people's faces. Sometimes it can be a bit naughty [laughter]. The experience of being part of a mixed family has really helped me to feel much more relaxed about everybody that lives in the city.

However, this "special relationship" that Eve had developed with her grandson was about to be threatened, she felt, when nine months after his birth Verna's mother Chantal moved from the Midlands to settle in London.

Chantal moves to London

Chantal's new profession as a social worker gave her the flexibility to move if she wished. A few months after Jonah's birth, Chantal applied for, and got a job with Greenwich Social Services. During the first few months while she searched for a place to live in London, she lived with Verna and Ken during the week, and commuted back to the Midlands on weekends. Finally, nine months after Jonah's birth, she secured a two-bedroom flat in Greenwich and gave up her house in Overflow to live in London near her daughter and grandchildren.

Her daughter Kate who was in her late teens had a baby, and was living at home with Chantal, so Kate and baby Ashley also moved into the Greenwich flat with Chantal. Her son Jude had left Overflow when he finished high school and moved back to Birmingham to live with his father Lionel and Lionel's partner Page (see figure 5:3), because as he explained, living in an area which was predominantly "white", "I just didn't fit in". He moved to Birmingham hoping he would feel more comfortable where he was less visible.

Once Chantal moved to London, Verna saw her mother and her sister weekly, and she spoke to her mother daily. "My mum would be the first person I would ring for everything. If I needed to know how to cook something, I would call her. If I needed to talk about the children, about my relationship, I would call her, and she was always there. She became, in a way, my best friend". Additionally, Verna's partner Ken who thought Chantal was "warm, very friendly, made you feel at ease, and non-judgmental", grew even closer to her once she moved to London. However, Chantal's sudden presence in Verna's nuclear family life was less welcomed by Eve.

Now that Verna's mother and siblings were living closer and could offer all kinds of help and support for her and her family, what did this mean for the relationship that Ken's mother Eve had developed with the couple, and even more, the close

grandparental bond that she and Jonah had formed? With Chantal now on the scene, and wanting to be active in her grandson's life, Eve remembers that she felt "jealous and insecure" on two levels. She was already jealous of the relationship between her son and Chantal even before Jonah was born. According to her:

Ken adored her [Chantal], and I kept hearing how marvelous she [Chantal] was when she first moved down to live with them while she was finding a place of her own. I felt a bit insecure thinking that he [Ken] likes her more than me. Another thing, pictures of Chantal were all over the fridge, [while] of me there would [only] be the odd one. Our mother-in-law used to say, 'mothers of daughters gain sons, but mothers of sons lose their sons'. I haven't really felt that, but there was a little feeling.

Eve also felt insecurities relating to her grandson. Chantal's active presence in Jonah's life meant that adaptations had to be made in order to accommodate the two grandmothers into the life of their grandson. Eve, who was the person caring for Jonah every Saturday until Chantal moved to London, no longer had this weekly "advantage" according to her, because Chantal had taken her place.

Concerned about losing the bond that she had developed with her grandson, Eve negotiated with Verna and Chantal to have Jonah on alternating Saturdays. This strategy worked not only for Eve in maintaining her relationship with her grandson, but eventually in the long run it helped the two grandmothers to develop a very close relationship. They jointly organized weekends with all the grandchildren (Verna's and her sister Kate's children). The two grandmothers also met together independently of other family members. They attended the theatre, went out for supper, and sometimes just visited each other's homes for tea. They talked about everything from their family histories to their current life stories. According to Eve, although there were differences in the "cultural" things they appreciated – she loved the theatre and plays and Chantal did not – in terms of "life, the universe and other things, we had a lot in common, and we could speak together as women". They became so close, that as Eve put it, "we felt as if we knew each other's souls".

Jude joins the family in London

Jude was disappointed by his move to Birmingham, where despite the larger Caribbean population there, he never felt totally comfortable, believing that neither “black people” nor “white people” accepted him. Thus, he soon followed his mother, moving to London a year after Chantal and Kate, and lived with Verna and Ken for six months until he found a job and could rent a room somewhere else.

Relating to the wider family

Although Chantal and her children were now all living in London, she continued to maintain active relationships with all her extended family in the Midlands. Her siblings and their families did not come to visit her in London, but she drove up monthly to see them all, often bringing her grandchildren, and whichever of her children was available. In between she kept in touch by phone, including with her brother Delroy and his family back in Ireland. Chantal also exchanged regular phone calls with her ex-partner Lionel and his new partner Page, Lionel’s siblings in the Midlands, his sister Jenny in America, and his sister Joyce in Wales. But in contrast with her own family of origin, Lionel and members of his family also visited Chantal and her children and grandchildren in London. Moreover, family get-togethers with Lionel’s family in the Midlands were more regular, and included birthdays. Ken remembers attending Lionel’s birthday party as an occasion to remember, one that would be “impossible and unheard of” in his family of origin:

You see, unlike my family where people don’t mix after separation and divorce, in Verna’s family they keep all their people even after they separate, and there’s no long-term bitterness, and they just all get on. That really fascinates me to see how their family operate. And her [Verna’s] parents seem to be the key players in keeping the family connections going. For example, Lionel [Verna’s father] is now with a woman, Page,

whom Verna and her mum and all the family get on with very well. We [he and Verna] like her very much, and she runs a restaurant with Lionel. But then there is also this other woman Sandra, who was the woman he was involved with when he and Chantal separated. Interestingly, this woman has also remained on the scene as an important person in his life. And of course you know that although he and Chantal [Verna's mother] separated years ago, he is still a major part of this family. Verna thinks her parents never stopped loving each other really.

So like I said he has this restaurant in Birmingham with Page, and we all went up. There was Verna's mum Chantal, and me, Verna, and the children. There was Verna's sister and her brother, and her sister's little girl Ashley. We were the set from London. Among the set from Birmingham were his [Lionel's] two brothers Milo and Manzie and their children. But most interestingly, for me anyway, was that there was also this other woman Sandra, this is the woman I told you that caused the separation between him and Chantal. So there were these three women in his life, all there to celebrate his birthday, and having a wonderful time between them. This would have been inconceivable in my family.

There were also family get-togethers in London, at which not only Ken and Verna's extended family, but also members of his family of origin often participated. One particular example is the joint birthday of Ken's sister Maggie and Verna's brother Jude, described at the beginning of the chapter.

Chantal remained her children's main practical and emotional support base. They all had keys to each other's homes, and would spontaneously "drop in" without phoning first. Ken's mother Eve had never experienced this kind of closeness among her own kin, and on the contrary had always encouraged a certain amount of "space and independence" around family relationships. Even when she gets the spontaneous urge to visit her children and grandchildren, she might call and "invite" herself, but out of "courtesy" she would not "just drop in". She found the new experience of such closeness "claustrophobic". Eve compared her relationship with her children to that between Chantal and her children, and according to her, "there was a much greater intimacy between Chantal and her children than I had with my children. Everything was very, very close with them. When they weren't together, they were on the phone all the time, and they always

had this habit of saying, 'love you' when they stopped". By contrast, communication between her and her grown children only occurred once or twice monthly.

However, within a short time, Eve had been influenced by Chantal's relationship with her children. Furthermore, having been influenced by his own observations of Verna's family, Ken once asked his mother why it was that "we never say we love each other in our family?" Eve says she has changed her views and she now tells all her children that she loves them.

Major crisis in the family

It was now the end of the 1990s, and Verna and Ken's extended family were experiencing what seemed to them the worst crisis of all. Two years after settling in London, Chantal became terminally ill. Although close and supportive relationships had by now developed between Ken, his mother Eve, and Verna's family of origin, both Verna and Eve said that Chantal's illness brought the family even closer together. While Chantal was ill at home, Verna and her two siblings Jude and Kate took turns nursing her, while Eve visited her regularly. Lionel (Chantal's ex-partner and father of her children) and other Birmingham family members also visited her regularly. Kate recalled that it was Lionel who made Chantal laugh the most: "Dad just seemed to bring this magic to her whenever he would visit". It was also during this period that Ken and Verna's brother Jude began to develop a "special brotherly relationship" (according to Ken). During Chantal's illness, they spent many hours together helping her, after which he and Jude often went off for a drink together, sharing their personal life stories, and having "lots of laughs together".

Seven months after Chantal took ill, she died. The events surrounding her death and her funeral remain a remarkable memory for all the family. Although Chantal

had kept relationships going between her own and her ex-partner Lionel's families of origin, it was the first time that these two sets of family gathered together in a co-operative manner. Relationships between the two families had never flourished because Chantal's birth family felt an ongoing disapproval of Lionel. Her three brothers that were still alive - including her brother in Ireland - and their families all attended her funeral (see figure 5:2). This was also the first occasion where the majority of Verna's family of origin came together with her affinal family. Eve remembered the period of Chantal's illness and eventual death as a period that "really brought us together as a family. And the preparations for her funeral was something that gelled it all". She gave a very moving account of Chantal's funeral, and how the various strands of extended family members worked co-operatively to make the event a memorable one:

Chantal's funeral was this magnificent event which was absolutely extraordinary. I mean they are an extraordinary family. And it was one of the most incredible days that I will always, always remember. Dolly [Eve's daughter-in-law] and I agreed we'd get there and make sandwiches, and this is even not consulting much with Verna, cause they were dealing with their mother having died. And then Maggie [Eve's daughter] turned up. Maggie is very practical, and she worked out that she would stay behind and look after all the little children that were there.

And then when we went back to the house, and the funeral itself was fantastic, really moving, but a celebration as well. Wonderful. The girls [Verna and her sister Kate] carried the coffin with Chantal's brothers...Lionel [Verna's father] was too emotional to do it, but Jude [Verna's brother] did....And when we got back to the house, my family just automatically went into service mode and doing all the making of the tea and the pouring of the drinks. This was Verna and Ken's house, and Lionel was there. It really shattered him. I can remember him [Lionel] sitting down in the corner and just looking open-mouthed at this event. Because Chantal's family were all shattered really by it. They couldn't do all the stuff. So my family, they just kicked in! We didn't plan it before hand or anything, and they just all did. It was just wonderful really.

For me, after spending extensive hours with Verna and her siblings and hearing the endless stories about their two sets of family, I too agree that for the two separate family units to come together in such a cooperative way in the end, is

indeed “wonderful”. I see this as a culmination of Chantal’s hard work and the influence she has had on her families, so that whether or not her disapproving brothers had revised their opinion of her life choice over the years, in the end, they could join with other members of her extended family to mourn and celebrate the passing of their “baby” sister. Thus, her funeral could be interpreted as a final reward for Chantal, for the persistent effort she put into the accommodative, adaptive, and innovative ways in which she did kinship, despite the conflicts and struggles she experienced in the process.

Verna and Ken marry

By 2000, with Ken working as a community worker at a Primary school and Verna working as a learning mentor at the same school, their financial position improved. They moved out of their rented flat and into their first bought home. Seven years after coming together as a couple and living as a family, and two years after Chantal’s death, they decided to become legally married. They invited as many of their relatives as possible from both sides of their families. Following Chantal’s funeral, their wedding celebration brought together for the second time, members from both their families of origin. Eve described the wedding as another cross-generational and cross-cultural experience which she was “delighted to be a part of”:

She [Verna] dressed the boys in long black trousers, and black waistcoats and white shirts. But it was quite strange for me to see my grandson looking so much like a West Indian child. I didn’t mind, but I just sort of thought, “Oh yes”. It was just such a wonderful occasion with Jonah standing there holding the rings. I mean he was happy doing that.

Oh, yeah, and the food afterwards! There were all kinds of food. There was English food, West Indian food... for you know that Lionel owns his restaurant, so he had cooked all this delicious food, some of it I had never had before. I was so delighted to be a part of it all.

This event was, for Eve, another occasion where her membership into Verna's family gave her the opportunity to have new experiences that she might not otherwise have had.

After the wedding, Ken and Verna reflected on the event. It made Verna aware of how little contact she had had with her mother's brothers and their families since her mother's death. She realized that it was her mother who had "put all the work into keeping the family connections going. Mum created the family we are today, even what we have between us and my father's family, she created, not my father". Ken also mentioned how struck he was to realize that outside the nucleus of his birth family, it was his mother Eve who kept contacts and relationships going with his extended family of origin. Hence, since his parents' separation and divorce, he had had little contact with his father's brother and his family. After these reflections, the couple decided thereafter, following Chantal's example, to put more effort into maintaining family relationships in the future.

Current family relationships

With Chantal, around whom family relationships had revolved, now gone, what family relationships did I observe during my fieldwork? Beginning with Verna and her siblings, I could see that Verna was now the pivotal figure. Verna as the elder child had already been a "second mother" to her siblings when Chantal was working days and nights, and now had become "mother" in succession to Chantal. Her house has become the hub of family sociability for "Sunday dinner", children's birthdays and Christmas, as well as much informal "dropping in" and exchanges of mutual help and childcare. They continue to have keys to each other's homes. At the time of my fieldwork Verna was having problems with her fourteen-year-old son, so he was living with her sister Kate, and Verna felt he was "safe" within the extended family.

There is a striking closeness between Verna's siblings, so much so that apart from their partners they appear "so close" that there is little space for other friends. Ken has become absorbed into this sibling set in preference for his own siblings, whom he only meets three or four times a year. Verna has also welcomed their younger sister Kate's partner, despite hesitations about him, because his unreliability reminds them of their father Lionel. With Lionel himself and his partner Page, there are regular exchanges of visits between Birmingham and London. Verna still feels resentment at her father's unpredictable behaviour towards the family when she was growing up, but directly influenced by Chantal, she has decided to "put the past behind and love him. Take him in not only for himself, but for my family".

On the whole, there were certain members of Verna's family, such as her father's brothers Milo and Manzie, that despite the minimal contact, it was mutually understood that connections may be activated at anytime, whether it is just to "catch up on life", or to request some form of help if necessary. The same was true for Ken and his siblings. There is also regular contact with Lionel's sister in Canada. On the other hand, there is only minimal contact with Chantal's siblings, and similarly with Ken's siblings: in these white Irish and English families the legacies of disapproval and divorce have resulted in long-term divided loyalties and fissures in kinship relationships.

The incorporation of Eve

I was particularly struck by the place Ken's mother Eve occupied in their extended family. Although coming from a "conventional middle-class white" English family, as we shall see, Eve has gradually adopted many of the creolized patterns of relationships that she first encountered in Verna's family. Eve, who had worked full time until she retired the year before I conducted my fieldwork, had developed a very busy social life as an artist, and found managing time and space challenging between all the members in her extended family. Although she

is very much involved in the lives of all her children and grandchildren, the degree of relatedness she has between them varied, due partly to the complications resulting from separation and divorce in her family, particularly with her son Lucas and his children. Eve told me that on the whole, because of closer proximity, but also because she feels “more comfortable” with Verna, she spends most time in family relationships and activities with Verna and Ken.

Eve’s relationship with Ken’s wife Verna is in her words, “special and wonderful”. She refers to Verna as “my other daughter”, a phrase she does not use in reference to her other daughters-in-law. Verna likewise, refers to Eve as “my second mum”, and talks to her more regularly on the telephone than Ken does. Furthermore, Verna and Ken have given Eve a key to their home, a privilege she does not have with her other children

The close relationships between Eve and Verna’s family is also based on the exchange of help and support. Although Verna and her siblings exchange the most help and support among themselves, as a couple, Verna and Ken do receive practical help in the form of babysitting and financial help from Eve. When the couple are experiencing relationship problems, it is primarily to Eve that they turn for emotional support. In such situations, it is Verna who beckons Eve, who immediately goes to the couple’s home and talks things through with them. Eve’s support does not end with Verna and Ken, but also extends to other members in Verna’s family of origin, in particular to her sister Kate. Kate, who according to the siblings has the most difficulty coping with the loss of her mother, had occasionally gone to Eve for “motherly” advice.

Although Eve has five grandchildren between her four children, it is obvious that of all she has the closest relationship with Ken and Verna’s son Jonah, her first grandchild, and with whom she has played a very active role since his birth. Jonah, who was seven years old at the time I met the family, was the only grandchild with whom Eve had ever spent time alone. From various accounts,

Eve and Jonah had developed a “special” relationship since he was four months old. Now that he has grown older, she takes him regularly for weekends, and also when his parents go away on holidays. Eve also takes Jonah on special holidays, just the two of them, and in London, she takes him regularly to the theatre to hear classical music, and to the cinema. Of all her grandchildren, it is largely Jonah’s photos that one sees pinned up in the hallways and the kitchen walls in her house. “They know that Jonah and I are special”. Eve attributes this “special” relationship which she has with Jonah over her other grandchildren, to the fact that Ken and Verna were willing to let her have “responsibility” and “freedom” with Jonah since he was a baby. This she has never had with her other grandchildren.

Eve also reports having a closer relationship with Verna’s niece Ashley (Kate’s daughter) than she has with her other grandchildren. Not only does she have more regular contact with Ashley who lives close to Verna, but Ashley gives her “great big hugs” and calls her “grandma”, which makes her “feel a part of her Ashley’s world”. Despite the different forms of relatedness between Eve and her grandchildren, in her will, she has included all the small children in her extended family as grandchildren. These include Ashley and Verna’s first two children who are not her biological grandchildren. In her view, “they all have full rights when I go and my things are divided up”. Thus, while Eve may wish she could have closer relationships with her other children and their families, she places them within her own wider family in a creolized spirit of openness – that is, family inclusiveness despite conflict and limited contact – an attitude she has derived from Chantal and Verna.

Dealing with Chantal's loss and celebrating her memory

In *Family and Kinship in East London* (1957) Young and Willmott argued that after a mother dies, "the first and most obvious effect is that, since her children no longer visit her home, they see less of each other" (p. 78). This argument is a generalization from a large sample rather than an exploration of particular families. For even Young and Willmott later described the case of Mrs. Firth and her siblings (p. 80), whose situation after their mother's death very much resembles that of Verna and her siblings. For although Verna's mother Chantal is dead, her essence remains alive not just in the lives of her children, but also in the lives of others who came into close contact with her. Furthermore, she has remained alive not just as a memory, but her example while she was alive continues to influence their behaviour.

According to her children, Chantal remains "a part of us all the time". They are joined by their father every year in a special celebration on the anniversary of her birthday, rather than on the anniversary of her death, because for them, it is a symbol of her enduring presence. I invited myself to the only chance I had of attending one of these rituals, which began with a visit to her grave, followed by a family gathering at Verna's home. The scene at the graveside was very moving, but the most moving moment for me was when Verna's father, Lionel, with the very large presence, pulled a handkerchief from his jacket pocket to dab his eyes filled with tears, touched the tomb stone and said in a very low voice, "You are the only woman I ever loved".

Conclusions

In Chapter 2, I argued that although participant observation is a key element in anthropological fieldwork, oral narratives are also important, in that they offer an extra dimension to understanding what we observe. This account of Verna and Ken's kinship history and practice and how it has developed over generations could not have been constructed without a combination of fieldwork participant observation with retrospective life stories. It would have been impossible to understand how this family has arrived at its present kinship practice from observation alone.

Inevitably some unanswered questions remain. For example, because Chantal herself has died, we are left asking precisely why she chose to ignore the disapproval of her own family of origin and to create this dynamic extended family? A second question is why Chantal is so present in the lives of her family even after her death? I believe that they continue to share the experience of her loss, because what they have learnt from her is so crucial to them. They have learnt innovative ways of doing kinship, despite a) family objections and differences in forms of relatedness; b) the challenges of time and space in maintaining family relationships; and c) the effects of break-ups and new unions.

A third question relates most directly to the issue of creolization: From where did Chantal's ideas of kinship practice come? There are very important aspects of this family's kinship which seem very similar to kinship practice in the Caribbean. Most striking is the acceptance of serial monogamy and willingness after a break-up to forgive, move on, and continue to accept an ex-partner within the kin network. Closely related is the treatment of siblings, half-siblings and step-siblings brought up together on an equal basis, as if full brothers and sisters. Other key features are informality of social contact, and a willingness to give practical help to even relatively distant kin in crisis.

The key figures in the transmission of these practices are three women: first Chantal, and after her, Verna and Eve. It may at first seem a paradox that apparently Caribbean practices should be transmitted by three women, of whom two are white and one is of mixed-heritage. Moreover it was Chantal, who came from a white Irish family, from whom both Verna and Eve learnt.

Chantal probably did draw some of her attitudes from her own family of origin. After all, despite their disapproval, her brothers did maintain contact and give her some degree of support, albeit at a distance. She also retained an “obsession” with cleanliness, according to Verna and her brother Jude, from her Catholic background. But there can be no doubt that a very large part of her kinship practice was learnt through her membership of Lionel’s migrant Caribbean family.

Thus, from the standpoint of creolization, we can say that Chantal represents a key moment. In Lionel’s family the Caribbean kinship patterns can be seen as reformulations/reconstitutions in a new country. But Chantal, as a white woman, by taking them up and making them her own, was creating a creolized form of *English* kinship, and transmitting this creolized kinship both to her own next generation, above all in Verna, but also, with Eve, to white English people beyond her own blood family.

Key to figures

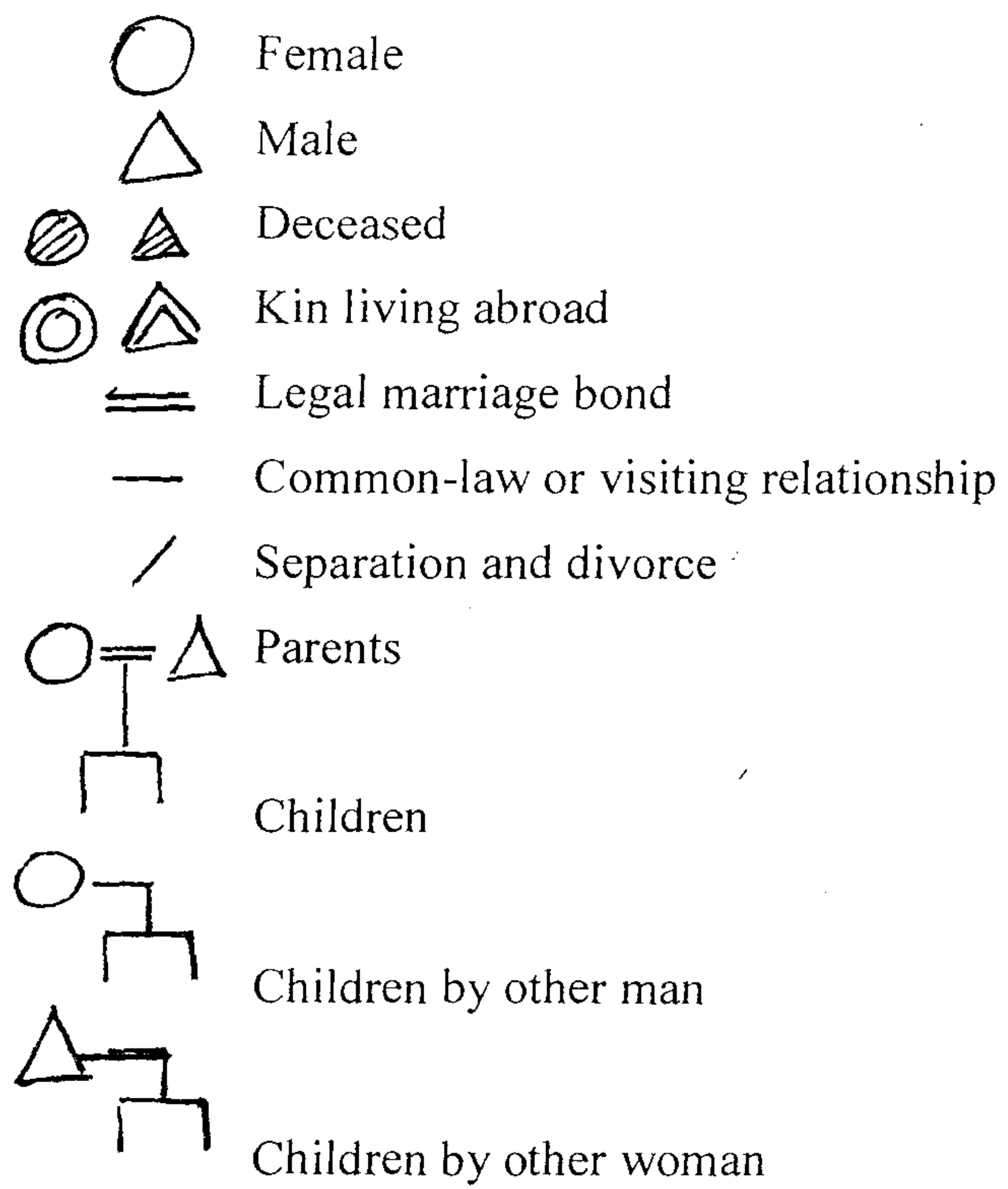


FIGURE 5:1 KEN'S FAMILY OF ORIGIN

MOTHER EVE'S FAMILY

FATHER TYLOR'S FAMILY

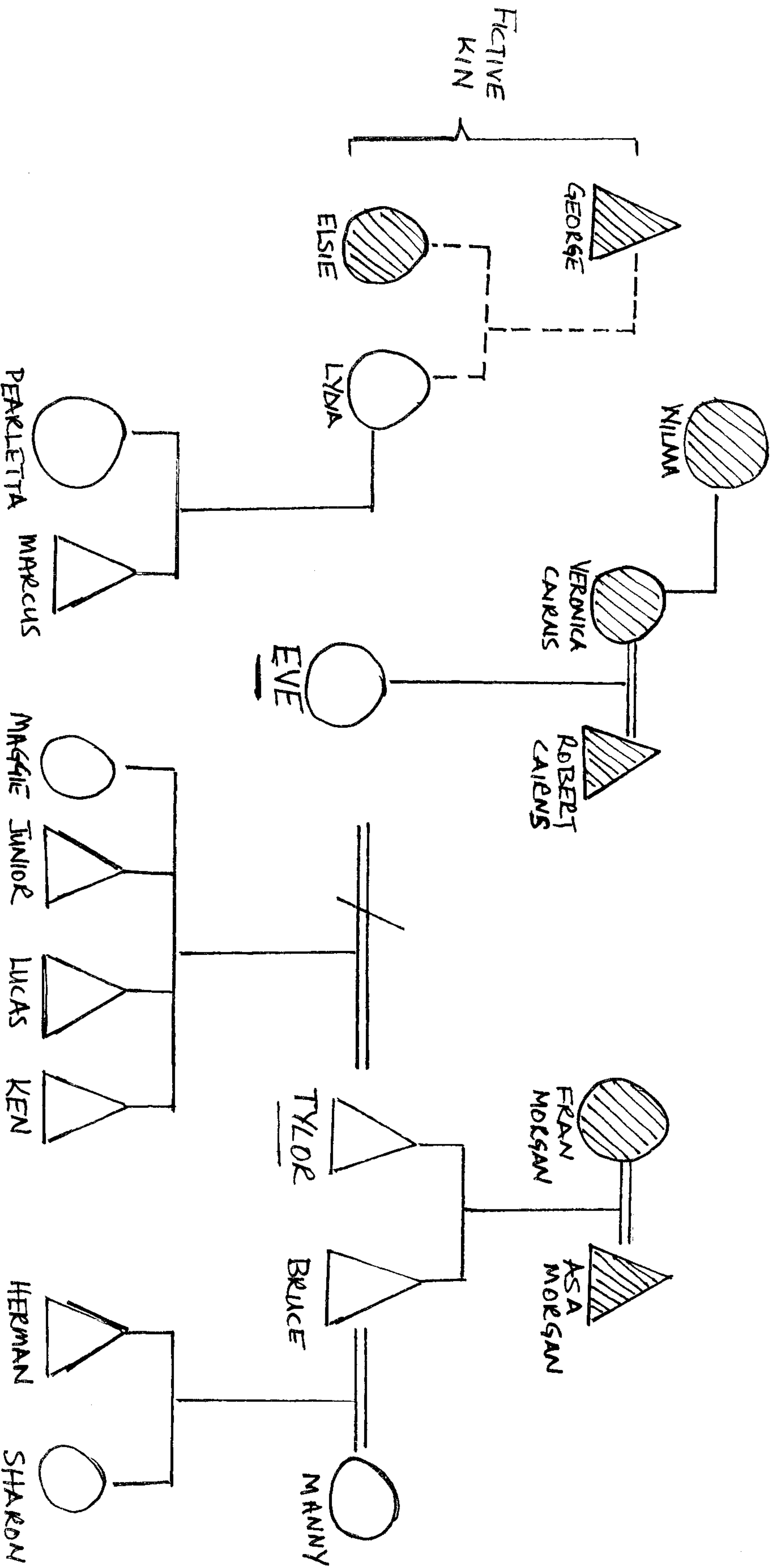


FIGURE 5:2 VERNNA'S FAMILY of ORIGIN

FATHER LIONEL'S FAMILY

MOTHER CHANTAL'S FAMILY

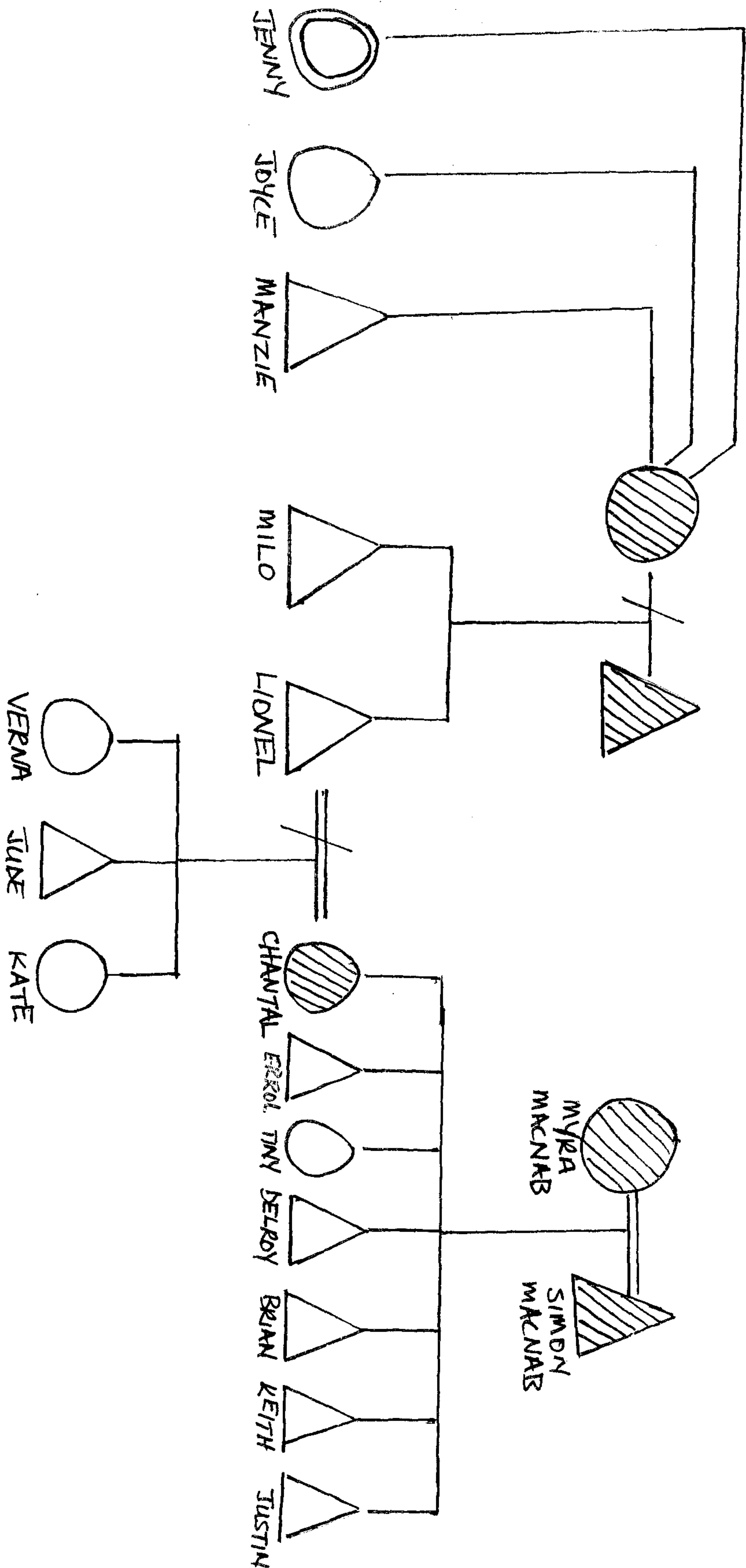
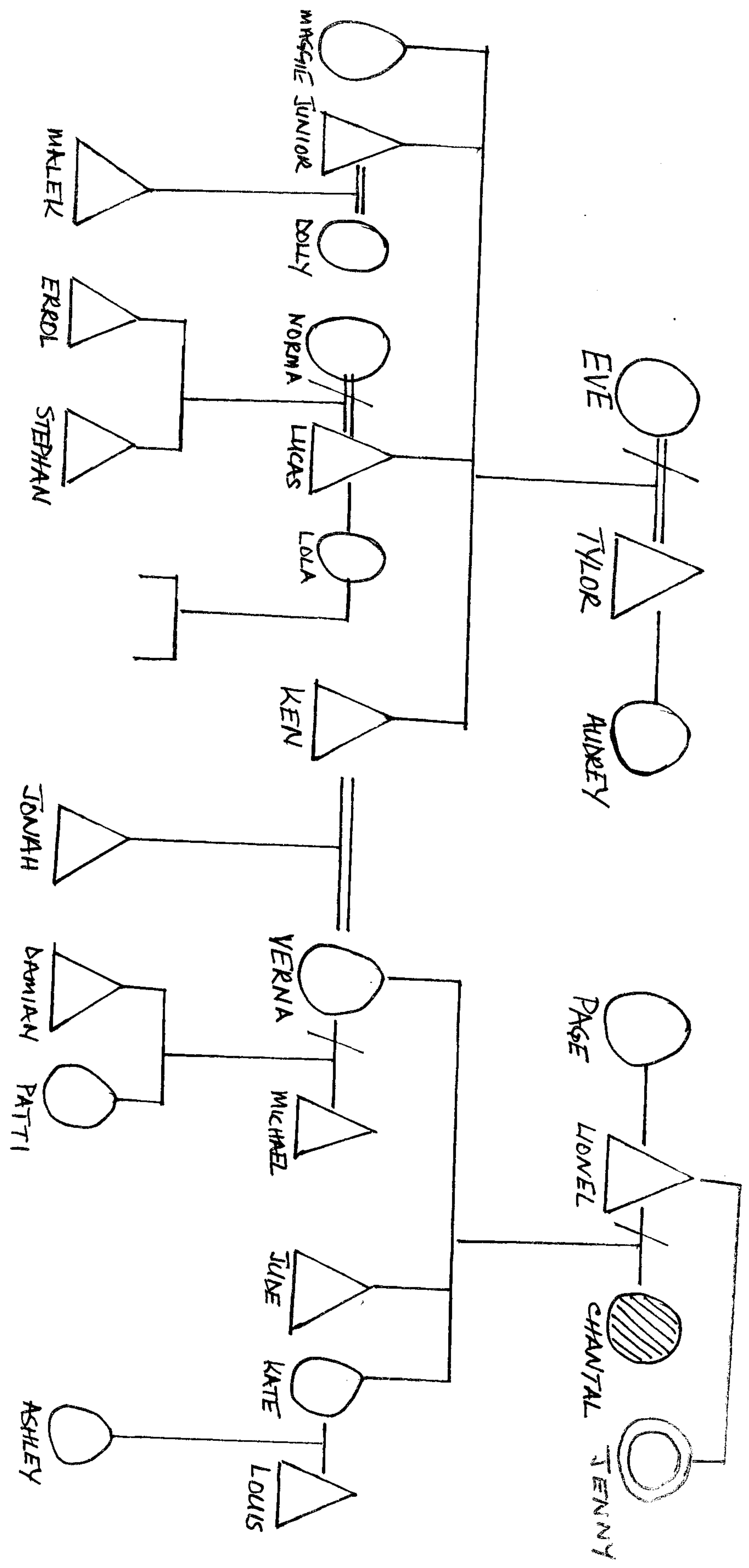


FIGURE 5:3 VERNA AND KEN MORGAN'S EXTENDED FAMILY (ACTIVE)



Chapter 6

Mixed sociability and the growth of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London

The first three ethnographic chapters - Chapters 3 to 5 - focus on particular extended families, highlighting the main themes of the thesis. However, in general, the accounts of people in my research conveyed a variety of experiences. Thus, in these next two chapters, the ethnography will explore more generally the social contexts in which these families have emerged, and the ongoing modifications and negotiations through which they have responded to changing circumstances, both within the families and in the wider society.

Chapter 1 demonstrated how during the 1950s, outside of places of work and schools, London had very few places where Afro-Caribbeans and white British people mixed socially (Glass, 1960; Patterson, 1963). Today social mixing in London is widespread, particularly among the second and third generations Afro-Caribbeans and their white counterparts (see Back, 1996; Hewitt, 1986). In his study of 99 young people in a South London Youth Club, Back observed that, "Young people living in Southgate are creating cultures that are neither simply black nor simply white. These syncretic cultures produce inter-racial harmony while celebrating diversity; they defy the logic of the new racism and result in volatile cultural forms that can be simultaneously black and white". The result is the development of rich syncretic cultural forms that are available to young south Londoners regardless of origin (Back, 1996:158).

Food is another cultural feature that can transcend cultural and social class boundaries, and also requires negotiations, especially within ethnically-mixed families. In her study of the relationship between "food, status and class" in Britain, James (1997) concluded that, "in Britain food has always served as a marker of class, and continues to do so" (James, 1997:75). She further argues

that: “The embrace of both foreign food and the emergence of a food nostalgia did not represent an emergent gastronomic pluralism in Britain in the early 1990s. Food, whether foreign or British, continued to speak to older class divides ...” (ibid:81). However, James’ conclusions are not surprising given that her research emphasis was on particular food items.

By contrast, Goode and her colleagues (1984), in their investigation of an Italian-American community, look at changes in food consumption along two dimensions: 1) “the choice of *format*” (the style of serving food, shaped by the particular social occasion and the structural constraints of the household); and 2) “the choice of *content*” (the type of food generated by individual preferences, network specialties, family tradition, and resources). They call this process of decision-making “*menu negotiation*” (Goode et. al., 1984:183). This chapter will show that for the families in my research, food is just one of many cultural processes transformed through cultural contacts in new places.

How have these transformations evolved? This chapter traces the growth of mixed sociability (that is, the social relationships between Afro-Caribbeans and the white British population) in London since the 1950s, based on the evidence of my fieldwork interviews and observations. It maps the spaces and processes in the wider society through which mixed sociability grew, and illustrates how such interactions set in motion the subsequent ongoing process of incorporation of individuals into mixed-heritage families.

The growth of mixed sociability in London: the starting point, the 1950s

Describing Brixton from her 1950s research, Patterson (1963) evoked the “depressing and unfriendly” ethos of London streets and the unwelcoming atmosphere encountered by the first wave of Caribbean migrants:

During the week these streets are full of hurrying, harassed entities, intent on getting to work on time or on escaping from the rain. At night or on a Sunday, the streets away from the city’s entertainment centre are empty but for the occasional church-goer, the groups of raucous teenagers waiting for the cinemas to open, and the police. Few

people in these London streets have the time or the inclination to stroll or to lean against a building, to smile or sing, or even to bid passers-by good-day.

In such surroundings the coloured migrant feels lost, uneasy, even rejected. If he in addition sees a chalked or painted sign 'K.B.W.' (meaning 'Keep Britain [Brixton] White') or 'Nigger Go Home' scrawled on a wall, his feelings of insecurity, indignation and rejection are heightened out of all proportion to the actual significance of the sign as an index of widespread local feeling. The great majority of local people will not chalk up such a sign but equally they will not consider it their duty to remove it.

From the local point of view, the presence of large numbers of highly visible and often audible newcomers may serve only to reinforce derogatory preconceptions. Said one middle-aged artisan: 'I'd be frightened to let my daughter walk along Coldharbour Lane alone at night now - there are so many blacks about, the place looks like darkest Africa'... Some local people appreciate the newcomers' cheerful greetings to passers-by, but many resent the uninhibited interest which a loitering group of coloured men will usually show towards a personable female passer-by (Patterson, 1963:215-216).

Banton and Glass paint similar views from other parts of London of the social situation during the early stage of Caribbean settlement (Banton, 1955; Glass, 1960). Essentially, these earlier studies show that during the initial large-scale settlement of Afro-Caribbeans in London, social relations between them and members in the host society were mostly of a casual nature that occurred on public transport, in public places such as markets and stores, in cafés and pubs, at work, and in schools (mostly primary) among the children. These casual contacts were limited, guarded, and fuelled by curiosity on both sides, and on the whole, not welcomed by the host society. However, despite these limited casual contacts, there were also informal social relationships, some of which developed into enduring inter-group friendships, couple relationships, and mixed-heritage families.

Dusty Smith from Chapter 3 was among the first migrants to arrive in Britain during the Second World War as a volunteer in the Royal Air Force (RAF). As an eighteen-year-old youth from Jamaica (see photo at end of Chapter 3), Dusty felt "at the time as a member of the colonial Empire, very proud to know I'm coming to England in the Air Force". From landing in Scotland in March 1944 he was immediately transported with other West Indians to a

training camp in Wiltshire. After a few months of training as a dispatch driver, Dusty was moving from camp to camp. At one camp, he recalled that out of 3,000 men, "I was the only black man there". He reminisced about how "very friendly and jovial" all his work mates were, and often made jokes about him being the "only white man" in the camp.

On weekends when Dusty was off duty, he went to London in search of entertainment. He stayed in the YMCA where according to him, he experienced no problem in finding accommodation:

You see, in those days, once you had on a uniform, you're accepted. The trouble started when you're not in uniform. When we came here, we was all lads, you know, you had to put on a suit. They didn't care a damn what colour you are. They didn't! It wasn't important, because that uniform you had on was part of *their* [his emphasis] thing. When you get out of that uniform and have to live, and go out and get a job, get somewhere to live, that was really when the problem started.

The "problem" indeed began for Dusty when he left the RAF after six years of service, disrobed his uniform and went to live in Stepney in 1950 - at the time one of the "coloured quarters" in London (see Banton, 1955). During this period the West Indian population was predominantly male. In Stepney Dusty found shared accommodation in a house with many other West Indian and Indian men, who regularly played dominoes, card games and gambled. Dusty recalled how venturing outside for social activities created major suspicion among members in the host society, and made him feel "inferior" in a country for which he had just spent six years of his life in service. Not only would he and his other Caribbean men friends be rejected or treated poorly in the pubs they visited, but, with very few Caribbean women around at the time, their only option was to socialize with "white English women". Although there were English women who were interested in socializing with them, according to Dusty, they were "under pressure" from the locals. Socializing with an English woman meant "going around the corner", and the women were considered prostitutes if they were seen with a "black" man. "Yeah, that was the thinking, 'You're no good going with a black man'".

Seventy year-old June also recalled the social atmosphere of London during the early 1950s. As a young English woman who had a relationship with a Jamaican man at the time, she remembered being called a “black man’s whore”, and having a really “hard time” when they were out together in public. June believes that the hostility towards Caribbean people and the riots of 1958 were not simply about colour prejudice, but also deeply rooted in the fear of miscegenation, which she suspects, “has to do with British male insecurity”. Thus, she looks back analytically, and sympathizes with the Conservative front-bench spokesman for Defence, Enoch Powell’s April 1968 “Rivers of Blood” speech, which predicted “racial violence between black, brown and white peoples” (Goulbourne, 2002:37). In retrospect, June believes that underneath all the uproar over Powell’s speech, given the hostility against “black people” in general, and “interracial” relationships in particular, he should have been credited for his foresight and his honesty regarding a situation that the “general government and do-gooders and politicians” had overlooked in the processes of fulfilling their own agenda: rebuilding Britain in the aftermath of the War. According to June:

From the government policy, it’s amazing how blinkered they were. But then that’s basically the British denial about sexuality. If you are going to bring a lot of people here to work, and they are mostly men, and they have their needs, but it’s pretending that their needs don’t exist...The men came to this country as workers, needing to lie down with a woman, and their women aren’t around. What are they supposed to do?

June’s experience has convinced her that a large part of Powell’s fear - “the black man would have the upper hand over the white man, taking the white man’s job, and worse, taking the white man’s woman” (Powell, cited in Goulbourne, 2002:38) - conveyed the sentiments of most British men at the time. Nevertheless, despite the hostile social atmosphere during this initial period, social relationships between white British people and Caribbean people did develop in London in some social spheres (as elsewhere in Britain where the Caribbean migrants settled), albeit, not without struggles. I now turn to those social spaces more in-depth, and explore the changes in social interactions over time.

Sociability in the workplace

1950s – 1960s

To begin with, because the first Caribbean migrants arrived in Britain to support the war effort and later as labour recruits, their first social contacts with white British people were at work. Within the thirty-four families in the research set there are four men who came to Britain between 1944 and 1956 either to work for the British army, for London Transport or the National Health Service, and were later conscripted for two years National Service. All four men reported having good relationships with their workmates in the Army, and on the whole, they also reported continued good relationships with their workmates in their respective jobs after leaving the Army. Only one man, Owen, reported colour prejudice from a work colleague.

Owen had trained as an electrical engineer. After completing his National Service in 1961, he applied for work at a job centre where he was introduced by a fellow army colleague and was given a job working with Post Office Telecoms (later British Telecommunications), doing electrical cable wiring on various sites in London. At work Owen's colleagues were people from diverse nationalities and regions of Britain, and he remembered "one English chap [Charlie] who came from way up north, who told me that there was no black people in that part of the world, and that frankly, 'I don't like black people'". It appears that this "English chap's" view was based on stereotypes of Africans and peoples from the colonies, mainly to do with "black people as animals and monkeys" living in trees and their "uncivilized" behaviour. Owen, however, would not be cowered and decided to be amiable to him. Over time when Charlie felt more comfortable with Owen, he asked specific questions relating to these stereotypes, Owen recalled that he would "set him straight on the facts", by telling him that they were "myths".

Although Afro-Caribbeans and English people worked side by side during these early years without much friction (see also Glass, 1960:81-86), it appeared that on the whole, outside of the workplace, they had minimal social

contact. This situation was further compounded in the late 1950s and early 1960s by the press reporting of the 1958 London riots, which effectively increased mutual suspicion between both groups (Glass, 1960:84; 147-211). Fred, a Barbadian, recalled how after National service he went to work in a hospital and made very good friends with a co-worker, yet they never socialized outside of work. Gertrude, a Jamaican, who came to London in the early 1950s, worked as a nurse in the hospital, and she recalled how she would “sometimes have a laugh” with her English work colleagues. However, they too never socialized outside of work. Furthermore, even now, she does not have even “one white friend”.

1970s-1990s

By the 1970s the post-war immigration from the Caribbean had largely come to a halt. However, among the relatively youthful migrant population that arrived between the 1950s and 1960s, there had been a steadily increasing birth rate. Thus, by 1971, the Census estimated there were 244,000 British-born Caribbean people, the majority of whom lived in Greater London (Owen, 2001:64-91).

By the 1980s and 1990s these children born to the migrants had largely joined the job market. While some of the first generation Afro-Caribbeans still had limited contact with their indigenous British workmates even into the 1990s, this changed for their offspring. With them, socializing now took place both at and outside of work, leading to many friendships. Furthermore, many individuals from this generation had become intolerant of colour prejudice, so that if there were experiences of racism at work, it usually came from an older person. Thus, in 1987, when Carla was refused a job on the basis that she was “black”, her English friend, the recruitment officer who recruited her for the job on the basis of merit, challenged the company in court, and Carla was eventually given the job.

Schools and nurseries

1950s –1960s

Up until the late 1950s, the Caribbean child population in London was still very small, because the early migrants were typically without partners. By 1957, the number of West Indian women had risen to equal that of the male migrants, but because many parents who migrated left their children behind in the care of their extended families, it was not until the latter part of the 1950s that their children began to arrive (Glass, 1960:4-6; see also Deakin, 1969; Patterson, 1963). However, it appears that in contrast to the very limited mixed sociability of their parents outside of work during this period, this minority of young Caribbean children mixed with English children inside the nursery and primary school classrooms as well as in the playgrounds, and without much tension or uneasiness in relation to skin colour (see Glass, 1960:63-66; Patterson, 1963:239).

Indeed, the few individuals in my research who were of primary school age during this period reported that in the main, their experiences in school were positive, both in terms of their relationships with their teachers and their fellow schoolmates. Maggie, a second generation Caribbean woman, recalled being one of three “black” children in her primary school, and the only one in her class. Maggie played with, and made very close friendships with some of her English classmates. Although she and her friends never visited each others homes during primary school days, their friendships endured into adulthood.

Merna, an English woman, also recalled playing and making friends with the only Caribbean girl, Sonia, in her primary school. Merna remembered her “ignorance” when she first met Sonia: “God, you’ve learned to speak English so quickly!” to which Sonia replied, “We speak English in Barbados you know!” Excited about her new friendship with Sonia, Merna went home and told her parents. Her mother was “shocked” at the news, and told her that she couldn’t play with Sonia because she was a “different colour”. Merna recalled

being “very angry” and “confused” by her mother’s response, but was consoled by her “very liberal” father who told her that she could be friends with whomever she liked, as long as her friends worked hard and stayed out of trouble.

A few Caribbean individuals told me that they felt that their classmates in primary school showed more “curiosity” about their physical appearance and their lifestyles than prejudice. Julie for example, recalled the battery of questions she received from her classmates during her first weeks in school; “What do you eat for supper?” “How do you get your hair like that?” “Oh look at your hands, why are they a different colour than the rest of your body?” Once Julie “enlightened” her classmates on her background and her physical features, “the novelty wore off” and nothing more was said. Cathy, an English woman, recalled going home and telling her mother about her “black” primary classmate whose hands were white inside, and wondering if that meant he was “turning white”.

During this early stage of Caribbean migrant settlement in London, there was evidently not yet a large number of mixed-heritage children. In my study, there were two individuals born in the early 1950s (Polly and her brother Mark, the children of Dawn and Dusty Smith from Chapter 3), and two born in the late 1950s. Polly and Mark were the only two individuals who reported blatant experiences of colour prejudice during their primary school years in the 1950s and 1960s. They were followed, name-called and stoned as they walked home from school, Polly was beaten by two girls in her primary school, and Mark was hit by an English schoolmate. In secondary school, Polly was called a “half-caste bitch”, but Mark reported less hostility there, which he thought was due to the greater number of Afro-Caribbean students in his secondary school than in his primary school.

On the whole, the accounts support Glass (1960) and Patterson’s (1963) findings that relationships in primary schools between the West Indian children and their white classmates between the 1950s and 1960s were, in the

main, friendly and without friction. What were their experiences as they moved on to secondary school in the 1970s and 1980s?

1970s-1990s

From her study conducted in 1970-71 in Brixton, Susan Benson concluded that the level of “interethnic hostility” increased when children moved into secondary school, as they became more conscious of the role played by “race and colour” in the society around them (1981:43-44). The accounts of the individuals in my research – even those in secondary schools during the time of Benson’s research – on the whole do not support her conclusion. From their accounts, their experiences appear to be dependent upon a number of variables such as the Afro-Caribbean to English student ratio; whether they were boys or girls; and whether they were of mixed-parentage.

On the whole, Afro-Caribbean students who attended secondary school during the 1970s –1980s reported more hostility from their “white” teachers than from their schoolmates. The most common accounts are of teachers challenging the Caribbean students’ intelligence, and requesting that they rewrite their exams. Many talked of teachers who tried to discourage them from pursuing areas of interest that would take them on career paths beyond sports and manual work (see also Bauer and Thompson, 2006). Other accounts were of teachers remarking on Caribbean students’ physical features, thereby making them feel self-conscious. Sylvia, for example recalls her science teacher using her hair to demonstrate the types of clouds.

However, student-teacher experiences during this period were not all negative. In fact just over a third reported having positive student-teacher relationships, with some teachers providing more encouragement and influence than their parents. For Maggie, coming from a very strict disciplinarian home life, school became a “refuge”. She remembered school as the place where her teachers made her feel “special”, and had “something to contribute”. Anna recalls how encouraging and influential some of her secondary school teachers were: “They made me feel that I was there on merit, and steered me towards

the subjects that would get me into a good university". Thus, in 1989 when Anna got into London School of Economics, she attributed a large part of her success to her white secondary school teachers.

Pam also gave a striking account of her Welsh home economics teacher who, after a few failed attempts of teaching British cuisine to a class of ethnically-mixed students, actively encouraged mixed sociability among the students through experimentation with different "ethnic" foods. In her school where at least half the students were Afro-Caribbean, she recalled the first day when her home economics teacher announced that she would teach the class how to make "toad in the hole". Not knowing what that was, the Afro-Caribbean students, almost in unison replied, "We are not making nor eating any toads!" On a second attempt, the teacher suggested "Welsh rarebit", to which the Afro-Caribbean students replied, "We don't eat rabbits either!" Eventually, the teacher asked the students what they wanted to cook, and they ran off a long list of different Caribbean dishes. Therein the class was structured in a manner whereby all the children learned to cook both Caribbean and English foods. This story illustrates the transformation of a cultural process as a result of new cultural contacts and through negotiation. A process akin to the process of creolization.

Some individuals who went to the same primary schools during the 1950s and 1960s maintained their friendships in secondary schools in the 1970s and 1980s, and sometimes also at universities in the 1980s and '90s. Although at secondary school the number of Caribbean students had greatly increased – in some cases to half the school – on the whole, the students did not socialize in segregated groups. This was partly because by now many of them had been used to socializing in their neighbourhood streets and on their estates. For example, when Anna got to university, she found it difficult to relate to students who came directly from the Caribbean, because "we weren't the same. I'd lived in London all my life". Hence, her friends were fellow students (blacks and whites) who like herself, had been born and socialized in "multi-cultural London".

Thus, whether a student had more “white” friends, more “black” friends, or a mixture of both, was largely to do with their common interests. Some took friends home without any disapproval from their parents, and even on family summer holidays. For the few who couldn’t take their friends home because of their parents’ prejudice, the students rejected their parents’ views and remained friends nonetheless.

Where there were reports of interethnic hostility in secondary schools, this involved mainly boys, and essentially name-calling by “white” youths such as “gollywogs” or “wogs” and “nigga” (cf Back, 1996 on a South London youth club in the 1980s). Petra told me how she was racially taunted by a schoolmate who was a member of a gang of boys whose parents were known British National Party members. The youth was eventually suspended from school for a week after Petra reported him to a sympathetic teacher. Some Afro-Caribbean men also reported experiences of racism in their secondary schools between “black” and “white” youth gangs. But even among these boys, the experience of racism was strongly linked to the ratio of Afro-Caribbean to English students. Thus, as the years passed and the Afro-Caribbean student population increased, the experience of racism decreased, partly because according to Gus, “we weren’t just sitting back and taking it anymore. In primary school we only had a few black guys in those years, and the white guys dominated. But once we started having more black guys in the school, the white guys begin to back off”.

Interestingly, most accounts of colour prejudice during the period of the 1970s to the 1990s were expressed by mixed-heritage children, mainly in secondary schools, in the form of frequent name-calling such as “half-caste”. It appears that the issues had to do with, as one such individual put it, “not being properly black or white”, as the hostility came from both “black” and from “white” schoolmates.

It was also during this later period at the secondary school level that both English and Afro-Caribbean children, through their interactions, became aware of alternative patterns of behaviour to those they were raised with in

their own families. For some, this was the context in which through their “interracial contacts”, racist ideas they had been exposed to in their families of origin were interrupted, challenged, and rejected (see also Back, 1996; chapter 4). Amanda and Maggie are two such examples. Amanda grew up in an environment where her English parents’ main locus of sociability was in the pub. She recalled being taken to the pub with her siblings from a very early age, and “hated it! Absolutely hated it! I hated the alcohol, hated everything about it.” At secondary school Amanda made friends with her Afro-Caribbean peers, with whom she socialized in their homes and at clubs. Through her contact with these friends and their families, she became aware that there was social life outside the pub, and which did not have to involve drinking alcohol. According to her:

As a teenager, my dad was drinking more, and their whole social life was the pub. My black friends’ social life was mainly in their homes, laughing, chatting, and listening to music. My friends and I also loved going to clubs to listen to music, but none of them drank, and I loved it. I loved to go out and not see people getting drunk. I can remember thinking, I don’t want to go out with someone like my dad, who is going to come home drunk every night, and I associated going home drunk every night with being white, I suppose. Having the friends I had at school made me realize that social life doesn’t have to be all about the pub and drinking.

Although somewhat different from Amanda’s situation, it was also through her friendships at secondary school that Maggie became aware that there were alternative ways to parenting than those she experienced in her own home. Maggie grew up in a strict authoritarian household, where both her Caribbean parents worked full-time jobs, and outside of the regular summer seaside holidays, where she and her siblings were given money to play the machines and the amusement rides, the children had no other form of “fun” relationships with their parents. According to her, “we knew what each member of the family’s role was; we just knew that mum and dad was mum and dad, and that was it. We knew our place, and we did what we were told. We didn’t talk, didn’t play, and there was no cuddling and laughing about things. We sat quietly and behaved ourselves, otherwise we’ll have a smack or a beating”.

Maggie attended an all-girls secondary school where the majority of her classmates were English. She made friends with many of them, but one special friend was Paula, who was also a neighbour. Maggie visited Paula's home regularly, and spent most weekends with Paula's family, because her friend's home environment "was the sort of home environment that I dreamt of as a child. There were people playing board games, the children were doing things actively with the adults in the room. They would not be beaten or intimidated or made to feel they were less than. It was a lovely environment".

Amanda and Maggie's situations were not described because they typify English or Caribbean families, or even such families in my research. Rather, they provide examples that illustrate how second-generation Afro-Caribbean and English classmates became aware of alternative patterns of behaviour among families, through their interactions in secondary schools. It was partly this awareness that formed the basis for future patterns of behaviour among these individuals when they later became adults and raised their own families.

Interestingly, despite changes in some social attitudes in response to the 1980s riots (see Chapter 7), when Afro-Caribbean and white students reached universities in the 1980s and 1990s, on the whole they continued to interact socially. Although by now many had been separated from their friends from primary and secondary schools, new relationships were created through liberal friendship alliances partly through sharing accommodation, but most often based on common academic and recreational interests. Some of these alliances were, as Gus (an Afro-Caribbean male) put it, "so tight, that we never allowed outside influences to ruin our friendships".

Overall, by the 1980s-1990s the Afro-Caribbean and white British children of the 1950s, and '60s generation had become young adults. This generation claims that from their teenage years they felt that they had come to share what many of them described as a "common culture". They were joining the same youth clubs, attending the same dance clubs, enjoying similar music, the same food, following the same fashions, and having friends from diverse ethnic origins, as well as sharing similar anti-racist views (see Back, 1996). As Ann,

a third-generation Afro-Caribbean woman put it, “our lives became more similar”. For Jane (a thirty-eight year-old white Englishwoman), when talking of her second-generation Caribbean “high school sweetheart” who eventually became her husband, “The only difference between me and Richard is that growing up, my family was middle-class, and his family was poor”. A difference that she thinks would also be present had she married a working-class Englishman.

Sociability in neighbourhoods

1950s –1960s

Unlike the apparently positive sociability that occurred in the workplace between adult migrants and their English workmates and between their children in schools during the 1950s-60s, neighbourhood sociability was of a different nature. My fieldwork accounts suggest a mixture of hostility with developing friendships. As Glass put it, “On the whole, English people have an entirely different attitude to their workmates than they have to their neighbours or would-be neighbours. While a man is prepared to work with coloured people, or even under them, he might still be most reluctant to accept the idea that they should come to live nearby. He is far more likely to be aware of their dark skin at home than in the factory” (Glass, 1960:67). To begin with, although many West Indians migrants who settled in Britain would have been considered middle-class in their places of origin, upon arrival, the majority found themselves in working-class positions. Left with very narrow choices of places to live, they were housed largely by friends and families who had migrated earlier, in areas close to the London labour market such as areas stretching from Paddington, through North Kensington and Nottinghill, to Shepherd’s Bush and Hammersmith, and also in Brixton, Stockwell and south Lambeth - though not concentrated in these areas alone (Glass, 1960, Chapter 4; Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001). These were widely scattered areas that had in common a stock of large but neglected Victorian housing, where migrants and transient lodgers from low-income groups could find affordable accommodation. The housing and living conditions of these areas have been

depicted by earlier researchers (e.g. Glass, 1960:44-92; Patterson, 1963, 171-189), and were vividly described to me by Jess and her daughter Pam:

In them days, black people were segregated where they could live, cause there were a lot of places where they didn't accept black people. And where we were living... one big house, used to have up to five family... Sometimes you have one family in one room, you, your husband and three kids or whatever. Or sometimes you only have one or two rooms. And that's what me and their father and the two older children had.

We had one room with two beds. Me and their father slept in one bed, and Pam and Dollard slept in the other bed, and we shared a six by six size kitchen and a bathroom with three other families living in the house. That's what it used to be like back in the sixties.

There were then also low-income English individuals and families who shared the same houses with the Caribbean migrants, and also shared in the general resentments towards the migrants about what they perceived to be the pressure the new arrivals put on housing. Thus, it is not surprising that the local attitudes and reactions towards West Indian neighbours were more critical with increasing proximity. According to Patterson, such criticisms focussed on “differences in social and cultural patterns so noticeable as to arouse aversion and even fear, and on the immigrants’ general failure to conform to the neighbourhood standards of house-proudness... and quiet and seemly behaviour” (Patterson, 1963:180).

Given this situation, it is not surprising that social contact between the migrants and the local inhabitants was limited. However, the accounts of neighbourhood sociability from people in my research were, more generally, either neutral or unfavourable, depending on the person reporting. Susie, an eighty-four year-old English woman (three of her daughters married Caribbean men), recalled when the “many people from different races” started moving into her area in Stepney during the 1950s and 1960s: “Didn't take no notice of them. If they spoke, I'd answer. Just, ‘Good morning, good evening, good night’”. Furthermore, Susie said that although she had no resentments towards the new migrants, because of the social atmosphere at the time, she believed that there were social pressures on working-class people

like herself and her family from the “white racists” to dissociate themselves from the migrants. She gave examples of the conversations she overheard at work and among her neighbours that conveyed negativity and disapproval towards the new migrants. This attitude was reinforced by her earlier memories of East End racism, especially against the Jews. Already a young mother during the 1930s, Susie recalled how Oswald Mosley and “his fascist men in the black shirts”, during the time of the Jewish settlement in East London, “used to cause all the fights and troubles, and put the swastika all over the walls. These were the white racists”. Hence, she had learned from her earlier experiences to keep out of danger.

Merna, an English woman who grew up in a middle-class neighbourhood in Harrow, recalled that there was one “black family” living on their street that everybody knew, but she doesn’t remember her parents making contact with them. Conversely, Julie, a second-generation Caribbean woman recalled how growing up in North Kensington during the late 1950s and early 1960s, she was not allowed to play on the street and mix with the locals, because her mother feared for her life. Willa, also a second-generation woman, showed me the eight-inch scar down her back that she received at age seven from two “white males”, while she was riding her bicycle along her neighbourhood street in Hackney in 1961. Willa was taken to hospital for stitches, and the men who ran off were never charged. Willa believes that the incident left her with such a deep psychological wound that, outside of the “white” members in her extended family, she has never been able to form close relationships with “English people”.

Yet despite the above picture, there was some informal social mixing between the local indigenous English population and the Caribbean migrants during the period of the 1950-1960s. These were contacts with a small number of unattached Caribbean young males and white British women who met in nightclubs (Patterson, 1961:247). Contacts in these common – or neutral – spaces provided the opportunities for some interracial unions, which in some cases resulted in interracial marriages and families. Dusty and Dawn Smith’s case in Chapter 3 is one such example.

By the mid 1960s, with the passing of the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 mass migration to Britain had reached a peak, but the Caribbean migrant population was experiencing high birth rates (Owen, 2001:65-66). Additionally, in terms of housing, “the pool of generalized white working-class resentment which had been focused and intensified by the 1957 Rent Act, had been dissipated by relocation, and by the new buildings stimulated after the 1964 Housing Act” (Phillips & Phillips 1999, 351). Caribbean migrants had begun to disperse, some to newly-built council flats, but there was also a gradual upwardly mobile middle-class moving into existing white middle-class areas, and becoming home owners (ibid:351). While some moved into their new homes as single families, many sub-let rooms to other West Indians. As they began to disperse, there was a widespread belief among many local people that the presence of West Indians in their streets or neighbourhoods caused a devaluation in property prices (Patterson, 1963:171-189), and some actually moved to other parts of London less populated by the migrants, or even away from London.

The accounts of the people in my research convey a variety of experiences. In Chapter 5 we are given Eve’s own account of her move from her London neighbourhood to a suburb in Kent when people from the Caribbean started to move in during the 1950s, because she and her husband feared that the value of their property would decrease. Donovan recalled that his otherwise “liberal” parents weren’t sure how they would feel if a “black family” moved in next door, because of the impact it might have on property prices. Donovan questioned his parents, “How can you say that? That’s terrible!” To which his mum replied, “I’d much rather live next door to a nice black couple than a horrible white one, but it would still put property prices down”. As it happened, Donovan’s parents didn’t have to move, as no “black family” moved next door.

For some local English people, the issue wasn’t so much about property prices, but about living next to these “strange people with their strange ways”. For Manny, reflecting on her mother Margo’s attitude at the time, it appears that Margo, who worked in the local drycleaners, had no problem dealing with

the “foreign” clients, but living next to them was an issue. Manny recalls her childhood when Jews became the first migrants in her neighbourhood in Kensal Rise. She remembers the “general feeling of resentment” towards the new arrivals, especially during and after the war, not only because they were “foreigners”, but also because they were regarded as wealthy: “The Jews had this, that, and the other. They had cars, they had houses...” Thus, from Manny’s recollection, “the Jews were the first people that were picked on because they weren’t exactly the same as us”. According to Manny, by the time the Jews started to move out of her neighbourhood, the West Indians began to arrive in large numbers, and “they were picked on as well. I think mainly because they were different, not because of anything terrible that they’d actually done, but because people of my parents’ generation were confronted for the first time with foreigners who didn’t look like us, and they didn’t know how to handle it. It was perceived as a threat to their way of life”. As it happened, in the mid 1960s a Caribbean family moved directly next door to Manny’s family. Eventually her mother Margo became very close with her neighbours, and developed a special friendship with the woman Lolita.

By the time Manny’s son Joseph was old enough for primary school in the mid to late 1960s, not only had more Caribbean people moved into their neighbourhood, but people from other nationalities, including Asians, had also moved in. Thus, according to Joseph, for most of his classes, the student body was “a third white, a third Afro-Caribbean, and the other third of various Asian ethnic groups”, and he made friends among all these groups. Manny and Joseph lived at home with Manny’s parents, and according to Joseph, the prejudices that his grandparents might have had were no longer evident when he was growing up. He was allowed to bring home his friends without any signs of disapproval.

Linda’s story is somewhat similar to Manny and Joseph’s. Linda recalls that as a ten-year-old in 1965 when her Jamaican neighbour, Dudley, and his family moved next door, her father Charlie wanted to move out of the area. However, her mother Beth was adamant that they should remain. After a few casual encounters, Charlie, who needed some electrical work done to his

house, discovered that Dudley was an electrician. Dudley fixed Charlie's electrical problem, and when Charlie offered to pay him, he refused, stating, "We are neighbours man, no problem". Subsequently, according to Linda, her father Charlie became "neighbourly" to Dudley. Though, "not that friendly, because even that was difficult for him".

Linda's family experience illustrates different views of the concept of neighbourliness. For while Dudley's understanding of what it means to have "neighbourly" relationships implies reciprocity (see Mauss, 1954), Linda's father Charlie does not share the same understanding. Charlie's understanding falls more in line with relationships between "guests" and "hosts" (see Benson, 1981: Chapter 4; Patterson, 1963: Chapter 14). In such "guest-host" relationships, there is an acknowledgement of "the distinctive ethnic identities of the individuals concerned, and the temporary and situational nature of their shared social activities (Benson, 1981:48).

While some English neighbours remained and became friends or just "neighbourly" with their Caribbean neighbours, others remained but kept their distance, and some tormented their neighbours in an effort to drive them away. Jenny's family experience is relevant here (see also Dusty and Dawn Smith's family in Chapter 3). During the mid 1960's Jenny's parents had managed to save enough money to buy a house in Chiswick. They were the only "black family" living in their neighbourhood during Jenny's entire childhood. She remembers it being, "just hell! They [their neighbours] made our lives hell!" Jenny's family received endless "racist" leaflets through their letterbox, and their windows were smashed several times. The worst for Jenny was the morning she woke up to find her cat dead in front of her door with a racist note strung around its neck. Under these circumstances, it wasn't surprising that there was no socializing between her family and the neighbours. This confused Jenny, because being the only "black" child in her school, she mixed with her "white" schoolmates without any problems. However, at home, all the socializing was with family and other Caribbean people.

Despite these neighbourhood experiences during the early stages, some of the most significant and intimate relationships developed from social interactions that occurred between neighbours from both groups. Seventy year-old Jada's experience is of relevance here. Jada, who during the time of my fieldwork was the sole white English member of the Windrush Club, a club for retired Caribbean elders, told me how she met her Jamaican "sister" Dolcemina, and subsequently became a member of a "mixed family".

Jada had grown up in south London, remained there and raised her family there with her husband Lester. In 1955 Dolcemina and her Jamaican partner bought a house a few doors down from her. Jada who was pregnant with her third child at the time noticed that Dolcemina, who was pregnant with her first child, passed by her door daily on her way to work. One day the two women "bumped" into each other, and Jada invited Dolcemina in for a cup of tea. The two women quickly developed a close friendship, and when Dolcemina and her partner decided to marry before their baby was born, it was Jada whom Dolcemina asked to be her bridesmaid. When Dolcemina was ready to deliver her baby, her brief labour prevented her from reaching the hospital on time, and it was Jada, who was a nurse at the time, who delivered Dolcemina's baby at home. As a result of this, the two women developed what Jada described as an "inseparable bond to this day", and they consider themselves "sisters".

The situation between Jada and Dolcemina illustrates a relationship that is based on shared understanding – and contrasts with the experience of unshared understanding of "neighbourliness" we saw earlier between Charlie and Dudley. From a spontaneous invitation for tea, the two women developed a friendship and an eventual "sisterhood" (according to Jada), that continued to operate on reciprocity and mutual obligation (see Mauss, 1954). Their "sisterhood" was formalized with Jada becoming the godmother of Dolcemina's child.

1970s-1990s

In 1970-71 when Susan Benson conducted fieldwork in Brixton on twenty “interracial households” and “the impact of racial divisions upon their lives” (Benson 1981:vii), she described the relationships between individuals of different ethnicities in Brixton as relations between strangers, “albeit strangers who might well live in the same street or work in the same factory” (p.48). Additionally, she characterized the nature of social interaction that did develop between individuals across ethnic boundaries, as interactions between “guests, hosts and marginals” (p. 48-50). As the previous section shows, this situation was the experience for some individuals during the 1950s to 1960s. However, I was also interested to determine to what extent such experiences were common from the 1970s onwards.

The scattering of the Caribbean population that began in the 1960s continued in the following decades, so that by 1991 Caribbean people were found to be living in practically all the London boroughs – though some areas showed higher concentrations than others (see Owen, 2001:73; see also Appendix 1). Thus, not only had Afro-Caribbeans and indigenous British people continued to work side by side, but there were now more of them living cheek by jowl. By the 1970s the children of the first migrants had reached secondary school age. In all these contexts social interaction between the two groups increased.

There was also more social mixing between Afro-Caribbeans and their English neighbours. To a large degree, this contributed to the ease with which the children of Caribbean migrants and their indigenous peers were able to socialize in their schools between the 1970s and the 1990s. Twenty-eight year old Pearl (born 1975) offers a vivid image of life growing up on an estate in South London:

Where we lived, it was very mixed. There was no group that wasn't living in the blocks around, so it was very multicultural. And obviously, most of the kids that were on the estate where I lived, went to the same school, so it's like you knew somebody who lived up there at no. 44, or across the way opposite you. You knew their family, you always knew someone, or met someone that went to the school, and

who had brothers and sisters that went to the same school, so it was like a massive area of different groups of people. When you live in blocks of flats, you tend to find that, with the kids, they all tend to bond together.

I've always been used to the mixture. I've never really had the problem of racism in my face, personally, from that era. I think there's one instance when my mum said that ... I was at nursery, and I came home crying, and she said, "What you crying for?" And I said, "Because [other child] doesn't want to play with me, because I'm black". And she just went, "Right. Fair enough". And she basically pushed me in front a mirror, and she goes, "Yes, you are black. There's nothing you can do about it, so get on with it". And that was that. She never made an issue of it.

I didn't understand what the deal about being black or being white was all about. And my friends ... my best friend is white, and I have black friends, but I also have white friends, and I never saw an issue with that. Never saw an issue with that.

I wasn't brought up in a tribe of people, a collective of people who were all black. I've always had a diverse group of people around me. And as I said, my mum would never use race as an issue, and neither did my dad.

Evidently, the degree of social mixing in neighbourhoods relates to the local social composition. Pearl's experience is typical of individuals who grew up in neighbourhoods with people from diverse ethnic/cultural origins, which had become a very common situation. The social mixing that occurred was not just among the children playing out in the streets, but also among their parents in each other's homes. Furthermore, in many cases, the children were the catalyst for social mixing among their parents, because they brought their friends home, and their friendship contacts often initiated contacts between their parents.

In areas where the residents were predominantly English, the situation was more complex, and ranged from no social exchanges between the two groups, to minimal contact in the streets in the form of pleasantries – such as "hello", "good morning" etcetera. Here too, however, in few cases, neighbours developed close friendships despite their initial attitudes towards each other. An example is Merna, whose mother Lisa disapproved of her playing with her

Afro-Caribbean friend in primary school in the late 1960s because she was a “different colour”. In 1980 at sixteen Merna met her first important boyfriend Floyd at a youth club, and her mother again disapproved because he was “black”. This created a conflict and Merna left home when she was seventeen. But Floyd’s uncle Peter, who had married an English woman, also lived in the neighbourhood, and they frequented the same pub as Merna’s mother Lisa. Over time, Lisa and Peter became such “close friends” at the pub, that by late 1980s, when Merna was able to introduce her Afro-Caribbean partner to her family, Lisa had become more tolerant of non-English people.

Leisure and social activities

1950s-1960s

While there was a minority of “anti-coloured” organizations with slogans such as “Keep Britain White” during the initial period of Caribbean settlement, Glass notes that the official attitude, “Keep Britain Tolerant” could be summed up as supporting “interracial harmony” (Glass, 1960:193). Furthermore, attempts were being made to promote tolerance. By the late 1950s a few upwardly mobile West Indians had joined long established organizations such as churches, political parties and trade unions, student organizations, as well as sports, jazz and other social clubs (Glass, 1960:195-195; Patterson, 1963, 240-254). After the 1958 riots, there emerged “interracial” social organizations set up both by “white” and “black” sponsors aiming at the integration of West Indians into British society. But with a few exceptions, where activities such as jazz, dancing, cricket, dominoes, and billiards attracted some West Indian migrants, these organizations were not successful. And despite the “interracial tag”, only a few “white” members participated (Patterson, 1963:242-243). This could partly be related to the degree of welcome “white” people felt they had at these clubs. Karen for example, recalls frequenting a West Indian club in the mid sixties as a teenager with three of her friends, and not feeling very welcomed “as the only white persons there”.

On the other hand, as Patterson notes, many migrants had radiograms and preferred to listen to their own forms of jazz and calypso music at home or in one of the “coloured” clubs that were then mushrooming (p.240). Similarly, for my research participants, social mixing took place largely in “black” clubs, and in Caribbean homes in the form of house parties, because as one couple said, “this is where we felt safest”. Indeed, up until the late 1970s house parties were the prime locations from which many enduring friendships and also mixed relationships developed (the Smiths house in Chapter 3 provides a good example). Thus, house parties may be considered as primary seedbeds for germinating the dynamic and complex family forms which I came to observe during my fieldwork. Thus Jada became part of a mixed-heritage family through her encounter with a Jamaican man, Harold, whom she met at a house party hosted by her “sister” friend Dolcemina and Dolcemina’s husband.

Dolcemina’s husband George had brought his very large sound system with him from Jamaica to London. In London he played music at parties in his own house, and in the homes of other Caribbeans. Dolcemina and George hosted parties as a means of supplementing their income. Jada enjoys dancing, and she went to numerous parties with Dolcemina and found the experience “very romantic and dramatic”. One night in 1962, she met Harold, who had arrived that day, “fresh off the boat from Jamaica”.

Harold had left his two boys in the care of relatives, with the intention of later calling for them to join him in London. Upon arrival he went to live with Dolcemina and George whom he had known from Jamaica, and who by now had become “family friends” of Jada and her family. Harold soon became friends with Jada and her family also, and at Christmas she invited him to join her family for dinner. By now Jada and her husband Lester had eight children. After dinner, when the family retreated to the front room to open Christmas presents, Jada noticed that Harold was missing. She went looking for him and found him crying in the kitchen. When she asked him what the matter was, he replied, “I wonder what my kids are doing today?” That night Jada consoled Harold by telling him that she would do whatever she could to help get the

children to England by the next Christmas. This was the beginning of what became a deep personal friendship between them. After Harold left, Jada called a “family conference” with her husband Lester and their eight children, and discussed what they might do to help Harold. Jada persuaded her family to help sponsor Harold’s sons.

Still working as a manual labourer and living in one room of his friends’ house, Harold was unable to save up enough to pay for his son’s passages, let alone provide them with accommodation. However, as poor as Jada and her husband were, between them and Harold, they saved enough to bring the boys over to London in time for the next Christmas. Upon their arrival, they lived with Jada and her family, an arrangement that was supposed to be temporary until Harold saved up enough to get a bigger place. However, after a few months, it became apparent that Harold would not be able to move into his own home any time soon. Jada decided to keep the boys, and fostered them.

Jada’s children were already accustomed to mixing socially with their Caribbean neighbours. Having the boys living in the family home required some adjustments, yet from several accounts, the initial adjustments among the ten children posed the least challenge. It was the relationships between the children and their parents that proved more challenging. Harold’s paternal role had now also been extended to Jada’s other eight children, and to his sons, Harold and Lester both became “dad”, and Jada became “mum”. This situation was perplexing for the children, but eventually they did establish their relationships with their parents in terms of parental roles.

Jada’s family story thus illustrates how, between the 1950s and 1960s despite prevailing public opinion, Afro-Caribbeans and white British individuals did come together through innovation and experimentation to form lasting friendships and mixed-heritage families.

1970s-1990s

By the 1970s, with the drop in Caribbean migration to Britain, there was also a decrease in public racism. Additionally, a series of Race Relation Acts (1965-1976) legally banning racial discrimination in public places (see Goulbourne, 1998:101-103) resulted in more recreational spaces that were accessible to both blacks and whites, such as dance clubs, local pubs, and youth clubs. However, as Chapter 7 will show, the social climate of the 1980s (a series of riots between young blacks and the police: see Hiro, 1991; Solomos, 1993) brought a resurgence of hostility from whites towards blacks, and black resistance towards forming alliances with whites, with some people from both groups disapproving of mixed relationships and marriages.

But while some blacks became “militant” – influenced by Black Power and Afro-centrism - and only socialized among their own group, others saw segregation as supporting racist dogma, and continued to socialize in ethnically-mixed public spaces. For some individuals, this caused problems both from whites and blacks. Gus, a white Englishman, remembers his favourite nightclub in London’s East End which he and his two “black friends” frequented during the 1980s. Although this club was ethnically mixed, “we’d get in problems with black guys because they didn’t like them being with me, or we’d get into problems with white guys because they didn’t like me being with them. But you know what, that was their problem, because I believe racism has only ever caused pain. It can eat you alive. I want no part of it”.

Some young black adults, who defied their “restrictive Victorian upbringing” because they felt that model did not “fit” in 1980s London entertainment culture (for example punk and the New Romantics), found themselves socializing in social spaces that were mainly inhabited by their white counterparts. In doing so some were seen by their Afro-Caribbean families and friends as “abandoning” or “rebellious against my black culture” (Becky). Others felt the need to abandon the notions of group identity that they felt had been imposed upon them, even though their agencies of socialization were by

now influenced by both Afro-Caribbean and white British communities. During the 1980s, Jenny, for example, who had been studying to become a social worker, was working as a community service volunteer with homeless people around London's West End. Jenny embraced the "alternative culture" she had found through her work, much to the "embarrassment" of her family. Jenny told me that:

Working in the West End had a profound effect on me. I got attached and fascinated by the gay scene. I'm not gay myself, but I love that world. ... It was seedy, it was going against the norm, it was friendly and unpretentious. I love the lifestyle. I love the gay men I came across, as well as the lesbians – there were black gay men, but the majority was white, so I was mixing mainly with white people. I felt comfortable being in that setting. It was so far removed from my rather restrictive and conservative upbringing.

I think my parents' generation is so conservative. In my family when I was growing up it was all different. My parent's siblings all came to England and they all lived together and had the same friends. My dad was in a steel band with my uncles, so they hang out together. The women would be talking and the men would be playing dominoes. There wasn't many clubs in my mum and dad's generation so there would always be parties in our house. My parents' house was the house to have parties. The parties would be with all their friends and all the people that came from Barbados with them.

And there was I, I was a punk, this black woman with dyed blonde hair, these amazing zipped clothes. I was a real rebel, and my mother couldn't cope, my brothers were just embarrassed by me...call me a 'whore' for going out with a white man. I'm talking about in the early eighties. You didn't see that many black women who adopted that kind of alternative lifestyle. And many places I would go, I would be the only black woman there...I was into my punk music, then I became a new romantic with Duran Duran, and went to all these very sort of eighties clubs dressing up in these sort of new romantic make-up and boots... I looked like a slut I think on some occasions, with my fishnet tights and boots [laughs].

I just didn't relate to my parents generation from the Caribbean. I wanted to get away from west London, cause everybody was... you know, I would walk down the road, I could see my aunt, I could see a ... you know, it was so intense! People would see me down our street and tell my mum, 'Oh, I saw Jenny with this white man deh you know!' To which my mother would respond, 'You sure is Jenny?' And they would say, 'Yeah, cause Jenny is the only black girl around with gold hair'.

When she met and “fell in love with a white man”, James, her mother was very disapproving of the relationship; “Jenny, don’t you bring a white man in dis house you hear me!” Her brothers’ reaction was, “What you doing to with a blood claat [very unpleasant Caribbean swear word] white man?” To James they asked, “What you doing to my sister?” Her family’s behaviour made it impossible for the relationship to continue.

In retrospect Jenny felt that her family had “just reason” for their resistance to her white boyfriend, because of the experiences they suffered at the hands of white racists in the 1950 and 1960s. Hence, she acknowledges the existence of racism, but her own experiences of mixed sociability at the time did not equip her to understand their behaviour towards her boyfriend. Jenny did eventually leave home, and like Becky, by “abandoning” her “black culture” for an alternative “white culture”, she told me that she experienced prejudice from the “black community”.

Although individuals like Gus, Becky and Jenny were aware of the existence of racism in London/Britain as young adults, through their mixed socialization, they have managed to interrupt the reproduction of racist ideas (see Back, 1996:Chapter 6). As Becky put it, “racism is wrong no matter who it is coming from”. Hence, they were able to deny the importance of colour in forming friendship relationships. Moreover, other white and black individuals continued to visit mixed dance clubs, local pubs and youth clubs and to form friendships and relationships. As a result by the 1990s, statistics revealed the highest percentage of inter-ethnic group partnership to be between second generation Afro-Caribbeans and their white British counterparts, with the largest numbers in London (see Chapter 1). On the other hand, as chapter 7 will show, due to the racism of this period, some people – especially individuals in mixed relationships who are visible targets for racism - remained cautious about the places they went for entertainment. Thus, they tended to form friendship alliances and socialize either with liberal people or with people in similar situations like themselves.

In sum, this section has shown how mixed sociability between West Indians and white British people could result in innovative forms of relationships, whether originating with juxtaposition as children at school, or as colleagues at work, or from encounters as neighbours and through leisure activities. It was within these slowly growing interactions/experimentations that mixed relationships were able to develop, such that, from the 1970s (although earlier for a few) there began a gradual increase in mixed-heritage families among Afro-Caribbeans and white British individuals in London. Furthermore, this process of social mixing has continued despite continuing social prejudice discouraging its development. For each time new intimate relationships evolve, contacts are made with the individuals' wider family and friends, which often set in motion further mixing. And with the arrival of children and grandchildren, a further incorporation takes place into the wider mixed-family network.

This cumulative process of family incorporation is not unique to the families in my research. What is striking about these families, is the nature of the process of incorporation. To begin with, individuals have had to struggle to devise strategic and innovative ways to overcome societal or familial prejudices at the start of their relationships. Equally, for the kinship network to function, individuals have also had to negotiate and adjust in order to accommodate differences in cultural and familial upbringing and expectations. Moreover, these strategic and innovative practices often maintain family and kin relatedness even after separation and divorce. I move on now to describe mixed sociability as I experienced it during my fieldwork in 2002-03.

Current sociability

Sociability among neighbours

Most of my research families had become established by the 1980s. During my fieldwork, I was forever struck by the dynamic, borderless and flexible degree of social interactions, social exchanges, and forms of family relationships that existed among individuals in the families, and also among their friends. To begin with, it was unusual to arrive into a neighbourhood and not find it peppered with a mixture of peoples from all national origins - Caribbeans, English, Irish, Africans, Asians etcetera. As I moved through front doors and into back gardens/yards, I was further struck by the number of families who did not have dividing fences between their neighbours who were often either Afro-Caribbeans, white British, Asians, or a combination of these. Not only were there no boundaries between many properties, but neighbours were exchanging services such as gardening and lawn mowing.

Linda, for example, is an English mother with two children of English parentage, and two children of mixed English and Afro-Caribbean parentage. Linda lives with her family in northwest London on a corner lot, with elderly Afro-Caribbean neighbours to her right. The scene in Linda's back garden is not common among the back gardens I saw. For even families without dividing fences usually maintained some division such as separate flowerbeds. Between Linda and her neighbours, however, not only is it impossible to find even a shrub that demarcates their property boundaries, but they have jointly constructed a shared back garden and a barbecue pit. Furthermore, there is a brickwork path connecting her back door to her neighbours'.

To an outsider, the scene conveys an instant sense of familiarity between neighbours. On the weekends that I visited, there was constant bustle of activities with Linda or her son mowing the merged lawn, while her two younger daughters and the neighbours grandchildren run in and out of both houses in play. Naturally my curiosity led me to inquire about the extent of

the relationships between neighbours. Linda told me that the reason there was no fence between the houses is so that both families could enjoy the whole space. She told me that growing up as an only child in her middle-class family, she always felt that "there was something missing; the love and the warmth of people around. But I've built that up now, I have found that right here with the people around me". Not only is Linda familiar with her immediate neighbours, but as we walked along hers and the neighbouring street, she appeared to know everyone that she passed with a similar kind of familiarity. I asked her how she came to know the people in her neighbourhood, and she told me that there is a "strong community spirit" in both streets. This "community spirit" apparently blossomed a few years back when individuals in the neighbourhood got together to protest against commuter parking for the nearby train station.

Thus, instead of past situations where some English neighbours moved away from their "strange" Caribbean neighbours, the relationships I observed among neighbours were not that "between migrants and hosts" (Patterson, 1963:215-224), but relationships that were in constant "rhythms of exchange" (Stack, 1974:40-44). Not only do neighbours socialize in each other's homes, but nearly all the families share in the holding of spare house keys with their neighbours "for emergency situations". For many, it is to neighbours that they first turn in cases of emergency. Relationships between neighbours, particularly those living on estates, extend far beyond leisure activities and helping out in occasional emergency situations, to regular exchanges of childcare, picking up children from school, small food items, and small money loans. I first became aware of this depth of exchange relationship between neighbours on my second visit to Petra's home on an east London estate.

Petra is a second-generation Afro-Caribbean woman who lives with her English partner and their three children. One Tuesday morning I arrived at her house and found her alone with her sixteen-month-old baby. Her two older children were at the nearby primary school. At around three in the afternoon I remarked that I should be leaving so that she could get her children from school. She told me that there was no need to rush, because it was Pearl's

(pointing across the road) turn to pick up the children from school that day. When Pearl (an English woman) arrived with her three children and Petra's two from school, I soon learned that there was a network of young families living on the estate, who lived away from their extended families of origin. They look out for each other and help each other out as a regular practice. Since my experience with Petra, I have subsequently observed this practice among other families, especially those living in council housing.

Leisure activities

Outside of the social interactions among neighbours, there were, for some families, neighbourhood activities that were set up and run jointly by both English and Afro-Caribbean individuals. During my fieldwork, I also experienced locally organized community/neighbourhood activities that included both Afro-Caribbeans and white British individuals. Thus, there is a children's weekend activity group in the local community centre of which Linda is actively involved; a Church of England monthly bazaar that Lorna, a first generation migrant Caribbean woman runs with her English committee members; and the volunteer organizations that Owen is actively involved in, and the women's group to which his wife Babette belongs.

I was particularly struck by my experience at the Windrush Club (a retired senior club for Afro-Caribbeans) Christmas party. Jada became the only white English member of the Windrush Club several years ago through her activities on a local project, conducting life story and reminiscence work on artifacts and foods that Caribbean migrants brought to Britain. The members of the Windrush club were so impressed with the outcome of the project (in the form of a booklet) that they invited her to join their committee. She declined on the grounds that she wasn't Caribbean. After much urgings, she became a member, and is now a very active fund-raiser and events organizer for the club.

In mid December 2002, Jada invited me to the Windrush annual Christmas luncheon. I arrived there expecting only to see the seniors, but found instead three generations of Afro-Caribbeans and white English people packed in the room filled with long tables and chairs. Many of these seniors were the same people Jada had told me about earlier; people with whom she danced at house parties in her youth; the men who offered her drinks, and the women with whom she visited maternity clinics, and waited outside schools for their children. According to her, “these were the people with whom I’ve grown up with and raised our children together for the last forty-five years”. There were the seniors’ children and grandchildren, their friends, and even the local councilors. Many of the children of the Caribbean migrants had now become members of mixed-heritage families, and had brought with them members of their extended families. Most people seemed familiar. After lunch the tables were cleared away, and some old Caribbean music was produced. A couple of songs later, Jada and eighty year-old Selma (a Jamaican woman) began to dance. The synchronized rhythms of these elderly women conveyed a sense that they had danced before, and that Jada was familiar with Caribbean music. After their dance I asked Selma which of the two of them taught the other to dance, and she replied, “Who knows! Jada has been one of us for so long now, it’s hard to say”.

The experience of this event was for me, akin to that of a film that had been fast-forwarded fifty years into the present. I felt as though I had experienced in one day, and in one large room, the development of the social relationships between these people that had taken place over decades, across generations, and through social and personal struggles. I wondered how it must have felt for the members of the Windrush Club who had lived the experience from the beginning to now. However my impression of the event, based on the accounts of the past, was that for them, these were happier and more comfortable times.

In the main, in the current landscape with no colour sanctions on recreational spaces (see Chapter 7), the individuals in my research families say that they feel more secure in most places. But because prejudice and discrimination do

continue, they tend to be selective in their choices of places for leisure activities. They continue to have house parties, and their friendship network consist of individuals in their similar positions, because this is still where they feel most comfortable.

Sociability in schools

I did not make observations in any secondary school, and my only observations in primary schools were when I accompanied mothers to collect their children. But based on what I saw, I would say that the schools I visited had a very ethnically mixed student population. Mothers from all ethnic backgrounds chatted casually, and with familiarity with each other while they waited for their children, and as the children rushed through the doors - many holding hands - they cheerfully bid goodbyes to each other. From my observations in homes, it was evident that children made important friendships with their schoolmates, as they were often visiting each other's homes, and having sleepovers.

Mixed-family sociability

Mixed families in themselves provide an important context for mixed sociability. For example, in the majority of my research families, there are at least two individuals from both Afro-Caribbean and white British backgrounds who have partnered with individuals from the other group, thus expanding within their own families the possibilities of mixing between the groups. In Kelly and Patrick's family for example, Kelly and three of her sisters have married English men, and Patrick's uncle is also married to an Antiguan woman. Hence, by the time of my fieldwork in 2002, the families that I encountered were made up of intricate webs of connections, and complex forms of family sociability and relatedness, which has been revealed in varying degrees in all the ethnographic chapters thus far. Here, however, I will offer a more general view of mixed family sociability as I observed it.

Overall, although factors such as growing family size, cultural differences, colour prejudice, family conflicts and individual lifestyles can place limits on cross family sociability, some families do manage to bring together extended family members from both their Afro-Caribbean and white British families, thus enabling extensive social mixing. During my fieldwork, outside of the usual family interactions within homes, I attended numerous family functions, including one funeral, three weddings, four christenings, numerous birthday parties, house parties and Sunday dinners - events where family members come together in large numbers. Rose (a white British woman) and her husband Raleigh (an Afro-Caribbean man) for example, regularly have house parties with their families from both sides attending. In Chapter 3 we find Dawn and Dusty's grand-daughter Anna's wedding providing a snapshot of sociability across families and generations at one event. Another remarkable event that I attended, and which exemplified the ongoing social interactions between friends and across families over time and generations, was Jada's seventieth birthday party.

Jada's house is the hub of family sociability. I came to know all her children and grandchildren and many of her friends as they dropped in for visits. However, arriving at her birthday party and finding the house brimming over with over fifty people (most of whom were her "family") was overwhelming. There were her husband, her eight birth children and their families, her two fostered Jamaican children and their families, their Jamaican father and his English wife, her sister with her Italian husband and their son and his family, and various friends, including some members from the Windrush Club, and her "sister" Dolcemina who had returned from her retirement in Jamaica, specially for Jada's birthday celebration. There were, overall, four generations of people at the event that had been mixing socially for over fifty years, and this was evident in the ease and familiarity with which individuals moved among each other, and from the speeches and songs that were delivered. Also remarkable was the variety of cuisine present - English, Italian, Polish, and Caribbean - and the familiarity in the way it was consumed. This event for me, reflected the strong alliance that is possible between individuals as a result

of social interactions over time, despite their ethnic origins, and social sanctions.

Sunday dinners

Although the many family events and get-togethers provided me with some insights into family dynamics and forms of relatedness, it was at open-door Sunday dinners that I was most consistently able to observe family sociability in action. This was because Sunday dinners were weekly events for most families. Hence, not only could I discern the quality of family relationships from ongoing observations, but from the family histories I heard, I was able to observe and analyze the continuities and changes that were occurring within the current family practices.

The frequency of social contacts among family members always depends on geographical propinquity. For members who are more geographically scattered, contacts are less frequent, and family get-togethers are often planned around birthdays, holidays, and summer picnics. However, almost all the families with members living nearby came together at least weekly, usually on Sundays for socializing and eating food. As with Gobi's family in Chapter 4, although Sunday dinner - lunches or teas for some - was an element of family life during most people's childhoods, among their current extended families the practice has continued, but with modifications made in order to accommodate individuals' lifestyles, family size, and other family obligations. Hence, in contrast to the past practices of families coming together at the same time and sharing food at the same table (commensality), the practice has been transformed to a more flexible and individualistic approach. Although members converge in a home as a family, the formal aspect of sitting down and eating food at the same time has been removed and replaced with a more laid back approach, whereby individuals come at various times that suit them, help themselves with food – often finding available space to eat with a tray on lap –and leaving at their convenience. The family reminiscences and sharing of weekly events that occurred around the table in the past now take place among individuals milling between little groups from room to room.

Additionally, from the past stories of children having to behave and often being “bored” at the dinner tables, sociability has become such that the children now segregate from the adults and play among themselves in a more relaxed fashion.

Family size has contributed largely to the new approach to Sunday dinners. As the family expands, for many, it becomes no longer possible to meet at “mum’s” or “nan’s” house, and now negotiations and adaptations are constantly being made to accommodate not only for family size, but also family obligations between different strands of the extended family. Raleigh’s parents migrated from the Caribbean in the mid 1950s, and they had ten children. Although his mother Clare is “not very religious”, she took the children to church almost every Sunday, and in their home, after-church Sunday dinner has always been a tradition. When I met the family, the Sunday dinner was still being practiced, but because of the growth in family size and Clare’s advanced age, the event had been modified to accommodate the now large number of individuals. Instead of Sunday dinner at Clare’s house, the event now rotates between four homes. One week it is held at Clare’s house, another week it is held at Rose and Raleigh’s house, and the other two weeks it is between two of Raleigh’s sisters’ houses. These are the people with the largest amount of living space. Thus on any given Sunday, one might find between twenty-five and thirty-five individuals at the event.

Another modification, due to family size was in the food provision. Instead of Clare preparing the entire meal, now everyone contributes to the provision and preparation of food. Contributions to food provision was a common feature across my research families, as a result of growing family size. Modifications were also made in the kinds of foods that were cooked and consumed, in order to accommodate different palates (see Goode et.al., 1984). To begin with, I found that many first-generation migrant Caribbean people have continued to cook largely Caribbean cuisines. Those who have partnered with white British people have taught their partners to cook Caribbean foods. Thus, Dusty taught Dawn to cook Caribbean food, and among the second generation we find the first migrants teaching their daughters-in law to cook Caribbean food.

Although the migrants' children have largely maintained a preference for Caribbean foods, they have also adopted other national cuisines - such as English, Italian, Indian, Chinese etc. - often combining elements from these different national cuisines into new and distinctive creation. As with other forms of cultural modifications, such food practice could be perceived as a form of creolization, a practice that has also been occurring in the Caribbean for centuries. As we move into the third generation, this shift to include a wider variety of cuisines has become even more evident. Hence at Sunday dinners, while there may be various Caribbean foods such as rice and peas, ackee and salt fish, curried and browned meats and fried plantains and dumplings, one will also find cabbage and mayonnaise salad, various pasta dishes, mashed potatoes and English bakes and puddings, and combinations of these dishes in interesting distinctive dishes – and this, whatever the social class of the families (cf James, 1997).

Sunday dinners thus provide one of the most vivid settings for observing family sociability, and for understanding the continuities, modifications, and changes that occur in families as a consequence of mixing between groups, and as a means towards the effective functioning of the extended family. It is here too that the degree of family cohesiveness, and the extent to which family relatedness continues after breaches, may be deduced.

Summary and conclusions

This chapter has traced the emergence and growth of mixed sociability experienced by my research families from the 1950s to 2003. One of the crucial factors in this appears to have been their school experiences. According to my interviewees, at secondary school it was not from other students but from their teachers that they most often experienced discrimination. Furthermore, by secondary school the Caribbean migrants' children and their white British peers had come to share what some termed a “common culture” in terms of language, music, and leisure activities, to the

extent that many of them were able discern and reject the discrimination and negative views in society – and for some even within their own families.

These accounts correspond with Back's (1996) findings in his study conducted in the mid to late 1980s at a youth club in south London. Here, Back found a complex relationship of "inclusion and harmony juxtaposed with differentiation, exclusion and racism". However, despite these complex and ambiguous relationships, Back also found that a "syncretic" (or what Bert, the white male in Chapter 2 and myself, would perceive as "creolized") working-class youth culture has also developed that was "neither black nor white but somehow a celebration of shared experiences". This "syncretic" youth culture, according to Back, "constitutes a volatile working-class ethnicity that draws on a rich mixture of South London, African American and Caribbean cultural symbols". Back makes particular reference to the transatlantic connections of music cultures of South London – Caribbean, North American and South Asian. Furthermore, as with my interviewees, Back found that despite the prevalence of racism in the locality, on the whole, "young people did not passively reproduce the ideologies of their parents. In the adolescent community, an inclusive localism is formulated where it is wrong to exclude people on the basis of colour" (ibid: 98). Thus, despite racial prejudice, with increased mixing over time, individuals have come together in friendships, intimate relationships, often resulting complex forms of family relatedness.

Additionally, within some contexts/spaces of social interactions between Afro-Caribbeans and white British individuals, the chapter illustrates some of the different understandings which individuals have regarding the nature of their relationships. Some people have shared understanding about "neighbourliness" and friendships, and share in spontaneous and reciprocal relationships (Mauss, 1954). Others do not have a similar degree of mutual understanding, and relationships become more formal as in relationships between "guests and hosts" (Benson, 1981; Patterson, 1963). Shared or unshared understandings between individuals in a context of mixed sociability depend on a number of variables including the nature of interracial contact, the period of time over which relationships are maintained, the history of the

relationships, and the attitudes individuals hold towards such relationships. These factors could determine whether or not racism is reproduced in a context of multi-ethnic and multicultural existence.

The chapter also shows that in a context of mixed sociability, black and white identity “is defined as a reaction to racism but also as the creative, process of self-reconstruction” (Back, 1996:146). This was particularly evident during the 1980s and 1990s among the young adults (black and white) who had grown up together in the same neighbourhoods and attended the same schools. While some of their white parents continued to hold racist ideologies, and some of their black parents continued to segregate themselves, these young adults were able to formulate their own notions of identities or social selves, while abandoning or “vacating” public notions of identity (Back, 1996: 240).

Also evident in the chapter are the different innovations and experimentations that are necessary in a mixed ethnic and cultural context in order to accommodate difference. One example is Jada’s family where family practices are worked through in innovative and experimental ways, or how Pam’s Welsh Home Economics school teacher tried to incorporate the different foods in her class in order to accommodate the children from diverse ethnic origins.

Finally, with regards to family life, because of growing extended family size, cultural differences, family expectations and obligations, family practices are constantly being adjusted and transformed in order to accommodate family members and achieve a reasonable functioning of the family network. An example of this is the modification of custom at Sunday dinners. Contrary to the predominant emphasis of James (1996) on class, my research shows that food cannot only be analyzed in terms of social class, but also in terms of history, social relationships, ethnicity, and cultural transformations . By contrast Goode and her colleagues (1984) found in the Italian-American community where they researched that food content was a matter of varied individual and family choice and negotiation. This seems much closer to the processes which I observed in my research families. For members in my

research families, “menu negotiations” take into account many factors including ethnicity, history, age/generations, diversity of individuals, lifestyles, family size and individual preferences. Thus, as with other aspects of their lives, even cuisine has experienced a form of transformation that can be seen as a process of creolization.

Chapter 7

Mixed-heritage, racial prejudice, and social positioning

Chapter 6 has mapped out the growth of mixed sociability experienced by my research families from the 1950s to 2003. We have seen how despite public and often personally experienced racial prejudice, individuals have come together in friendships and intimate relationships, for some resulting in the formation of mixed families. We have also seen how over time, with increased mixing and cultural exchanges, the children and grandchildren of the Afro-Caribbean migrants and their white British counterparts have come to share similar interests. Given this evidence, how has the rise in mixed sociability in London in the past fifty years influenced the experience of racial prejudice of individuals in these mixed-heritage families? This chapter aims to address this question, while exploring the strategies family members have used to counteract prejudice through the generations. Additionally, it examines mixed-heritage individuals' understanding of their social positions within their families and within the wider society, and their agency in constructing and establishing their positions in British society. Thus, it reconsiders Benson's suggestion that, "for the mixed-race child...there were problems inevitably arising from an ambiguous ethnicity" (Benson, 1981:134). But first, a look at the concept of racism itself.

"Racism": real or imagined?

Racism becomes an everyday life and "normal" way of seeing. Its banality and invisibility is such that it is quite likely that there may be entirely "politically correct" white individuals who have a deeply racist perception of the world. It is entirely possible to look at racism at the level of ideology, politics and institutions...yet possess a great quantity of common sense racism... Outside the area which is considered to be "political" or workplace...this same white activist (feminist or solidarity worker) probably associates mainly or solely within white middle class people. That fine line which divides pleasure and comfort from politics is

constituted with the desire of being with “people like us” (Bennerji, 1987:11).

This quote echoes the experiences of many Londoners, yet the debate over racism as an ideological construct versus racism as material reality continues among social scientists.

American race relations literature, as well as the experience of the apartheid system in South Africa and the rise of Nazism in Germany, strongly influenced the race relations analysis in a number of other societies including Britain, where the field of race studies was established during the 1940s and 1950s (Solomos, 1993:16). First coined by the American anthropologist Ruth Benedict, “racism” was defined as “the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority” (Benedict, 1943:97). For Benedict, racism referred to ideas that defined “ethnic and racial groups on the basis of claims about biological nature and inherent superiority and ability” (Solomos, 1993:17) – nineteenth century ideas about race and progress.

In Britain early attempts to theorize race and racism were dominated by two central themes. “First, the patterns of immigration and incorporation into the labour market of black and other ethnic communities. Second, the role of colonial history in determining popular conceptions of colour, race and ethnicity in European societies” (ibid:18). During the 1950s and 1960s a number of early studies under the “race relations” rubric were carried out, with the main focus on the interaction between the “immigrant” and the “host” communities in employment, housing and other social contexts, but little theorizing about racism (see Banton, 1955, 1960; Glass, 1960; Patterson, 1963).

By the late 1960s, the theorization of race and racism picked up steam when social reforms were put into action in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement, urban violence and unrest, and the emergence of black power ideologies and

forms of cultural nationalism which helped to reshape “race” politics in the USA and other parts of the world. In Britain, social transformations around the issues of race that emerged during this decade focused on issues of migration and settlement (see Back and Solomos, 2000; Goulbourne, 1998). Michael Banton’s *Race Relations* (1967), and Rex’s *Race Relations in Sociological Theory* (1983) illustrate the trend in research and debate since the 1960s. Banton employed a global and historical approach to compare “race relations” in Britain with societies in the Americas and South Africa. He focused on the situations that arise from cultural contact, attitudes to the concept of “race”, and the social relationships individuals construct on the basis of “racial” categories” (Banton 1967).

For Rex, the study of race relations was concerned with situations whereby the existence of certain structural conditions (such as conflict over scarce resources, harsh class exploitation, strict inter-group distinctions and occupational segregation, cultural diversity with limited group interaction, or migrant labour as an under-class fulfilling stigmatized roles) interacted with, and influenced actors’ definitions in ways that produce a racially structured social reality (Back and Solomos, 2000:5). In other words, “race” is used in everyday discourse as a basis for social action. In effect, it produces differences that carry unequal access to certain “goods”.

Both Banton’s and Rex’s works were later critiqued by Robert Miles (1989), who objected to the existence of a sociology of race relations, and argued that the concept of race, and the very noticing of skin colour had become collectively shared and disseminated as popular ideologies, partly because of the long history of Western cultures of the elaboration, articulation and application of these ideas - a “conceptual inflation” (Miles, 1989:42). For Miles, “race” is an ideological construct which disguises the real economic relationships in society, and lacks any theoretical basis for analysis. Hence, from a Marxist position, Miles takes the

object of analysis from race to racism, but still as an *ideology*, which he views as integral to the process of capital accumulation (Miles, 1989).

Essentially, Miles argues that the patterns of knowledge production are intimately connected to social and material conditions. He notes how some meanings persist as effective systems of social justification, even after being refuted. For example, although modern biologists may have disproved the existence of discrete racial populations, race and racism continue in everyday language, because they serve to justify important everyday functions.

Although Miles' arguments are very cogent at one level, what is less clear in his accounts is the issue in which many people are interested. That is, how ideology might articulate with and influence political and economic conditions. In other words, how effective is ideology? Do the representations of Jews and Blacks have any power that makes them worth studying? Is ideology an epiphenomenon, a polluting but insubstantial cloud suspended above the social relations of production, or does it have characteristic effects within a social formation? What role does ideology actually play in a society and in everyday life (as well as at an economic and political level), and in personal relationships? Is it possible that ideas might act back on the economic base and may there be some reciprocal influence between forms of discourse and social relations? These are material (real) concerns that when addressed more closely, do not support Miles' argument that racism is a "false" explanation and representation of social processes/actions.

In North America a number of social scientists (see Lichtenberg, 1998; Omi and Wnang, 1986; Ng, 1993; and Sniderman and Piazza, 1993) have shown the interrelationship between politics, power and racism – the material reality of racism – and would counter Miles' argument by stressing the notion of "commonsense" and its usefulness in demonstrating how ideological processes are not merely located in people's minds and in theory. "They are embedded in people's daily practices as the normal ways of doing things; in other words,

ideology including racist and sexist ideology, is taken for granted and normalized” (Ng, 1993, p.57). Thus ideology is forceful and effective, in that it has visible results, particularly for the victims of racist ideologies. This is evident, for example, when a black male driving a fancy car is stopped by a white police officer because the officer, drawing on racial stereotypes, assumes the car is stolen or the black male is a drug dealer.

Finally, ideology can be material by fixing individuals into positions within hierarchies (Lichtengerg, 1998). “Systems of ideas and practices have been developed over time to justify and support this notion of superiority. These ideas become the premise on which societal norms and values are based, and the practices become the ‘normal’ ways of doing things (Ng, 1993, p. 52). Thus ideological representations can become embedded in institutions and manifest in a range of actions in everyday life. From this point of view then, ideology is not just about ideas or beliefs, but concerns the practical conduct and real existence of human beings. For example, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service was affected by a culture of “institutional racism”, particularly in terms of canteen talk and stereotyping of possible offenders, which was propelling most officers into racist practices, as opposed to merely a black sheep minority of individual racists (MacPherson, 1999:Chapter 6). As Lichenberg (1998) notes, “racism is not [just] a matter of what’s in people’s heads but of what happens in the world” (p. 43).

Miles has made a major contribution to the scholarly debate on “race relations” by shifting the analysis from “race” to “racism”. His definition of racism as an ideology, and the arguments he sets forth in support of his definition, are very convincing: especially his claim that racism articulates with the ideologies of sexism and nationalism and is historically specific. However, with his focus on class and capitalism (social processes), he ignores the mental processes that might sustain ideology. He is less clear on how ideology might articulate with and influence political and economic conditions, or how stereotypes can serve social

functions and sustain oppressive power relations. By focussing on truth and falsity, Miles' work neglects the actuality of ideological practice. Even if we were to agree that racism is "in the head" (Lichtenberg, 1998), overtly racist attitudes and beliefs do not exhaust its content. Less-than-conscious attitudes and belief still occupy our mindsets. And even if individually such attitudes seem insignificant, collectively they add up to pervasive habits of behaviour that can bring injustice to a whole group of people.

In Britain, there have been some important studies since the 1980s exploring the role that ideology and political discourse play in contemporary processes of racialization (see Gilroy, 1987; Back and Solomos, 2000; Blumer and Solomos, 1999; and Solomos, 1993). Back and Solomos, for example, note that although Miles has made a great contribution by insisting that "'races' are created within the context of political and social regulation" (Back and Solomos, 2000:8), the danger in this position "is that it can result in a kind of class reductionism that ultimately limits the scope of theoretical work on conceptualizing racism and racialised social relations" (ibid). This point is of particular importance to the individuals in my research families. For among them, not only "working-class", but also "middle-class" and "professional" individuals have been victims of racism.

Essentially, what these current investigators do is not simply to reinstate the previous conceptions of race. Although they share Miles' concern to understand the dynamics of racism, they do challenge his treatment of class in British society, and reflect significant changes in the wider political and theoretical environment (Mason, 1999). Gilroy for example argues for the need view the "race" concept seriously, because "the actions of organizations of the urban social movement around 'race' may themselves assume symbolic significance" (Gilroy, 1987: 236). In effect, the more recent debates offer evidence which support the notion of racism as material reality. For example, Solomos points to the complexities of racially motivated attacks in Britain. Although far right-wing groups are not

always directly involved, the impact they have on the everyday lives of many black people in this country is very clear, and the widespread nature of these attacks as well as everyday forms of racial harassment have been confirmed by a number of surveys by the Home Office, the Commission for Racial Equality and local authorities (Solomos, 1993:191).

These authors argue that we need to “avoid uniform and homogeneous conceptualizations of racism” (Back and Solomos, 2000:20). They point to the “new racism” or “cultural racism” in contemporary Britain within the political culture and in everyday life. This is evident in the policies and attitudes towards immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, and above all on the focus on the perceived threat to “British culture” from Islam. The focus is increasingly on “the mythic ‘British/English way of life’ in the face of challenges posed by the incursion of ‘foreign influences’”. Thus they highlight the “need to situate racism and ideas about race as changing and historically situated” (Back and Solomos, 2000:20). From this perspective, the question of whether or not race is an ontologically valid concept is irrelevant. What is more important to understand is “why certain racialised subjectivities become a feature of social relations at particular points in time and in particular geographical spaces” (ibid). And this is certainly relevant for individuals in my research: what roles have racist ideologies played in people’s everyday lives and personal relationships?

From her research carried out in Brixton between 1955 and early 1958, *Dark Strangers: A Study of West Indians in London* (1963), Sheila Patterson argued that *xenophobia* (an intense fear or dislike of foreigners or strangers), did not properly describe British attitudes to outsiders. “The term’s derivation stresses an element of fear and implies a consequent aggressiveness that do not seem dominant in the contemporary British attitude, strong as it is. ‘There’s a foreigner. Let’s heave a brick at him,’ is no longer the general reaction in Britain” (p. 207-208). Instead, Patterson argues that “*xenophygia*” (flight from strangers), might be a more precise term, as it stresses “aversion to and avoidance of outsiders”. Hence, the

general reaction, “There’s a foreigner. Let’s keep our distance”, which does not relate only to people outside of the United Kingdom, but are also characteristic of relationships within the society – for example between the English and Scots, the Northern English and southerners, between counties, villages, boroughs, and even streets – still operates among the residents in Brixton (p. 208). In Patterson’s view, the situation in Brixton was not a “colour or racial situation”, but an “immigrant-host situation, in which the newcomers’ visibility serves mainly to draw attention to the problems inevitably found in the early years of immigrant absorption” (Patterson, 1963:9-10). In effect, what Patterson has done is deny the presence of racism in British society.

However, in light of the evidence of other studies conducted around the same period as Patterson’s (see Chapter 1), as well as the accounts of individuals in my research, I would argue that both *xenophobia* and *xenophygia* describe British attitudes towards the West Indian migrants. For while some British people did keep their distance, for example by not letting accommodation to the Caribbeans (see Chapter 3), or moving away when Caribbean neighbours moved into their neighbourhoods (see Chapter 5) – *xenophygia* - some West Indians did indeed get bricks (and knives, and bottles) thrown at them – *xenophobia*. The 1958 riots could be argued as evidence of xenophobia in British society at the time. As Glass (1960) points out, the summer 1958 riots in London took place beyond the fringes of the “coloured settlements” – unlike the Nottingham riots of that same year which occurred in an area densely settled by “coloured people” – and “the worst offenders were from housing estates and districts that were almost wholly white” (p.133):

As in Nottingham, the large-scale disturbances in London, too, were preceded by a series of apparently sporadic assaults on coloured people. But in London it was not the retaliation of a few coloured men which sparked off the crowd outbursts, nor was there a definite chain of incidents during the turbulent days. ‘Nigger-hunting’ simply spread and collected an increasing number of partisans – active forces and passive spectators-simultaneously in several districts. Although no one was killed, the actual violence, and even more the cumulative threats of violence, produced an

atmosphere of menace and fear which closely resembled that of a textbook race riot (Glass, 1960:134).

As we move from the 1950s and 1960s into the next decades, Patterson's argument holds even less strength. From her research in 1973 on Jamaican Migrants in London (1979), the anthropologist Nancy Foner concluded that, "It is the racial stereotypes that most English people believe in and the discrimination that blacks must constantly face that make blackness a stigma in England" (Foner, 1979:42). Based on beliefs that were still being reinforced by the media, by government actions and by "respected public figures" during the 1970s, Foner (citing Lawrence, 1974:198) states that "racial distinctions are built into British cultural definitions, and those who hold unfavorable views about black people are normal rather than exceptional" (p. 42; see also Lowenthal, 1972:224). Given these conclusions, it is not surprising that there was an "aversion to intermarriage or miscegenation among a large section of the British population" (Patterson, 1963:248; see also Banton, 1955; 1959; Hill, 1965).

As part of a large survey in three different areas of North London exploring colour prejudice in Britain in the early 1960s, the Reverend Clifford Hill (1965) investigated 36 cases of "racially mixed" marriages in London. In 1961, Reverend Hill stated in a broadcast talk on B.B.C. Caribbean Service on Commonwealth Day that, "provided they were in other ways, compatible, I would be happy for my daughter to marry a coloured man" (Hill, 1965:218). His statement was published by the British press, and provoked seven days of "mostly foul and abusive" correspondence through his letterbox. Among these were the following:

Your statement in a newspaper that you would not mind your daughter marrying a black man seems to me so indicative of the low social conditions in England at present that I feel I must expostulate. Even horses, cattle, dogs, and cats are mated and bred to be of pure race. How much more should man 'made in God's image' be strict in preserving our white heritage! Why lay the possible onus and curse on your child of breeding mongrels and half-castes and bastard children; a race of unhappy creatures who have ignored God's and Nature's rules... You ought to take

it as your duty to try to improve the level of life in England not to visualize a half-caste breed, who in such cases always take the worst in each other – so England's disaster would be complete...(an Englishman resident in Switzerland)

Interbreeding is evil and nobody could be proud of half-caste children. You've got a decent English heritage yourself, why plan to encourage your poor little lassie to breed children everyone is ashamed of? The idea of everyone being a wretched khaki colour with thick lips and flat noses in the future is abhorrent to all right-thinking Englishmen... All men are not born equal. There are centuries of evolution behind the whites and you cannot expect the blacks to attain in a few years an equality which isn't there (a Manchester woman).

We can integrate fellow Europeans, the Irish and even certain oriental races who have light skins, or 'European type' features. But God chose to make the Negroes very distinctive so that they cannot be integrated. It is not for you to tamper with God's handiwork! (A Middlesex man) (Hill, 1965:218-220).

The hostile correspondence led a week later to an attack on Hill's house, with slogans such as "NIGGER LOVER" and "RACE-MIXING PRIEST" painted over his doors and windows. Although there were also some letters of support, Hill's survey in North London revealed that 91 per cent of the population disapproved of mixed marriages between "white" and "coloured" people (Hill, 1965:209). Even among the local white population who had no objection to working with "coloured people" or having them as neighbours, they expressed strong disapproval of mixed marriages (p. 209).

Since these early investigations, while there has been no research on mixed white and Afro-Caribbean families in Britain, some insight into changing public attitudes may be gleaned from the British Social Attitudes Surveys (BSAS) and surveys carried out by other Institutes on ethnic minorities in Britain. For example, the Policy Studies Institute (PSI, 1997) surveys reported that the percentage of white people who thought most white people would mind if another white person married a non-white person fell from 75 per cent in 1983 to 33 per cent in 1996 (Madood and Berthoud, 1997:314-318). A more recent survey at the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR, commissioned by Alibhai-Brown 2001) supported the latest BSA report, and also reported that while 33 per cent of

whites thought that most people in Britain would mind if one of their close relatives married an Afro-Caribbean, 74 per cent said that they themselves would not mind (Alibhai-Brown, 2001:83). The PSI survey also reported that 84 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans said that they would not mind a close relative marrying a white person, while 15 per cent said that they would mind (mostly 35 to 49-year-olds). In both the PSI and the IPPR surveys, there was an age factor, with older people minding more than younger. Overall, the surveys revealed that currently in Britain, South Asians are the most disapproving of mixed marriages.

While quantitative data can provide useful indicators of changes in social attitudes, with regards to sensitive issues they can also be unreliable – as people may avoid responses that may offend. Hence, with regards to emotive issues such as those dealt with in this thesis, it is often through more in-depth qualitative inquiry that more reliable information might be gained. That said, by using the survey data as a point of departure, what have been the experiences of the people in my research, and how have they changed over time? As we shall see, negative attitudes to mixed families have been reduced, but have not totally disappeared.

Early families

The case of the Smith family in Chapter 3 provides a good example of a mixed family who suffered from the attitudes similar to those described above during the 1950s and 1960s. But while this particular family's experience of "racism" within the wider society was severe, their families of origin nevertheless embraced their union. However, most of these earlier families were not as fortunate as the Smiths. For the majority of them, hostility came not only from the wider society but also from individuals within their extended families.

To begin with, because of the social atmosphere during this period, many couples avoided going out together in public, because by so doing they became visible targets of racism. Merna recalled having to "run for our lives" from a group of

white youths in Harrow as she and her Caribbean partner walked home one evening in the late 1960s. Dawn and Dusty Smith went separately to and from the church in Islington on their wedding day in order to avoid racist abuse. Furthermore, because the wives were predominantly white English women, they suffered the most, as they became visible targets for racist verbal abuse while they were out with their children: mainly white people shouting at them, “Nigger lover”, “Black man’s whore”, and “Have you got a monkey in the pram?” In Jada’s family, no one was spared the experience of racism. While she herself suffered verbal abuse, her children were victimized at the local school (Jada raised ten children; her eight “white” children and her two “black” foster children). The white teachers told Jada that her “black” children were “hopeless” in the classroom: “These chappies are great on the sports field and therefore weren’t worth the effort”. Meanwhile her “white” children were taunted by their peers who called their mother a “tart” who must be “sleeping with a black man”, because she was raising his children. Many white wives experienced strong disapproval and ostracism from members in their families of origin. Over time, however, through a combination of increased interactions in families and in public places, and through the birth of children, some family members began to change their attitudes.

The 1970s and 1980s

The 1970s were a period of pause with less public racism. There was less new Caribbean immigration, and no public outbursts such as the 1958 riots. On the other hand, for some individuals, disapproval from their white families of origin persisted.

The 1980s saw a further and in some ways surprising change. While on the one hand, within the families, disapproval by other family members had lessened and some had become reconciled, on the other hand, the drop in public expressions of racism that had occurred in the 1970s was reversed in the 1980s. During this

period, public hostility came not only from the white community – including increased discrimination from the police - but also from the Afro-Caribbean community. After having experienced a less hostile phase during the previous decade, couples and families had gained enough confidence to venture out in public together, but the social climate of the 1980s incited a resurgence of hostility towards mixed relationships and marriages. While hostility from the black community came in the form of “unpleasant stares” and disapproving comments, physical abuse came from the white community. Merna, who, in the late 1960s had to “run for our lives” while she was out with her Afro-Caribbean partner, had remained in Harrow, where she grew up. During the 1970s life seemed “calm”. But one evening in 1981 while she and her partner were walking home, they were “badly beaten up” by a group of five “skinheads” with broken bottles and sticks, and had to be hospitalized. The couple became so “traumatized” that they soon left the area and moved to a more “mixed” area in west London.

Not everyone could move away so easily, both from lack of economic resources, and also from housing shortage. Karen was one such individual. In varying degrees, she and her family endured eleven years of “suffering” at the hands of racist neighbours in her south London home. Karen has been with her Afro-Caribbean partner since the mid 1960s, and had also experienced racism during that period. In the 1970s they moved to Lewisham to raise their family, but while she ignored the racist taunts during the 1970s, by the eighties the situation changed to violence. Here is her story:

When I first had my daughter we lived in Lewisham [1970s], and when I used to push her in the pram, this particular family which was quite staunch National Front family used to give me leaflets which said ‘Have I got a monkey in the pram?’ and stuff like that to me, because she was mixed-race. And so I used to ignore this type of thing, and really not give them any credence at all. And then as my children got older, the taunts went on in different ways.

When my oldest son was then sixteen [mid 1980s], and I'd gone out with a friend, just to go down and get some milk, and it was on our way back that this particular family started to say abusive things to us. So my friend said, 'Let's go and speak to their mother about this'. So that's what we did, and that was probably our first mistake. Cause as we went to knock on the door, there was more abuse shouted [at us]. So as we turned away they threw a really heavy piece of equipment at my friend's head, which was cut, and one in my back, which resulted in us both being in hospital.

And that just resulted in really weeks of torment from this family. And even though we knew the family who did it, because we couldn't say, 'Yes, this particular one threw this, this particular one', the police didn't do anything about it. And I was in fear. My daughter was only about eight or nine at the time, and she used to walk home from school with my other son, and I used to worry that they would be waiting for her down the end of the road while I was at work. So it was awful. And they'd come and knock on the door, banging on the door, trying to get us out of the house. So that was pretty hideous actually. It was a council house I was in. That wasn't a very pleasant experience. So they moved us here in 1989 [Forest Hill].

The lack of police intervention was a common experience for many families who suffered abuse. On the other hand, police harassment was also a common experience. This harassment appears to have intensified during the 1980s. White women especially reported being constantly stopped by the police, *only* when they were with their partners or other "black people". How might the rise in public hostility towards mixed Afro-Caribbean and white families during the 1980s be explained? Furthermore, why hostility now from the Afro-Caribbean community?

The 1980s were a period of social and political unrest in British society, and London in particular experienced its share. The unemployment crisis that had begun in the late 1970s intensified with the new Thatcherite government, such that by the end of 1982, Britain had experienced its highest unemployment rate ever (Marwick, 2003:228; Rosen, 2003). This resulted in especially high levels of unemployment for migrants who performed unskilled jobs in declining industries. While many South Asians turned to self-employment – mainly to small enterprises such as newspaper shops and neighbourhood groceries from limited

initial investment (Rosen, 2003:93-94) – the economic recession appeared to have weighed most heavily on “black youth” (Marwick, 2003:230). From a combination of unemployment and its resulting frustration, and intensive policing - some argue provocation/harassment on the part of the police - in black communities (ibid; see also, Phillips and Phillips, 1999:351-366; Hiro, 1991:81-96; Solomos, 1993: 147-158), a series of riots erupted in Britain between April 1980 and 1985. In London, the riots began in April 1981 in Brixton, culminating in 1985 in Tottenham.

Unlike the 1958 riots, the 1980s riots were “not between races, but between groups of mainly young blacks and the police” (Hiro, 1991:81). Both black and white youths participated in the rioting and looting (Hiro, 1991:86; Solomos, 1993:154). White participation was also explained in terms of unemployment and deprivation in the inner cities. On the whole, the factors that emerged as dominant causes of the 1980s riots “in popular opinion were an amalgam of poor social conditions and police misbehaviour” (Hiro, 1991:91; see also Solomos, 1993:154-158).

If the urban unrest of the 1980s was not primarily related to “race”, how then, might the white hostility towards individuals in mixed families be explained? One possible explanation is that earlier attitudes of whites towards Afro-Caribbeans, might have been re-ignited among racist individuals (such as skinheads and members of the National Front Party, who attacked Karen’s family) by the reporting of the riots. For although these were not really race riots, “a quarter of the population, predominantly white, held blacks responsible for the troubles” (Hiro, 1991:92).

With regard to emerging black hostility towards individuals in mixed relationships during the 1980s, the key factor was the rising influence of revolutionary “black consciousness” among second generation Afro-Caribbeans, which had displaced the “simple working-class consciousness” of their parents

(Benson, 2005:216). Unlike the situation in the 1958 riots in which the newly arrived migrants were intimidated by white racists, by the 1980s their children had become young adults, and had begun, since the 1970s, to assert their place in British society. Furthermore, although the Black Power Movement which began with the Civil Rights struggle in the United States in the 1960s had some impact on the migrants at the time, it was the visits of prominent Civil Rights and Black Power activists such as Martin Luther King, Stokeley Carmichael and Malcolm X to Britain, that most effectively raised the consciousness of the Caribbean community as a whole. It was during this period that “blackness” and “being black” became the idea which Caribbeans felt could define them, and reconnect them to their African roots (Phillips and Phillips, 1999: 231-236). Hence, in 1970, the Black Panther Movement and the Black Unity and Freedom Party were set up in London, with branches in other parts of the country. These groups advocated Pan-Africanism, African liberation, and called for radical change along class and racial lines in Britain and the rest of the world (Goulbourne, 1998:65).

Thus, with this new sense of “black pride/black solidarity” and self-affirmation, it is not surprising that members from the Caribbean community would begin to show disapproval to mixed marriages and families. This was expressed in comments such as “Sell out”, or “You are diluting your race/community/culture” from Afro-Caribbean men towards black women in mixed relationships, and “Have someone of your own” from Afro-Caribbean women towards white women. From such standpoints, for Afro-Caribbeans to form mixed relationships with white people was seen as a rejection of Black Pride. Furthermore, as some of my Afro-Caribbean peers have told me, they see mixed marriages/families as “lightening up” by “marrying up”, and in sharp contradiction to the efforts of the Black Power Movement of eradicating the internalized negative legacies from slavery and colonialism that exist among “black people”.

Nevertheless, despite the increased hostility during the 1980s and the efforts of black radicals, mixed relationships resulting in mixed families continued to

increase in London – ironically, many of the black radicals formed mixed families themselves. But as we shall see, prejudice against these families continues today

The current landscape

Racism within families

As we move into the current landscape, there appears to be a decrease in the experience of racism and disapproval within the wider family. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 illustrate examples of families where disapproval existed, but with increased association over time, acceptance and close relationships have developed between individuals. While some parents are not too keen on the idea of intermarriage for their children, the birth of grandchildren has continued to be a major factor contributing to family acceptance. In the 1980s when Jenny married her English husband, her Antiguan mother and her brother disapproved to the extent of severing all contact with her for nine years, on the grounds that she was “sullyng the family blood”. When Jenny’s first child was nine years old, she decided to reconcile with her mother, but the relationship between them only began to rebuild after her brother – whom according to Jenny, is her mother’s favourite child - had a child with an English woman, to whom her mother has become a very active grandmother.

For some families, on the surface relationships appear smooth, and only from individual conversations may apprehension or disapproval be detected. Effectively, what disapproving individuals have done, is strategically suspend their opinions – at least within the family – for the sake of the smooth running of the family network. Becky and Rodney’s family provides a good example. Both Becky’s Afro-Caribbean mother Willa, and Rodney’s English mother Patsy are apprehensive at having become members of a mixed-heritage family. We met Willa earlier, who had been hospitalized in 1961 from an attack by two white

males. Hence, her apprehension as a member of a mixed family is informed by her earlier experience. From observations, however, it is difficult to detect any anxiety in Willa. She relates well with her son-in-law, has regular contacts with Becky and Rodney and their daughter, and on the Sundays when Rodney works and can't attend Sunday dinner, Willa sends food home for him by Becky.

Becky has no knowledge about her mother's anxiety. In fact, she believes that her marriage is "not an issue" for her mother. Willa, on the other hand, told me that although she has reservations about mixed marriages, "my motto is that if a man takes care of your daughter and he cares for her, you have nothing to say but good things. She is happy, and no mother can ask for more than that. He is like my son really".

With Rodney's mother Patsy, there is also apprehension. Contact between Patsy and her son's family is quite frequent, and she is fairly active as a grandmother to their child. She even went shopping with Becky for her wedding dress. However, while Rodney believes that his mother is "delighted" about their family – based on her behaviour – and Becky sees her relationship with Patsy as closer than with her own mother, Patsy paints a more ambivalent picture:

I'm very glad they [Rodney and Becky] have come together, but having the baby, that worries me. I am not very happy being a grandmother to a mixed-race child. No, I don't agree with it. For Rodney and Becky I have no problem, but generally speaking, I don't agree with the mixture. I don't want everybody being brown. I think people should keep their identity. I think it's very, very important actually. Maybe there'll be no problems, because things are easing up so much, but...I personally don't think it's an ideal situation. ...You don't want to lose cultures, you know! No, I think it's very important that people keep their culture.

I think people should mix socially... In some ways that's why we don't get a lot of trouble in this road. We are so mixed we are not a ghetto. I think you need to mix, but I'm not sure about intermarriage, I'm really not.

Despite her ambivalence, Patsy provides regular childcare for her grandchild. Additionally, she introduces Becky as her “daughter”, and maintains that she has a closer relationship with her than with one of her own daughters who is an “alcoholic” and an “irresponsible mother”. Effectively, what the two mothers have done, is to find ways of suspending their own apprehensions regarding mixed families, and adapt to the choices made by their children, for the sake of maintaining family connectedness. As Patsy points out, “it’s his [son’s] choice. I’m not married to her [Becky], and I wouldn’t risk losing my child over his partner”. Hence, as in other aspects of family relatedness, here we find the women investing tremendous effort in *doing kinship*, even at expense of their own beliefs.

Finally, with regards to experiences of racism within families, where strong disapproval remains without any willingness on the part of the disapproving individuals to adapt, parents devise means of protecting their children from the experience of racism. Mary, for example, has been very familiar with racism in her family since she first met her Afro-Caribbean partner Jessie in the 1960s. However, over time, her maternal family changed their views and accepted Jessie and their children, but her paternal relatives remained estranged. Mary’s paternal grandfather died years after her children were born, and was never told of his grandchildren. It was only when her grandmother became ill that she was told of her grandchildren. Apparently, Mary’s relatives kept the knowledge from both grandparents because “they thought it would kill them”. Before her grandmother died, she requested to see Mary’s children, but Mary declined her wish, because, as she put it, “I felt that her racism was too entrenched, and I wanted to spare them the possible look on her face”. When Mary’s grandmother died in 2000 she went to her funeral without her sons.

Although in Mary’s case there was no reconciliation between her and her paternal family, her strategy of avoidance was devised as a means of protecting, or as she put it “sparing” her children from racism. According to her, “there is enough out

there that they will have to contend with as mixed-race boys who will be treated as black in our society, so they don't need to experience it in their family also".

The Wider society

As in the 1980s, in the current landscape these mixed families have continued to experience racism from individuals in the wider society, from both "blacks" and "whites". On a number of occasions in public places, I observed racism towards members of the families in my research, ranging from disapproving stares, to unkind comments. However, one particular event stood out as a prime example of how little some people's attitudes have changed towards mixed-heritage families:

On a Thursday morning in August, I went to visit Petra and her children. As it was a nice sunny day and the children were off on summer holidays, Petra seized the opportunity of my company and help to take the children on a day outing. We decided to go to Greenwich. In Greenwich we strolled around the market for a while looking at the different stalls, and then sat in the patio of a nearby pub for lunch. Petra's youngest child who was twenty months at the time was sitting in her stroller. At the table next to ours was a couple I assumed (based on their spoken accent) to be English, and the woman started a conversation with Petra, seemingly admiring the baby in the stroller. "Oh, how old is the little un?" she asked Petra. "Twenty months", replied Petra. "Oh, I bet she speaks different languages because of her dad", said the woman. "No, she only speaks one, English. Why?" Petra replied. The tone of the conversation instantly changed, as the woman began to express her opinion about "mixed marriages". "Oh, I don't agree with all these mixed marriages and children being born this colour, and half that, and half the other...". Petra responded, "You know what lady, that is your opinion, and you are very much entitled to it, but what makes you think my children and I would like to hear it". The situation became somewhat

uncomfortable, and Petra and I asked for containers to pack the rest of our food, and we went to the park and finished our lunch with the children. On the way to the park, Petra pointed out to me that it was because of such experiences that she feels it important to educate her children about race. "That woman was fine until she found out that my child was half white. Any other race would have been fine, but not her own race, God forbid! What is the problem with these people?"

Such a public display of racism, although it still happens, is not the most typical current experience. One couple described two incidents of physical abuse in public; one in 1989 in which the white male was struck by a black male as he and his partner walked holding hands in Hackney, and the other was in 2000 in which they were attacked by a black male in Portobello market. More common are disapproving stares and unpleasant comments. Furthermore, among the current generation it is primarily when they venture outside of their neighbourhoods that they experience racism. In sum, although experiences of racism for individuals in mixed families have continued through the generations, for most of them the intensity of incidents has lessened, reflecting the changing political and social climate. At the same time the strategies that individuals use to cope with racism have also changed.

Dealing with racism

Among the earlier families, because of the hostile social attitudes towards Afro-Caribbeans and mixed marriages at the time, a strategy of avoidance was taken to cope with racism. One strategy for couples was to avoid being seen in public. Because of the general lack of social support during the earlier years, when racism was encountered in neighbourhoods or in the general public it was largely ignored by the victims. The Smith family endured all forms of racism, from swastika and human excrement, to "Get out you Black bastards" written in black all over their

front door. Their reaction was simply to “wash it off! What else could you do?” Dawn told me. Similarly, when women encountered racist comments while out with their children, they usually ignored them.

The older Afro-Caribbean men also spoke of their strategies for coping with racism. Dusty Smith, despite the neighbours reaction to his family, felt that if “I behave myself as how I see people are behaving around me, then eventually, people would change their attitudes”. Thus, by not playing loud music, and keeping his surroundings tidy, he was “fitting in like a jigsaw puzzle”. By the 1970s Dusty was indeed “respected” by his neighbours. The men in his local pub who refused to serve and drink with him in the 1950s and 1960s later came knocking on his door for him to join them. Humour was another tactic some of these older men used to cope with racism. Owen, for example, laughed at the “absurdity” of his workmate who thought he came from a tree like monkeys, before proceeding to educate him on such matters.

For most of these earlier families, their main strategy for dealing with social racism was to socialize with others like themselves. According to Fred, “We all stayed in our own little world, cause it’s safe, it’s familiar, and you want to be with people you can relate to”. This applied to family and also to friends. Karen, for example, one night heard her best friend’s husband, whom she had also been friends with for many years say, “If my daughter went out with a black man I’d put her in her coffin”. Karen, who at the time had a “black” partner herself, left instantly, and has not socialized with her friends since.

The experience of public racism still continues though different in intensity and in kind. Although there was a resurgence of racist experiences in the 1980s, individuals among the current families have since become more active in dealing with racism than those from the earlier families. Since the 1960s, public housing policy and also individual initiative have resulted in a much wider geographical dispersal of Caribbean migrants so that more live in mixed neighbourhoods, thus

increasing the likelihood of social mixing (see Appendix I). Secondly, the legal banning by successive Race Relations Acts (1965-1976) of racial discrimination in public places and housing and employment, afforded more social rights to Caribbean migrants and their children (Goulbourne, 1998:101-103). Thirdly, the 1981 disturbances in London resulted in a situation whereby migrants could finally have their voices heard by local and national governments (ibid:66).

Given these developments, not only do individuals in the current generation of families have more choices in terms of housing, places to live, schools to send their children, and places of leisure, but they have also become more empowered – partly due to their own agency – and less willing to be passive recipients of racism. Thus, as individuals and as families, they have devised several strategies as means of counteracting racism, which enables them a more comfortable existence than the generations before them.

Neighbourhoods and schools

To begin with, due to the growth in mixed neighbourhoods in London, mixed families now have more choices of tolerant places to raise their families than did the earlier families. The majority of them have consciously chosen to live in mixed areas. Of the couples and their children, all except one live in an ethnically mixed area. We saw earlier how after two racist incidents, Merna moved from the northwest London area where she grew up to a more ethnically mixed area in west London. Linda, who said she grew up in a “very small British middle-class community and didn’t know anything else about anybody else in any part of the world”, after travelling as a young adult, “realized that there was a world of different cultures and people besides what I knew”. When she married her first English husband, she decided to raise her family in an area of London with “mixed cultures”, and she encouraged her children to “mix”. Linda’s daughter Magda conveys the views of many families in the current generation. According

to her, growing up in an ethnically diverse area is a “natural thing, that’s all I know”. Magda, who herself has an Afro-Caribbean partner and a child, “cannot imagine living anywhere that is predominantly white. I feel he [son] needs to be able to mix socially with people from all cultural backgrounds, cause I don’t want him to grow up with a narrow mind”. Another man, Adam, who grew up in a small Welsh community, feels that raising his “mixed race children in a white neighbourhood where they never see another black face would be irresponsible”.

Rose, who grew up in east London in the 1960s, was used to having Caribbean neighbours and friends at her school. After marrying her Afro-Caribbean husband, she remained in east London to raise her family. In the 1980s when the council was tearing down her estate, they decided to re-house her family in a new Housing Association scheme. When Rose went to the council office to choose a home, they told her, “You can’t have one of those houses because they’re for Asians and minority groups”. However, when Rose, who said she “wasn’t buying any of that racial thing” [by which she didn’t want to be segregated from non-white families] told them that her family was part of a “minority group”, she was given her choice of home. Rose’s situation illustrates how even in the current landscape, individuals in mixed families still have to struggle against institutional racism in order to create the life they wish for their families.

The one family who chose to live in a predominantly “white” area illustrates the unease that this can bring. Alice and Buster who are both school teachers bought their house in 2002 from a fellow workmate in South London. After moving in, they realized that except for the occasional “three or four black persons” on the high street, Alice was the only non-white person in their immediate neighbourhood. Their neighbours on the right were very welcoming, but the neighbours on their left according to Buster, were “not very friendly, in fact, a bit funny”. After about six months these neighbours moved away, having lived there for over thirty years. They did make a point of telling Buster –though he never asked – that the reason they moved had “nothing to do with neighbours”, but after

telling their friend from whom they bought the house, they were told, “Oh they have strong views when it comes to black and white and that sort of thing”. Buster and Alice remained with their family, and a Jamaican family moved into the vacated house. They now feel more comfortable, because they now have good relationships with their neighbours on both sides.

Part of the motivation for families to choose ethnically diverse areas to live, is related to the inevitable mixture of children from diverse ethnic origins in the schools. This strategy of choosing ethnically diverse areas to live in and send their children to school as a way of counteracting racism has proved very effective. It is in these areas that the least racism is experienced among the recent families.

Places of leisure

Families are also selective of the places they choose for leisure and social activities. Thus, they talked about going to places that they know cater to a diverse mix of people. Fortunately, most clubs and places of leisure in London no longer discriminate as they did in the past. But when families visited relatives living in small towns and villages outside of London, they spoke of how uncomfortable they feel when some of the local white people look strangely at them. Even worse than stares is the behaviour of some service people in these small towns towards the black family members: two people spoke of being ignored by white bartenders. It is for such reasons that Sid only goes from “a sense of duty” to visit his family in the small town where he grew up.

Similarly, as a tactic for avoiding becoming targets of racism, some couples avoid overt display of affection in public. Having had two racial attacks in the past five years while they were holding hands in public, Carla and Joseph have since avoided any form of physical contact in public. With Pearl and Bert, although they have never had any racist experience as a couple, she avoids expressing

affection in public because she is conscious of the disapproving looks she receives - especially from “black men” - and is concerned for Bert’s safety.

Friends

It is also with people who are similarly in mixed relationships or mixed families, or individuals that are accepting of their situations, that members in my research families socialize. These are people with whom they can share common experiences, common interests and common political views. Some individuals lost their adolescent friends once they became involved in mixed relationships. Jenny, an Afro-Caribbean woman, lost some of her childhood friends when she married her English husband, because she refused to respond to their battery of questions: “What are you doing with a white man girl?” “Can’t you find a black brother?” Jenny has remained friends with one woman who disapproves of her family situation, but her strategy is to socialize with her alone, and avoid any mention of her husband. Some white individuals sever their friendships with other white people because they cannot accept their constant stereotypical comments and racist jokes.

Challenging racism

Unlike the pioneering families who were largely intimidated, and would ignore or walk away from racism, today, among the current families and even now some earlier pioneers, individuals will more often than not challenge the racism they encounter. By confronting racism, they feel that they are educating others, and hoping to stop the perpetuation of racism. As Lorna put it, they are saying to people, “we deserve to exist in this society the same as you without your hostility and intimidation”. In effect, as individuals who have come together to form

family units, albeit from different cultural and ethnic origins, and by their reactions to racism, they are asserting their sense of belonging in British society.

We met Petra earlier confronting the woman in Greenwich who expressed her views about “mixed marriages” and children born of such marriages. I was also with Merna and her family one Saturday afternoon in Kew Gardens, when she responded to what she felt was a racist incident. As we sat having tea, one of her sons called out, “Mummy! Mummy!” A little white girl sitting next to us turned to her mother and asked, “How can that be his mummy? He is black and she is white!” Her parents began to giggle, and Merna turned to them and asked, “Are you going to explain to your daughter they [her sons] got a black dad and a white mummy, that’s why they are brown children?” Without replying, the family left.

For Karen, who herself has had her share of racist encounters in the past as a white member of a mixed family, now as a grandmother, continues to experience racism as she plays with her grandchildren in her neighbourhood park. She recalled the time a white mother turned to another white mother and said, “It’s the children I feel sorry for”. Karen turned to her and said, “My children have a lot of love, what is it you think they don’t have”?

Katrina’s neighbours went a bit too far with their expressions of racism. In 1999, after being repeatedly taunted by her neighbours, she woke one morning to find sprayed all over her door, “Katrina stinks of nigger”. She knocked on the neighbours’ door, and the mother came out and tried to argue with her. Katrina “dragged” the woman outside, “beat her up and threw her inside her house” and left. She then reported the incident of the painted door and her reaction to the police. The case was dealt with by Katrina’s family getting relocated by the council. There were other stories of individuals challenging people in public who made unkind comments about them, especially when couples were out together. Even Dawn, who in the 1950s to the 1970s “ignored” racist encounters, now challenges them. She finds her views constantly challenged by neighbours of her

own age, for example on the local bus, who disapprove of “mixed-race people”. The conversations never get far, however, as Dawn soon tells them their views are also directed at her, and she has spent too many years having to cope with them.

Some parents have also told me that they have had to go to their children’s school to deal with the reports of racism brought home by their children. One remarkable story is Merna’s - herself a schoolteacher, who says she is familiar with racism even at an institutional level. Merna showed me the letter (dated 2000) she kept which was the consequence of her action from her son’s reports of racism in his school. Although Merna and her children live in an ethnically-diverse neighbourhood, most of the children (white and non-white) attend the local Catholic school. Her older son Julius attends a different school and is one of two mixed-heritage students in his year. After several incidents of racial bullying, Julius told Merna, who went to the head teacher to complain. The head’s reaction was, that “children will always pick on other children’s *weaknesses* [Merna’s emphasis]”. To this Merna replied, “My son’s colour is not a *weakness*. How dare you”! The head apologized and Merna demanded action. The head acted by sending a newsletter to the homes of all the children stating, “We can’t dictate to you what you do at home, but we will not put up with any racism in our school”.

Some people reported being “shocked and surprised” when they experienced racism from friends. Cathy, was “shocked” when an old family friend whom she knew from Cambridge, “a well-educated, and well-cultured woman” asked her shortly after her daughter married a Jamaican, “When is some good news going to come out of your house?” Cathy replied, “My daughter has married the man she loves. Aren’t we all entitled to do that? The fact that he is black is irrelevant!” According to Cathy, leaving Cambridge has “opened up” her mind, and “I pity people who still hold those views”.

Dealing with racism within families

Finding strategies for dealing with racism within families proved most challenging. Unlike the above situations in which individuals feel justified in confronting racism, partly because of the knowledge that there are public policies in place to defend them (for example under the Race Relations Act), there are no policies in place for racial discrimination in the private sphere. On the whole, as one man pointed out, “people carry on badly in every family”, and racism may be considered an aspect of this. We have seen how some family relationships dissolve because of racist attitudes. When this happens without an attempt at reconciliation, it is usually because as a strategy, parents try to shield their children from racism. Conversely, when some parents become aware of racism within their families, they confront the individuals with those views, and try to reach some compromise whereby they may coexist as relatives, without their attitudes being revealed to the children.

With some individuals there are contradictions between the specific experience of belonging to a mixed-heritage family, and their general attitude towards such mixing. Patsy says she has “no problem” with her son’s marriage to his Afro-Caribbean wife, and from my observations, she relates well to her daughter-in-law and is an active grandmother to their child. Yet she also told me that she “disagrees with intermarriage” and “little brown babies”. Jenny’s mother ostracized Jenny and her family for nine years because she disapproved of her marriage to an Englishman, but has subsequently become an active grandmother to her son’s child by an English woman. These women have effectively made adaptations for the sake of relating to their children and grandchildren.

Educating children about “race”

Finally, because of the challenges which these families face, some parents feel it necessary to educate their children about “race” as another strategy for coping with racism. Those who do so, say that although their children are “mixed-race/biracial/mixed-parentage/English and Afro-Caribbean/mixed black and white/half black and white”, due to the pervasiveness of racism in British society, being “part white” would not defend against racism directed at “blacks”, because society ignores the white part of them. Essentially, by educating their children about “race”, they try to instill into their children a positive self-identification in a society that might try to negate this.

There is an interesting difference in the approach Afro-Caribbean and white British parents use in educating their children about race. While Afro-Caribbean parents educate from a historical and political stance, based on their awareness of the various socio-cultural constructions of colour, white British parents educate from a more individual position. For example, Richard, a second generation Jamaican, teaches his sons that although they are “mixed-race”, society will see them as “black”, because historically and politically, that has always been the case. Richard tells his sons: “People are going to see a black boy when you go to find a job, when you walk down the street, when you get stopped by the police. Therefore, while I want you to feel comfortable about where you belong and how you identify, you also need to know the history of black people in this country”. On the other hand, Merna, an English woman, teaches her sons that they should embrace their “dual-heritage”: “Never see your colour as a weakness. If someone is going to look at you certain ways because of the colour of your skin, that’s their problem. Don’t try hard because of your colour. Try hard for you, because you want to succeed in life”.

The difference between these two parents’ approach might be explained in terms of the historical experience of racism. Racism for Afro-Caribbeans in Britain has

been an ongoing experience, so that their attitudes are informed by their experience. For many whites, racism remains something that is observed, and only after becoming part of a mixed family have some white individuals experienced the impact of racism.

Some parents felt that there was no need to educate their children about race. Their rationale was that although they realize that racism pervaded the society, they believed that raising the issue might prove counterproductive. Hence, they relied on their children to focus on the positive racial attitudes they encounter from family and friends. However, other researchers have suggested that in order for mixed-heritage children to develop a positive self-identification, discussions about “race” produced more positive outcomes in the long run (see Wilson, 1981; Tizard and Phoenix 1993). My observations and the narratives told by mixed-parentage adults and children support this view. I was visiting Petra one afternoon when her nine year-old son Junior came home from school complaining of bullying from another pupil who called him a “half-chat monkey”. When Junior wanted to know what the term meant, the explanation turned into a half hour discussion that ended with him educating his younger sister about differences in skin colour, showing her different shades of brown from a book. This scene demonstrated the emergence of an awareness of a socio-cultural construction of colour in London, even among the very young.

This basic lesson in understanding racism and colour distinctions in a context of mixed sociability was missed by Verna and her siblings Kate and Jude (see Chapter 5) in their upbringing. Growing up in their village community in the Midlands in the 1980s, these siblings felt that they “didn’t fit in because it was full of white people”. In their schools they were called “Blackistani” by their white peers, and were “always made to feel different”. Furthermore, this was during the height of the Black Pride renaissance, and according to Jude, while “white people were treating me different cause I’m not white, black people were treating me different cause I’m not black”. In retrospect, they felt that had their

parents been less “neutral”, and educated them about the importance of skin colour in this society, they might have been more equipped to cope with the hostility they experienced. Thus, although Verna and her sister Kate believe that “race” has become less of an issue for their children in the current context of “multicultural” London, they do respond to the queries of their children regarding racial issues, in a manner in which they believe that their children can learn about the issues from historical and political perspectives.

Essentially, by educating their children about racism, parents are informing them about the history of their kinship in the historical and political context of Britain in general and of London in particular, thus instilling in them a sense of belonging as citizens within their society. Moreover, although parents feel that their children should be aware of racism and how people might treat them based on the colour of their skin, they believe that it was also important for them to embrace their dual-heritage.

Collectively, these strategies for coping with racism over time and generations have been instrumental in facilitating the *positive* identification and sense of belonging among the children in these mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families, which has been another significant change that has occurred from the earlier families to the current one. This final section illustrates how this change came about.

Locating the self in the context of mixed sociability

The presence of racially mixed persons defies the social order predicated upon race, blurs racial and ethnic group boundaries, and challenges generally accepted proscriptions and prescriptions regarding inter-group relations. Furthermore, and perhaps most threatening, the existence of racially mixed persons challenges long-held notions about the biological, moral, and social meaning of race...

The increasing presence of multiracial people necessitates that we as a nation ask ourselves questions about our identity: Who are we? How do we see ourselves? Who are we in relation to one another? ...Resolving

the identity crisis may force us to re-examine our construction of race and the hierarchical social order it supports (Root, 2004:143).

This extract by Maria Root refers to the “biracial baby boom” in the United States that began about twenty-five years ago, after the laws against miscegenation (race mixing) were repealed in Virginia in 1967. But in the British situation too, the same questions might be asked: “Who are we? How do we see ourselves? Who are we in relation to one another?” But before exploring these issues among my research families, a note on ethnic identity.

As with the concepts of race and racism, ethnicity is a contested concept. Is ethnicity something stable that is essential or fundamentally given or guaranteed in the distinctions between groups of people – “primordial bonds” or attachments (Geertz, 1973:255-310), or is ethnicity fluid, whereby through “self-ascription”, individuals or groups choose to shift or alter their ethnic identification depending on the circumstances (Barth, 1969:14)? The debate among earlier scholars was never quite clearly defined, as both positions overlapped in many ways. Geertz, for example recognized that, “The general strength of such primordial bonds, and the types of them that are important, differ from person to person, from society to society, and from time to time” (Geertz, 1973:259). For his part, Barth, while rejecting the idea that ethnic groups are definable by some cumulative inventory of cultural traits that their members share, recognized the power and stability that may be inherent in ethnic identifications: the “organizing and canalizing effects of ethnic distinctions” (Barth, 1969:38, 10).

Whereas the earlier generation of anthropologists and other social scientists viewed ethnicity as cultural reproductions, more recent scholars have taken a more holistic approach. They now look at culture, history, and politics, as significant factors in social relations that influence individual or group identities (see Cohen, 1996; Hall, 1996a; 1996b). As Hall notes:

Identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured. Never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation (Hall, 1996a: 4).

Thus Hall suggests, “We need to situate the debates about identity within all those historically specific developments and practices which have disturbed the relative ‘settled’ character of many populations and cultures, above all in relation to the processes of globalization”, [which he argued] “are coterminous with modernity, and the processes of forced and ‘free’ migration which have become a global phenomenon of the so-called ‘post-colonial’ world” (ibid).

It is within this framework that the “new ethnicities” identified by some recent scholars may be analyzed (see Back 1996; Hall, 1996b). “New ethnicities” that account for “*difference* and diversity” (Hall, 1996b:161-3) - both culturally and subjectively – and that are situationally defined, may be strategically or tactically manipulated, and capable of change at both the individual and collective levels (Jenkins (1999:89). It is also within this framework that the new ethnicity among the mixed-heritage individuals in my research finds relevance. For as I will show, their ethnicity is “not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one” (Hall, 1996a:3). Along with the other kinship processes, their ethnicity may be viewed as a form of Creole ethnicity, because as with other processes of creolization, their “Mixed” ethnicity developed through a process of becoming, through innovative strategies over time, and in their local context.

“Mixed-race” children and new ethnicities

The psychological adjustment of “mixed-race” children has been a popular area of concern in the United States and in Britain. The popular view had been that neither the black nor the white community accepts children born from mixed marriages, who therefore develop identity problems because of their ambiguous

social positions (see Gordon 1964; Benson, 1981). Thirty-five years ago when Susan Benson conducted her research on mixed couple families in London, based on reports from parents about their children's "identity", and from incidents Benson witnessed, she concluded that many of the children had "identity problems" (Benson, 1981:143). "For the mixed-race child... there were problems inevitably arising from an ambiguous ethnicity" (p134), and more than a third of the "mixed-race" children "were reported by their parents to have problems related to their ethnic identity, which typically took the form of attempts to deny or negate the fact of their colour" (p.142), and to "define themselves as white" (p. 141).

Benson's work had special credibility – because she was mixed-heritage herself – but as we shall see, her argument was almost certainly mistaken for a number of reasons. First, with a sample of twenty-seven children ranging from a few months to over twenty years, without any indication of the ratio of older to younger children, the reliability of her conclusions are questionable. Secondly, and I believe most importantly, her conclusions regarding their "identity" were not based on the children's own accounts, but on the anxieties of their parents and upon her own impressionistic observations. Therefore, one could argue that her evidence was scanty and without sound empirical basis (Wilson, 1987:16). Thirdly, her result could reflect the social-political time when her research was conducted, for indeed, there was some time lapse before the subsequent studies that reported "positive identity" among "mixed-race" children (see Wilson, 1981; Tizard and Phoenix, 1993). However, this argument is not totally plausible, as a contemporary of Benson's also reported positive identification among "mixed race" British children (see Durojaiye, 1970).

My sample of thirty-four mixed-heritage families included twenty-nine adult children of mixed-heritage (I made contact with fifteen) and at least ninety-eight children (of whom I got to know forty-three between the ages of one and a half and nineteen years old). Of those who were born between 1950 and the early

1960s (contemporaries of those in Benson's research), only one person, Lolly, reported having problems with her ethnic identity. Lolly was born in the early 1960s to an English mother and a Barbadian father. When she was eight her mother had a stroke and the family moved to Essex so her mother could be near her sister for help and support. Although Lolly only lived in Essex for two years, to her it felt like "ten", years that remained the strongest in her memory, because they were "just horrible". As the only "black" child in her school and in their neighbourhood, she was "constantly being called names for being black". Thus, because of the racism, Lolly wanted to be "white" so she wouldn't look different. After two years of hostile experience, the family moved back to an ethnically mixed area in London, and Lolly began to feel "comfortable" again with her skin colour. Unlike Lolly, the rest of the children from that period reported having "no problem" with their skin colour.

For example, Polly (born 1950) and her brother Mark (born 1951), grew up in a neighbourhood in north London where there were no other children like themselves to identify with, and where their family experienced harsh racism (Chapter 3). However, their experiences of growing up in a "multicultural home" (Polly's terms) with many people from various ethnic backgrounds influenced their positive self-image. Polly told me, "I never thought or wished I wasn't mixed. I just accepted it, cause I had this happy upbringing in a multicultural home where I could mix with people. And the people in the house always validated me and always used to say, 'Oh, you're so pretty. When you grow up you're gonna be lovely'". In her brother Mark's words, "I never thought of myself as a black person or a white person, I just thought of myself as a person. I have a white mother and a black father. Everybody had a mother and a father, it just happened one was white and one was black in my family".

Of the children born after the 1960s, there were only two, Verna, born 1969, and her brother Jude, born 1979 (see Chapter 5), who, like Lolly, felt uncomfortable with their skin colour. Verna and her siblings grew up in a predominantly white

neighbourhood in the Midlands. They too experienced racism from the community, and Verna recalls that she “wanted to be white, because I lived in a white area”. For her brother Jude, being the only “black kid” in his school where the teachers and his peers treated him “differently”, his desire was not to be either “black or white, but to get the hell out of there”, because “I just knew that I didn’t fit in”. However, as I will show, self-identification is fluid and changeable, and is influenced by the socio-political changes in society over time.

The accounts of “ambiguous identity” by Lolly, Verna and Jude point to the lack of open discussions of racial issues in their families as a strategy to counteract racism. Neither Lolly nor Verna and Jude’s parents educated their children on issues of “race”, and for these children, their experiences of ambiguity regarding their skin colour were more intense when they lived in predominantly white areas. In contrast, among the other children of that period, issues of “race” were regularly discussed in their families. Additionally, it appears that living in a segregated neighbourhood might encourage feelings of ambiguities, since these individuals all lived in white neighbourhoods.

The construction of identity is a complex process. As Stuart Hall points out, “Identity is always a question about producing in the future an account of the past, that is to say it is always about narrative, the stories which cultures tell themselves about who they are and where they come from” (Hall, 1991:5). While “race” is one element which individuals will explore in constructing their cultural identities, other factors such as nationality, ethnicity, gender, or class are also significant. “These factors change over time with individual’s changing awareness of self, others and the social system, through interactions and in response to social change” (James, 1999:39). For children of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British parentage, “black and white are both elements in their racial identity, which can be played up or down according to context” (Wilson, 1987:36).

Thus, we find, for example, Lolly and Verna positioning themselves differently at different times, in order to adapt to the changing contexts within which they find themselves through the decades. For Lolly, up until the 1990s felt as if she was “floating on a little island in the middle of the Atlantic, because I’m neither English nor Bajan [Barbadian], I’m just on that island”. As we saw earlier, when she lived in Essex she wanted to be “white” because everyone around her was white. When her family moved back to London in the late 1970s she felt more comfortable as a mixed-heritage individual. However, by the 1980s when the Black Pride movement picked up steam in Britain, she wanted to be “black”. This period was also a “difficult period for Lolly, because depending on where she was, and with whom she was speaking, she found herself grappling with “racial” and national identification. While in England she felt “embarrassed to say I’m English to a white person”, and because of comments from whites such as, “You’re alright for a black person” which she felt were “denial of my white English heritage by white people”, she was inclined to see herself as “black”. On the other hand, saying “I’m English to a black person” meant that she was “ashamed of”, and “denying” her Caribbean background. However, whenever she visited Barbados, Lolly found that calling herself Barbadian “was a joke” to the people there, who saw her as “an English woman”. Additionally, forming intimate relationships with “black men” during the 1980s and early 1990s posed a challenge for Lolly, as she was made to feel that she was “not black enough for them. I’ve been brought up too English, and haven’t got the black culture”. Lolly, who has a son with an Englishman, thinks the situation has become “a lot easier for kids nowadays”. A judgment she makes based on her own observation:

I think more people are mixed now, which is a good thing. Because if you’ve got someone in your family of colour, if you like, then you’re unlikely to be racist. If you love someone, a grandchild or whatever, then maybe your tolerance could influence the people around you.

Lolly feels no longer that she is “floating” on an island, and according to her, “now I actually love being me. I love my skin colour, very happy with it”.

Furthermore, she sees herself as a “mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British person”. Her teenage son sees himself as a “mixed-race British” person.

Verna’s perception of herself also changed in parallel with the social and political changes in Britain in the last few decades. As with Lolly, during the 1970s and early 1980s when she lived in a predominantly white neighbourhood, her experience of racism made her wish she were “white” so she could “fit in”. As a young adult in the mid 1980s she moved to Leeds where she came into contact with more Afro-Caribbeans, and from her account, she “became a militant black then”. At the time, “Leeds was very, very black and proud, and in fact, I tried to deny I even had a white mother to some people. I was slightly embarrassed, because I wanted to belong. I struggled and suffered for it”. Since moving to London in the early 1990s, she has come to embrace her dual heritage, and according to her, “I am who I am now. Now I am really happy being mixed, and I feel at my most comfortable living in London”.

Lolly and Verna’s situations illustrate how individuals’ sense of identity – who we are, and where we come from – may be internalized during primary socialization when externally imposed categorizations become major contributors to ethnicity (Jenkins, 1996:91). However, whether through external categorizations or self-ascriptions, views of the self are products of local contexts that undergo continual change over time and under particular circumstances (social and/or political).

Since Susan Benson conducted her research, many public developments have encouraged a more positive sense of belonging and self-esteem among blacks and people of mixed-parentage in Britain. Because most neighbourhoods are less ethnically segregated, there has been increased social contact between Caribbeans and whites, and to some extent an “increasing liberalization of white attitudes” which may “reduce the stigma attached to being black or of mixed parentage” (Tizard and Phoenix, 1993:3). Additionally, the influence of Black Power has

helped empower mixed-parentage individuals, but they have reinterpreted Black Power ideas to fit their own experiences. Thus, as Tizard and Phoenix point out from their study, “a sizeable proportion of young people reject, or are unaware of, the view” that they should see themselves as black, just because “the rise of the black consciousness movement led to a renewed insistence on the ‘one drop of black blood makes a person black’ rule” (ibid. 3). I have found similar attitudes among young people of mixed parentage in my research families. Thus, Olive, born 1958 of an English mother and a Jamaican father, rejects the notion of the “one drop rule”, on the basis that she had no experience of racism growing up, and was raised primarily by her white mother. According to her:

If I say that I’m black, then I deny the fact that I’ve got a white mother, and I won’t do that, because at the end of the day, my biological father left us, and my mother was the one who looked after us. So why should I deny her that? If I was going to deny any part of me, it would be him. It is obvious that I am mixed.

Polly’s experiences in her home environment also informed her positive self-identification and self-esteem. What the Black Pride Movement contributed was pride in her “frizzy hair”, and the emergence of more “black clubs” for dancing, where she could dance with the expressiveness that she knew from her family, instead of feeling like “a square peg in a round hole” while dancing to the Beatles and the Rollingstones at her all white school dances. Thus, on the one hand, the influence of Black Pride has helped Polly to feel positive about her own physical appearance, but on the other hand, it has not led her to deny her white ancestry.

My data suggests that in the current climate, children in London born of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British parentage do not feel torn between the “black” and the “white” communities. And although identity is not always a matter of *total* free choice, individuals do have a *certain amount of choice* about how they define themselves. Thus, mixed-parentage individuals in my research families have chosen to construct their own identification categories such as “brown”, “mixed-race”, “mixed-heritage”, “mixed-parentage”, “Afro-Caribbean and

white”, “mixed Caribbean and English”, or “half West Indian and British”, which for them, have become adequate idioms for locating themselves within the society, thus providing them with a *positive* sense of belonging and self-esteem. It is the need for this positive sense of belonging that has driven them to become active agents in transforming the way in which they had been defined by the state.

Through their struggles and strategic manipulations, they have made a significant step in liberating themselves from the institutional structures of “racial” categorisation that prevailed up until the 2001 census, and forced them into, as Lolly put it, a “half-denial [denial of the white side]” through inclusion in the “Black-Other” category of the 1991 census (see Appendix II). Since then, through their strategies, they have effectively located themselves between their Afro-Caribbean and white British heritages, thus validating their existence, and declaring their visibility in British society.

In 2001 the category for “Mixed race” with its four sub-groups of “Mixed” – “White and Black Caribbean”, “White and Black African”, “White and Asian”, and “Any other mixed background” was introduced for the first time in official statistics (see Appendix II). Although in the 1991 census it was estimated that there were 230,000 people of mixed race in Britain (a figure disputed, with the correct figure being over 290,000), “the preparation for the 1991 census explicitly rejected a Mixed category” (Charlie Owen 2004:245-7; see also Appendix II). Instead, the only option for people of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British parentage was to identify under the “Black Other” category (see David Owen, 1996). By contrast, after the 2001 census, the Office for National Statistics reported that more than 677,000 people in the UK described themselves as being of “mixed ethnicity”. Mixed heritage people are the third biggest minority group in England and Wales; and the largest mixed ethnic group is of White and Black Caribbean extraction.

The inclusion of the new “Mixed” category in the 2001 census was primarily due to the agency of mixed-heritage individuals in Britain. Many of those in my

research told me how “frustrated” they were in the past with the ethnic question on census forms and job applications. Many individuals told me that they deliberately ignored the “Black Other” category, and drew a line merging the “White” and “Black Caribbean”, so indicating the “mix”. Some went even further and wrote “Mixed” on the merged line. Polly conveyed the satisfaction of many like herself, with the new category:

These tick boxes that they try to get you to fill in, luckily now, they have come up with a better category. I’ve got two job applications on which they’ve finally put “Black Caribbean and White”. That’s one of the tick boxes on the form [said with some sense of satisfaction]. At last somebody’s got it right... as opposed to “Other” or “Black Caribbean” or “African”, then “White and Irish” or “Other”.

Well before they had this box that said “Black Caribbean and White”, I used to tick the Irish box and “Black-African/Caribbean” box, and then I used to draw a little line to make them merge into one, and I’d write “Mixed”. Just to get them to read something for their monitoring purposes... But it seems that it’s worked over the years [laughs]... I don’t know if it’s just in this country they realize, cause there is a high proportion of people that are mixed Afro-Caribbean and white.

The efforts of Polly and others like herself have indeed been recognized at a national level, as an Office for National Statistics (ONS) report revealed. Reporting on consultations on the ethnic group question, a number of points were made supporting the need for an explicit “Mixed” category. “These included demand from the mixed race population, the growing size of the group, and users’ needs” (Charlie Owen 2004:246). The report stated:

The ‘mixed group’, known from the full census classification and the Labour Force Survey to be one of the largest ethnic groups, is regarded as a strong candidate for inclusion, based on the group’s happiness to describe themselves as such and the increasing numbers in this group are not currently met by identification through free-text responses (Charlie Owen 2004:246, citing P.I. Aspinall 1996:50).

Essentially, people of mixed heritage wanted to be able to identify themselves as such. This positive identification with being “mixed” supports my research

findings and the more recent study of Tizard and Phoenix (1993) of “black” and “white” “mixed race” adolescents in London, and contrasts with Benson’s (1981) suggestions that such individuals experienced ambiguous identities.

Nevertheless, mixed-heritage people still have to deal with denials at an institutional level. An example of this is the story Bert told me of his son’s confusion at the questionnaire he was given to fill out in school very recently for the Local Education Authority. The questionnaire included questions regarding the students’ teachers, their lessons etc., and ended with an ethnic tick box with two choices: “black” and “white”. Bert’s son refused to tick the box, because he considers himself “mixed”, and that category was absent from the form. The situation was pointed out to the Education Authority, and the woman conducting the survey was very apologetic.

In sum, the mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British population have, through the ongoing process of mixed sociability, emerged as one of one of the largest ethnic groups in Britain today. Far from denying any part of their heritage, they have fought and struggled to carve out a place in British society where they can finally be acknowledged for who *they* feel they are. And even the two older individuals who reported having ambiguities during their childhood and adolescence no longer have those feelings. Polly, the oldest mixed-parentage individual in my research (fifty-three years old) conveys the sentiments of many like herself in the current climate:

I’m just very, very happy with who I am. I love everything about my identity. I love the mix, I love the Caribbean mix, the Irish mix, everything. I love it all. I’m just so happy [with emphasis] to be who I am.

Summary and conclusions

Given the experiences of individuals in my research, my data suggest that Miles' notion of racism as an ideological construct is not sufficient for analysis of contemporary lives. As I have shown, although ideological representations might be embedded in people's minds as well as in institutions, they become manifest in practical conduct in the everyday lives of individuals. Furthermore, given the changing face of racism in Britain in the last fifty years (for example away from the focus on "race"/colour to a focus on culture/"cultural racism", I agree with those scholars who emphasize the need to "situate racism and ideas about race as changing and historically situated" (Back and Solomos, 2000:20). With this approach we are better able to understand why certain groups of individuals (racialized or otherwise) become targets in particular geographical contexts and at particular points in history.

Although experiences of racism continue to occur in the present, my data suggest that by comparison with the earlier situation, for individuals in my research families, there is significantly less open expression of racism and colour prejudice. This evidence could be related to the emergence of the "new racism" that has been identified, with the switch in focus from threat caused by other "races" to the threat of "foreign influences" on the British way of life (Back and Solomos, 2000). Conversely, many second and third generation Afro-Caribbean individuals and their white British contemporaries in my research have told me: how they have become "culturally similar". This illustrates how in a particular context, over historical time, and through changing social processes, the "other" (Afro-Caribbeans versus the Africans, or more recently Muslim persons) may become closer to "us" (white British).

For individuals in my research, the typical expression of racism has changed from physical attacks to verbal abuse. Both contributing to, and resulting from this change, is the increased social mixing over time between Afro-Caribbeans and

white British Londoners, both in the city as a whole, and within their own families. Neighbourhoods are less segregated; dance clubs are no longer just “black clubs” or “white clubs”, but places where people from diverse ethnic groups socialize. From my observations, the difference in the proportion of individuals from different ethnic groups at any given place of leisure owes more to class and cultural capital than to colour or ethnicity. For example, at Latin, African, or Caribbean events, the participants are usually of a more diverse mix than those at a classical concert or at an art gallery (though here it depends on the theme of what is being exhibited). Additionally, although there were a few reported incidents of physical attack in the last two decades, on the whole, there have been changes in the frequency, intensity, and kind of racism in public.

The changes in intensity and kind of racism experienced by my research families have not only occurred as a result of the socio-political changes in Britain from the 1950s to the present, but also because family members are often themselves active agents in effecting change. Among the younger generations an increasing number have become less passive recipients of racial hostility, and have devised strategies to cope with and combat racism. They have deliberately chosen where to live and to send their children to school, and where to go for entertainment, usually choosing places where there is a mix of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. They have also been selective in their choices of friends, by either socializing with people in similar family situations as they are, or people who are tolerant of their situations. Additionally, it appears that individuals in the current families are more willing than the earlier families to confront racism both within their families and in the wider society.

Finally, as a strategy to protect against racism, and to prepare their children for possible racist encounters, most parents now educate their children about race. Their reasons for doing so reflect their awareness of the various socio-cultural constructions of colour that still exist in twenty-first century British society, with parallels to such constructs in the Caribbean from the slave period to the present

(see Henriques, 1953; Hoetink, 1985, Lowenthal, 1972; M.G. Smith, 1965). Hence, another adaptive strategy as a significant aspect of the creolization of kinship in the London context.

Within some families there are individuals who still hold racist attitudes, or are still disapproving of “mixed-race” families. However, as a strategy for maintaining family connectedness, these individuals suspended their beliefs – usually for the sake of their children and grandchildren - in order to adapt to their family situation.

While it was suggested that in the past individuals in mixed relationships, mixed families, and of mixed-parentage had ambiguous identities (Banton, 1960; Hill, 1965; Benson, 1981), overtime, with the growth of mixed sociability, this “problem” appears to have been ameliorated for most individuals. For the children of mixed parentage in particular, ambiguity seems to have been replaced by a new pride in their mixed-heritage. Hence, my research finds common ground with the subsequent conclusions of Wilson (1987), Tizard and Phoenix (1993), and Back (1996). Essentially as with these studies, mine suggests that the children of Afro-Caribbean and white British parents do not want to deny any part of their heritage. Moreover, they have become active agents in creating their own “mixed” ethnicity in contemporary Britain, as a way of asserting their sense of identity and belonging. In effect, through their own agency, they have brought to fruition what Ann Wilson asserted two decades ago: for children who live in “multiracial” areas, “mixed race may provide a viable identification in its own right which gives the child a sense of belonging and self-esteem”(Wilson, 1987:36-37).

This emergence of “mixed” ethnicity in London could be compared to the emergence of “Creole” ethnicity(ies) that emerged in the Caribbean (see Burton, 1997; Besson, 2003; Hintzen, 2002). From the complex interaction of “race”, class and culture among the Europeans and the African slaves and their

descendants, emerged “Euro-Creole”, “Afro-Creole” and “meso-Creole” ethnicities in the Caribbean over five centuries (Besson, 2003:171; Besson, 1997:42). The Euro-Creoles are the European settlers (the elites) and their “white” European descendants, the Afro-Creoles are the African slaves and their descendants, and the Meso-Creoles are the descendants of the Europeans and the Africans through miscegenation. Of particular relevance to the “mixed” ethnicity among the London families is the “meso-creole” ethnicity, which emerged through “opposition, resistance, miscegenation and creolization in changing social contexts” (Besson, 2003:171).

As with the meso-Creoles in the Caribbean, the mixed-Afro-Caribbean and white British individuals in London have, through an ongoing process of creolization, struggled to have their “mixed” ethnicity acknowledged in a society where individuals are often treated according to socio-cultural constructions of colour. In the Caribbean, there are structural and cultural ambiguities regarding the meso-Creoles, despite their phenotypically mixed appearance. For although they may be of mixed parentage, whether they are classified by the wider society as “coloured” or “black” is determined by their social class positions. Thus, a middle-class meso-Creole may be phenotypically “black” or “coloured”, but regarded as structurally and culturally “coloured” (hence the local saying “money whitens”), while at the same time a meso-Creole peasant cultivator who is phenotypically “coloured” is seen by the wider society as structurally “black” (Besson, 2003:172). However, in her study in West-Central Jamaica, Besson (2003) found that these meso-Creole peasant cultivators regard themselves as “mixed”, and have strategically asserted their ethnicity within capitalist class relations through their focus on family land and strong transnational kinship ties, which provide them with resources to maintain a certain standard of living - reflected in their farms or small plantations and in modern housing purchased, built, improved or rented with earnings from either Jamaica or overseas. (See also Hintzen, 2002 for the case of mixed Asian Indian and Afro-Creoles ethnicity in Guyana and Trinidad, called “Douglarization”). Hence, the situation among

the mixed-heritage individuals in these London families finds parallels with the meso-Creoles in the Caribbean. As with the meso-Creole peasant cultivators, they regard themselves as “mixed”, and have employed different strategies to challenge nationalist constructs and to redefine their racial and national identities.

Finally, the new “mixed” ethnic identities that these mixed-heritage individuals have constructed in “multiracial/multicultural” London have implications both for anthropology (and the social sciences in general) and beyond the academy to wider public debates. For anthropology, it adds depth and range to theoretical debates about structure and agency: the capacity of human beings to strategically and innovatively intervene in their own lives and determine the formation of their social realities (up to a point and with varying degrees of success) in the context in which they live, and the social relationships in which they participate. With regards to wider public debates, the construction of a new “mixed” ethnic category by these individuals points to the need for “a new cultural politics which engages rather than suppresses *difference*” (Hall, 1996b:162). Thus, “mixed-race” individuals have *chosen* to be recognized as *visible* and responsible agents whose hopes, desires, opinions, experiences and actions matter.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The study of kinship has been of particular interest in the history of anthropology. While Afro-Caribbeans have been making kinship in Britain for the last half a century, they have not been investigated as part of the fabric of “English kinship”. Moreover, they have, since their arrival in the 1950s, also been making kinship with their white British counterparts, and these mixed kinship relationships have also gone uninvestigated. What have we learned from my exploration of this ongoing and un-researched aspect of contemporary English kinship from the thirty-four mixed-heritage families in London?

To begin with, a study of this kind has methodological implications that differ from the traditional anthropological perspective (Chapter 2). While participant observation is crucial to anthropological inquiry, conducting a transgenerational study of this kind was only possible through the combination of oral narratives and in-depth life story interviews with participant observation. The narratives and personal life stories not only gave me important insights into how individuals interpret their social relationships in the present, but also importantly, into their past life experiences that have shaped their current lives. They offered me a “‘window to the past’ that allows for the exploring of life courses and events that have already taken place, and therefore no longer can be experienced by the investigator” (Besson and Olwig, 2005:2). Historical accounts of London since the early Caribbean migrant settlement depict the general context of migrants’ experiences, both local and institutional levels. However, they offer very limited knowledge of the migrants and their families who are subjected to these structures, their experimentations and innovations in carving out a life for themselves against the constraints they faced. It was through the oral histories that these aspects of their family lives could be understood. Besides the limitation

of participant observation alone in conducting transgenerational research, conducting anthropological research in a dense urban centre such as London meant modifications to the traditional method of living with participants and becoming immersed in their daily lives. Thus differing circumstances defined differing methods.

The mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British families in London have emerged through an ongoing process of social interactions and relationships over the last fifty years. The roots of these families go back to casual social encounters and interactions in a hostile environment. Moreover, for many Afro-Caribbeans and individuals in these mixed-heritage families, racism has not been simply an ideological construct that reside in their minds as Miles (1989) argued. Their experiences show that the concept indeed has material reality. In parallel with this development, there have been changes in the wider social environment, such that, although racial attitudes still exist, the intensity and the nature of racism have also changed. This points to Back's (1996) assertion that "there is no one monolithic racism but numerous historically situated racisms" (ibid:9). Thus, the "new racism" conceptualized both in political culture and in everyday life, which shifts the focus from "race" (or the stranger among us who look phenotypically different, as in the earlier decades of Caribbean settlement in Britain), to "ethnicism and cultural differentiation" - or "foreign influences" which pose challenges to the "British" way of life (Back and Solomos, 2000:20, 22) - could partly explain the changes in the nature of racism experienced by individuals in my research.

However, despite the hostility, some of these social encounters developed into friendships and intimate relationships that led to the formation of mixed families. Indeed (Chapter 6), it has been through inter-group contact especially among the second and third generations of Afro-Caribbeans and their white peers that we mainly find a breach in the cycle of racism. For although some white parents still held racist ideologies, and some "black" and "white" parents did not share similar

understandings regarding neighbourliness or other forms of behaviour, among their offspring we find strong friendship alliances with shared interests and ideologies, to the extent that they now feel that they have become “culturally similar”. Thus Jenny, who in retrospect understood her family’s disapproving reaction to her white friends and husband on the basis of their hostile experiences in London, as a youth had felt the need to “vacate” (Back, 1996:94) a situation that she felt was accepting and sustaining racist ideology. She escaped to a place where she was not confronted with racism, where friends shared similar social and political interests. We also find the migrants’ children becoming agents of change in their multiethnic/multicultural spaces. For example, it was due to the resistance of the Afro-Caribbean students in Pam’s Home Economics class at secondary school, that the teacher experimented with different ethnic foods, thereby encouraging mixed sociability between the students.

Among the mixed families themselves there has been an ongoing dynamic process of modification involving family conflict, rejection, violence, adaptation, accommodation and innovation/creativity, in order to survive as families and kinreds. There are many features in their kinship patterns which are features that are neither wholly British/English, nor are wholly retentions of family forms brought over by first generation Caribbean migrants. These include patterns of residence, their complex kin relationships within and beyond households, patterns of marriage, parenting, and informal child fostering. Other features include the use of kin terms based on personal experience rather than on descent, the inclusion of kin based on the quality of a relationship rather than on blood. Also of significance are continuities of relationships even after endpoints such as separation and divorce, lifelong bonds of three and four generations of blood and non-blood kin, exchange networks linking kin members locally, nationally and transnationally, the centrality of women, and the significance of children (and fathers) in linking kin networks.

In the new London context these have become innovative developments of kinship, creating a different system which incorporates elements and influences from both cultures. For example from British sources these include attitudes to marriage (the much higher proportion of legal marriages than in the West Indies), childrearing (less disciplinary practices), leisure activities (participation in football), housing (council tenancies) or eating patterns (afternoon tea). Other developments appear to be new in terms of both cultures, for example the active role of men in childrearing in mixed families. Whatever their sources, these mixed forms ultimately belong to the local context in which they have been transformed: adaptive structural features as part of a resilient response to changing social, political and economic conditions. In my view, they are family forms that have developed through a process akin to the process of creolization.

Creolization as a concept, although born in the Caribbean to describe cultural and social processes of resistance and survival, is potentially fruitful in analyzing the process of kinship among the London families. Unlike hybridity, which as a concept connotes movement and mixture (usually of biological entities), creolization also refers to conflict and structural inequalities. So while creolization is about mobility and mixture, it is also about violence, tension and conflict - "a process of *contention*" (Bolland, 2002:38). Running through the thesis are many examples of these processes of creolization. These began with the uprooting of the migrants in the early 1950s, and their arrival in a largely inhospitable environment. Of those who did nevertheless form intimate mixed relationships, even after defying society's disapproval, some were confronted with the disapproval of family members. Thus, from the very beginning, these families found themselves in a conflicting web of social rejection, injustice and inequalities, to which they have had to devise modes of response, which in effect become new modes of doing and making kinship. Hence, as with the process of creolization, their kinship is a process that is not fixed, but is dynamic and complex, and constantly undergoing transformations in order to bring meaning and some sense of normalcy to their lives.

Such transformations of kinship include some specific forms of family socialization and relatedness that are very much akin to Caribbean Creole family patterns. It is particularly striking how non-Caribbean white mothers are also instrumental in adapting and transmitting these Creole family patterns. So “traditions” are not just survivals maintained by first generation migrants, but are also replicated, innovated, and invented, not only by their descendents, but by the white English kin who become their partners.

Regarding forms of marriage, Leach (1961), drawing on his Sinhalese data, showed that marital institutions may take various forms and serve various functions in different societies and cultures, and should therefore be analyzed in a particular social and cultural context. He further demonstrated that different forms of marriage may coexist within the same society. Thus the “complex” marriage/conjugal system which is elaborated by three types of marriage: “‘extra-residential’ or duolocal visiting relations, ‘consensual cohabitation’ or coresidence, and legal marriage” (Besson, 2002:283) which have been features of Creole families for centuries, are also practiced by the members in these London families. Moreover, as with Caribbean Creole families, these types of marriages among the London families sometimes coexist, resulting in a dual marriage among some couples. Thus when Lionel was absent from Chantal and the children, he was living with another woman (Chapter 5). Similarly, in another family, Seta, who was legally married to Mary, also maintained a second home with another woman, Cleo, with whom he had two children. Interestingly, although Seta was a responsible “husband” (to both women) and father to his sons, his wife Mary was unaware of his other home for twenty-five years. Mary, who herself had no children, later willingly accommodated Seta’s sons as members of her family – another Creole family adaptation of family inclusiveness that extends beyond blood, and often “for the sake of the children”.

Other characteristics of the London kinship system that find parallels with Caribbean Creole kinship system include the range in household composition:

single parent (mother or father), female-headed, and extended, sometimes including non-blood relatives, and relationships forged through half-siblingship and “outside children” (Besson, 2002:277). Resulting from these various household forms is the existence of bilateral kinship networks with extensive kinship ties that extend transnationally to the Caribbean and North America and other parts of Europe, with flexible boundaries, and kin members offering help and support when needed - also features of Caribbean Creole kinship system (see Bauer and Thompson, 2006; Besson, 2002).

Bilateral kinship networks have long been recognized as an aspect of Caribbean Creole kinship (see Clark, 1999 [1957]; Besson, 2002; Olwig, 1981a; Smith, 1988). This bilateral kinship system that recognizes an individual’s parents, the individual’s full and half siblings, parents’ siblings and half siblings, grandparents, cousins that extend far beyond the first, second, or third cousins, sometimes including fictive kin, is not typical of English kinship system (see Firth et. al. 1970; Young and Willmott, 1957). Yet among these families it is a basic feature. The lack of in-depth anthropological studies of contemporary urban English kinship makes it difficult to pinpoint with any certainty the continuity of English derivations in these mixed family patterns. I have suggested some instances above. A further confusion is that the tendency of change in English patterns, for example toward cohabitation and serial monogamy (see Mansfield, 2006) points strongly in the direction of Caribbean Creole kinship patterns.

Leach’s perspective that marital institutions may take various forms and serve various functions in different societies and cultures, can also be usefully applied to the London families to show that an individual’s conjugal system should be measured in its own right, for example as a product of its London context (an English creation) even though it resonates with Afro-Creole characteristics. To begin with, the degree of social and conjugal mixing between Afro-Caribbeans and the local majority is very different in degree, being much greater in London where nearly half of younger Afro-Caribbean people have white British partners

at all social levels. In the Caribbean by contrast, the white population is a small minority, and nearly all elite, so although minor degrees of colour mixing are normal, “interracial” relationships and marriages among the “black” majority and the “white” minority are often among the middle and upper social classes (see Henriques, 1953; Smith, 1988). Secondly, the collective households consisting of kin and non-kin which we find in early families (Afro-Caribbeans and mixed families like the Smith family), and some contemporary families, as in Gobi’s family, are unique to their situation in London. In the Caribbean, such extended kinship arrangements would be found in “yards” or family land consisting of various houses (see Besson 2002) as opposed to one dwelling. A third feature that is unique to these London families is the manner in which the white British women become carriers of both Afro-Caribbean and British cultures.

A fourth feature found among the London families that resonates with Creole Caribbean families, and is worthy of a concluding comment is “child fostering”. In the Caribbean, child fostering (sometimes called “child-shifting” or “child loaning”) is an *informal* practice that is perceived as a domestic “responsive strategy” (Gordon, 1987:442) to economic and other pragmatic circumstances whereby a child is relocated from less secure homes to more secure ones, often within the bilateral extended kinship network, but sometimes to homes where the child does not have biological ties (see Barrow, 1996; Besson, 2002; Clark, 1999 [1957]; Goody, 1975; Gordon, 1987; Olwig, 1981b; and among Afro-American families (Stack, 1974)). In Britain by contrast, the practice of bringing up a child – whether through adoption or fostering - that is not biologically related to a parent usually involves a strict and sometimes difficult legal procedure. Yet, in the London context the practice is adopted, or as Gobi put it, “inherited”, by white Irish and white English women (Chapters 3 and 4).

Although women are crucial in forming and maintaining kinship relationships, children and fathers are also central in making kinship. Among the London families, it is ultimately through the elaborate strands or links of full and half

siblingship (primarily through the fathers) that the family becomes extended. Furthermore, despite separation, divorce, death or migration, kinship bonds are maintained transgenerationally (primarily through the agency of women) in order that the sibling relationships are maintained.

Collectively, as with the Caribbean Creole kinship, the features found among these London families are adaptive strategies conceived in an environment of changing social and cultural forces, including processes of violence, conflict, and tension. They maximize “ties of conjugality, consanguinity, and affinity” (Besson, 2002:281) with the wider family ties, creating bases of identity and mutual aid. Moreover, given their London context, they challenge previous notions about English kinship (Firth et.al. 1970) and what is “truly British” (James, 1997).

Finally, as a process, creolization continues among the current generation of mixed-heritage families. For although the earlier families have struggled and devised innovative strategies for survival, their children continue, though in different ways, to become agents in securing a place within, and of belonging in British society (Chapter 7). It is particularly among these mixed-heritage children that the notion of ethnic identity as a stable entity is challenged. As part of the process of creolization, ethnic identity or social positioning is not a fixed process, but a dynamic one that undergoes “unstable points of identification or suture that are made in the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a *positioning*” (Hall, 1990:226). It is a process of becoming rather than being (Hall, 1996a:4). In their local context, they have used the resources of history, language and culture to experiment and innovate their own construction of ethnic identity. They have challenged the externally represented ethnic categories on order so that their own representations of themselves may be acknowledged: thereby demonstrating that identities are not always about external representations, but may also be constituted from within (Hall, 1996a:4).

With particular reference to the census, we find even at an institutional level the children who are the products of these families are “coming-to-terms-with [their] ‘routes’” [their ancestry] (Hall, 1996a:4), and actively claiming their mixed-heritage “roots” on British soil. We are seeing the emergence of a “mixed” ethnicity comparable to the emergence of “Creole” ethnicities in the Caribbean (Besson, 2002; Hintzen, 2002). Effectively, these children who are the products of mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British parents have illustrated that identity, including ethnic identity, is constructed through human sociability, is situationally and locally defined, may be strategically manipulated, and capable of change at both the individual and collective levels.

In sum, I see the process of kinship in these London families as bearing a close resemblance to the process of creolization. As with the process of creolization, their kinship processes are processes of becoming that occurred over time and through generations, and evolved against the constraints they encountered along the way into their own dynamic transformations. And as with creolization, through the rejection, borrowing, and mixing of cultural elements from both Britain and the Caribbean, they have innovated their own forms of family in the local context, thus asserting their claim of belonging in London.

Implications and practical significance

The research purpose, design, analysis and interpretation of this thesis are qualitative and exploratory. In conducting the research, I did not set out to prove or disprove a hypothesis. I undertook this research in order to *explore* a phenomenon of a group of people about which very little is known, in order to become familiar with their social lives or “life-worlds” (Berg, 1995), and to gain insight and understanding about them. Because I am interested in their social lives or life-worlds, my focus is on the meanings individuals assign to experience. Thus, I am interested in how individuals in mixed Afro-Caribbean and white

British extended families arrange themselves and their settings and how they make sense of their surroundings through social structures, social roles, symbols, rituals, etcetera. In other words, I am interested in emotions, motivations, symbols and their meanings, empathy, behavioural routines, experiences, the various conditions affecting their routines and settings, and other subjective aspects associated with the evolving lives of individuals within this group.

The use of qualitative techniques provided a means of accessing unquantifiable information about the people I spoke to and observed, and also those people represented by their personal narratives (some either alive but absent, or no longer alive) through letters, photographs, diaries, etcetera. Qualitative techniques allowed me to share in the understandings and perceptions of the people I studied, and to explore how they structure and give meaning to their daily lives, and how they make sense of themselves and others. Analysis of such qualitative data allowed me to discuss in detail the various social contours and processes individuals in these families use to create and maintain their social realities over time and across generations.

Many of the evidence in an exploratory research such as mine are directly observable and as such may be viewed as objective (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). Nevertheless, "certain elements of symbolism, meaning, or understanding usually require consideration of the individual's own perception and subjective apprehensions" (Berg, 1995:10). Therefore my conclusions may well lead to other perspectives and interpretations. Because it is original research, it provides a vantage point for more precise research problems for further studies and interpretations. Thus, I believe that my research has methodological, empirical, theoretical and practical implications and significance.

In terms of the *methodological* implications and significance of my research, there has been a big gap in kinship studies in cities. I suspect that one of the difficulties is the lack of appropriate anthropological techniques to handle the complexities in

urban kinship research. Anthropologists have traditionally studied homogeneous “whole cultures” and have been very hesitant to engage with cultures which are mixed or in the process of mixing with other cultures, both for conceptual and for methodological reasons. My research introduces some modifications to traditional anthropological techniques of participant observation to enable the study of complex urban families with members scattered across the city. Individuals within these families do not exist in bounded “communities”. They have busy lives, and spending extended periods of time within their homes observing, interacting and participating in their daily activities are impossible. Therefore, other methodological tools such as the use of the telephone, e-mails, and joint leisure activities at participants’ convenience, had to be employed.

Black-white families are one of a number of family forms that are becoming more prominent in the modern globalized world (such as stepfamilies, gay families and transnational families). *Empirically*, my research has a number of implications which could be taken up in future research:

1. It provides data that can be used for comparison on mixing with other groups, and of comparison with mixed-race families with same-race families not just in Britain but also beyond.
2. It is new British urban kinship research. Mixed-race/heritage families like same-race/heritage families are sites of support and strength as well as conflict and pains. Therefore, I believe that they warrant social science inquiry, and that research on such families adds a new perspective on British kinship and encourage theoretical debates about them.
3. It provides research that highlights the significance of children and siblings in creating the links between extended families. This is an area of research that has been ignored or given little emphasis in English kinship studies.
4. It provides research that offers insights into the dynamics and functioning of female-headed homes with multiple-race children.
5. It provides current research on mixed-sociability (social interactions between Afro-Caribbeans and white British people) not only in terms of families, but also in terms of neighbourhoods.

6. It provides an in-depth cross-generational study of kinship. By studying families in terms of their history across generations, I believe my research has opened up an area of research that offers promising ways of looking at continuity and change within families, in order understand how they arrived at the here and now. And of understanding the influences and concerns that they had from the past, including when for some families, the iconic figure is no longer alive.

My research also has *theoretical* implications and significance. Firstly, it addresses the argument that rigorous and limited family norms have given way to a wide range of experimental and innovative family forms (Giddens, 1992) in a changing global society such as London, reflecting the more general theoretical debate between structure and agency. Secondly, by employing the concept of creolization as a theoretical framework for analysis, I have shown how a theory which was developed in post-colonial Caribbean contexts has relevance in a Western post-imperial ethnically diverse context. Particularly with respect to family structures carved out of situations of continued conflict and adaptation, as a result of migration and globalization. Furthermore, like individuals and cultures, theories also migrate.

Finally, I believe my research also has *practical* significance. Fifty years ago mixed Afro-Caribbean and white British extended families were uncommon, but today there are many of them particularly in London. In many ways, however, they have remained uncommon in the ways they create their social worlds, and in the questions which they still pose for individuals and for the society. Thus, these families demonstrate the hard work that is required for survival in a context that is still ambivalent about their existence. Thus, their survival strategies may have wider social implications in a multicultural/hyperdiverse/intercultural society such as London. Their solutions achieved through communication, experimentation, and innovation could hold important clues for politicians, institutions and city planners of hyperdiverse intercultural cities who are interested in creating “racial harmony” and “community cohesion”. A possible solution which may be

deduced from their examples points to the creation of more public spaces that encourage mixing between groups, where individuals could come together to share common interests and even realize some common values. For example in art, music, sports, literature etcetera. Providing more inter-racial/cultural public spaces has the potential to reduce the strain associated with mixed-race relationships/marriages/families, and thus enhance positive race relations more generally.

Bibliography

- Abenaty, Francis K. 2003. "Family and social networks among St. Lucian migrants in Britain: The Birmingham connection". In *Community, Work & Family*, Vol. 6 no.1:17-28.
- Abrahams, R. D. 1985. "Our native notions of story". *New York Folklore* Vol. 1: 37-47.
- Alexandar, Jack. 1984. "Love, Race, Slavery and Sexuality in Jamaican Images of the Family", in R.T. Smith (ed), *Kinship Ideology and practice in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Alibhai-Brown, Y. 2001. *Mixed Feelings: the Complex Lives of Mixed-Race Britons*. London: The Women's press Ltd.
- Allan, Graham. 1999. *The Sociology of the Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Allen, Carolyn. 2002. "Creole: The Problem of Definition". In Verene Shepherd and Glen Richards (eds.) *Questioning Creole: Creolisation Discourses in Caribbean Culture*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.
- Alleyne, M. C. 1985. "A Linguistic Perspective on the Caribbean". In Mintz, S., and Price, S. (eds.) *Caribbean Contours*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- _____. 1988. *Roots of Jamaican Culture*. London: Pluto Press.
- Amit, V. 2000. *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London: Routledge.
- Arensberg, C. M. & Kimball, S.T. 1968. *Family and Community in Ireland*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Arthur, S., Dawn Snape and Geoff Dench. 2003. *The Moral Economy of Grandparenting*. London: Institute of Community Studies.
- Aspinall, P. 2004. "The Conceptualisation and categorization of Mixed Race/Ethnicity in Britain and North America: Identity Options and The Role of The State". In Jayne O. Ifewunigwe (ed.) *Mixed Race Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Back, L. 1996. *New Ethnicities and urban Culture: Racisms and multiculturalism in young lives*. London: Routledge.

- Back, Les and Solmos, J. 2000. *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Bagley, C. and Young, L. 1979. "The identity, adjustment, and achievement of transracially adopted children; a review and empirical report". In G. K. Verma and C. Bagley (eds.) *Race, Education, and Identity*. London: MacMillan.
- Ballard, R. 1994. *Desh Pardesh; The South Asian Experience in Britain*. London: Hurst.
- Bannerji, H. 1987. "Introducing Racism: notes towards an anti-racist feminism". *Resources for Feminist Research*, 16 (1): 10-12.
- Banton, Michael. 1955. *The coloured Quarter: West African and West Indian immigrants in the East End of London*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- _____ 1960. *White and Coloured: the behaviour of British people towards coloured immigrants*. New Jersey: Rutgers University press.
- _____ 1967. *Race Relations*. London: Tavistock.
- _____ 1987. *Racial Theories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barn, Ravindar. 2001. "Caribbean families and the child welfare system in Britain". In Harry Goulbourne and M. Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- Barnes, C., Thompson P., Daniel G., Burchardt N. 1998. *Growing Up In Step Families*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Barrett, S.R. 1997. *Anthropology: A Student's Guide to Theory and Method*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Barrow, Christine. 1998. "Caribbean Masculinity and Family: Revisiting 'Marginality' and 'Reputation'". In Christine Barrow (ed.) *Caribbean Portraits: Essays on Gender Ideologies and Identities*. Kingston: Ian Randle publishers.
- _____ 1996. *Family in the Caribbean: Themes and Perspectives*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.
- Barth, F. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The social organization of cultural difference*. London: Allen & Unwin.

- _____. 1989. "The Analysis of Culture in Complex Societies". *Ethnos* 54(3-4), 120-142.
- Bauer, E. & Thompson, P. 2006. *Jamaican Hands Across the Atlantic*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.
- Bell, C. 1968. *Middle Class Families*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Benedict, R. [1943] 1983. *Race and Racism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Benson, S. 1981. *Ambiguous Ethnicity: Interracial Families in London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Benson, J. 2005. *Affluence and Authority: a Social History of 20th Century Britain*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Berg, B. L. 1995. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (second edition). Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.
- Berreman, Gerald D. 1962. "Behind Many Masks". *Society for Applied Anthropology*, pp. 1-24. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.
- Berrington, A. 1994. "Marriage and Family Formation among the White and Ethnic Minority Populations in Britain". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 17 (3):517-46.
- _____. 1996. "Marriage patterns and inter-ethnic union", in Coleman D & Salt J. (eds.) *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census: Demographic Characteristics of the Ethnic Minority Population*, Vol. 1, London: OPCS.
- Bertaux, D. & P. Thompson. 1993. *Between Generations: Family Models, Myths and Memories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Berthoud, Richard, and Sharon Beishon. 1998. "People, Families and Households". In Tariq Madood and Richard Berthoud (eds.), *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- Berthoud, R. 2000. *Family Formation in Multi-Cultural Britain: Three Patterns of Diversity*. Colchester: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Essex.
- Besson, Jean. 2002. *Martha Brae's Two Histories: European Expansion and Caribbean Culture-Building in Jamaica*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

- _____ 2002b. "Land, Territory and Identity in the Deterritorialized, Transnational Caribbean". In Saltman, M. (ed.), *Land and Territoriality*. Oxford: Berg.
- _____ 2003. "Euro~Creole, Afro~Creole, mes0~Creole: Creolization and Ethnic Identity in West~Central Jamaica". In Gordon Collier & Ulrich Fleischmann (eds.), *A Pepper-Pot of Cultures: Aspects of Creolization in the Caribbean*. Amsterdam: Editions Ropodi B. V.
- _____ 1995. "The Creolization of African-American Slave Kinship in Jamaican Free Village and Maroon Communities". In Stephan Palmie (ed.), *Slave Cultures and the Cultures of Slavery* (pp 187-209). Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.
- _____ 1993. "Reputation and Respectability Reconsidered: A New Perspective on Afro-Caribbean Peasant Women", Chapter II. In Janet Momsen (ed.), *Women and Change in the Caribbean*. Kingston: Ian Randle.
- Black, M. L. 1995. "My Mother Never Fathered Me: Rethinking Kinship and the Governing of Families". *Social and Economic Studies* Vol. 44 (1) pp 49-71.
- Bulmer, M., and Solmos, J. 1999. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Today*. London: Routledge..
- Bolland, Nigel O. 2002. "Creolization and Creole Societies: a Cultural Nationalist View of Caribbean Social History". In Verene A. Shepherd & Glen L. Richards (eds.) *Questioning Creole: Creolization in Discourses in Caribbean Culture*. Ian Randle Publishers: Kingston & James Currey Oxford: Publishers.
- Bornat, J. 1989. "Oral history as a social movement: reminiscence and older people". *Oral History* Vol. 17:16-24.
- Bott, E. 1957. *Family and Social Network*. London: Tavistock Publications Limited.
- Bouquet, M. 1993. *Reclaiming English kinship: Portuguese refractions on British kinship theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- _____ 1977. *Outline of A Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Brannen, J., and O'Brien M. 1995. *Childhood and Parenting*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Brathwaite, Kamau. 1971. *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Brown, Terence. 1985. *Ireland: A social and Cultural history 1922-1985*. Glasgow: Harper and Collins Publishers.
- Burton, R.D.E. 1997. *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in The Caribbean*. London: Cornell University Press.
- Bush, B. 1990. *Slave Women in Caribbean Society: 1650-1838*. London: James Currey.
- Caplan, Pat. 1997. *African Voices, African Lives: Personal Narratives from a Swahili Village*. London: Routledge.
- _____ 1997. *Food, Health and Identity*. London: Routledge
- Carsten, Janet. 2000. *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____ 1997. *The Heat of the Hearth: The Process of Kinship in a Malay Fishing Community*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- _____ 2004. "Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkwi". In Parkin and Stone, L (eds.) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Carsten, J. and Hugh-Jones, S. 1995. *About the House: Levi-Strauss and beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chamberlain, M. 2005. "Language, identity and Caribbean families: transnational narratives". In Besson, J. and Olwig, K. F, *Caribbean Narratives of Belonging: Fields of Relations, Sites of Identity*. Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean.
- _____ 1997. *Narratives of Exile and Return*. London: The MacMillan Press Ltd.
- _____ 1999. "Brothers and Sisters, Uncles and Aunts" A lateral Perspective on Caribbean Families". In Silva, E. & Smart C. (eds.), *The New Family*. London: Sage.
- _____ 2001. "Migration and the Caribbean Family". In Goulbourne, H. and M.

Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.

_____. 2003. 'Rethinking Caribbean families: extending the links'.
In *Community, Work & Family*. Vol. 6 (1):63-76.

_____. 2001. "Narratives of Caribbean families in Britain and the Caribbean". In
Goulbourne, H. and M.Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain
and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.

_____. 2006 forthcoming. *Family Love in the Diaspora: Migration
and the Anglo-Caribbean experience*.

Charles, N., and Marion Kerr. 1999. "Women's Work". In Graham Allan (ed.)
The Sociology of the Family, Chapter 9. Massachusetts: Blackwell
Publishers.

Chevannes, Barry. 2001. *Learning To Be A Man: Culture, Socialization and
Gender Identity in Five Caribbean Communities*. The University of the
Jamaica: West Indies Press.

_____. 1993. "Sexual Behaviour in Jamaicans: A Literature Review".
Social and Economic Studies. 42:1-45.

Clarke, Edith. 1999 [1957]. *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of The
Families in Three Selected Communities in Jamaica*. University of the
Jamaica: West Indies Press.

Clifford, James. 1992. "Traveling Cultures". In Lawrence Grossberg, Cary
Nelson and Paula A. Treichler (eds.) *Cultural Studies* (pp. 96-116) New
York: Routledge.

Cohen, A. 1996. "Ethnicity and Politics". In Hutchinson J. & Smith A (eds.)
Ethnicity. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Collier, G., and Fleischmann, U. 2003. *A Pepper-Pot of Cultures: Aspects of
Creolization in the Caribbean*. Amsterdam: Matatu.

Davidoff, Leonore, and Catherine Hall. 1987. *Family Fortunes: Men and
Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*. Chicago: The University
of Chicago Press.

Davidson, R. B. 1962. *West Indian Migrants*. London: Oxford University Press.

Deakin, N. 1970. *Colour, Citizenship and British Society*. London: Panther
Books.

- Dench, G. 1992. *From Extended Family to State Dependency*. London: Institute of Community Studies.
- _____ 2003. *Rediscovering Family*. United Kingdom: Hera Trust.
- Dench & Ogg (ed). 2002. *Grandparenting in Britain: a baseline study*. London: Institute of Community Studied.
- Dexter, L.A. 1958. "A Note on Selective Inattention in Social Science". *Social Problems*. Vol. 6:176-182.
- Douglas, M. 1984. *Food In The Social Order: Studies of Food and Festivities in Three American Communities*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Driver, G. 1982; "West Indian Families: an anthropological perspective". In Rapoport, R., Rapoport, R.N., Fogarty, P, and Rapoport, R.(eds.), *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Durojaiye, M.O.A. 1970. 'Patterns of friendship choice in an ethnically mixed junior school'. *Race*, 13(2):189-200.
- Edwards, J. & M. Strathern. 2000. "Including Our Own". In Janet Carsten (ed.) *Cultures of Relatedness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eshleman, J.R. & Clarke, J.N. 1978. "Myths and Biases in Marital/Family Studies". In Lydia Morris & Stina Lyon (eds.) *Gender Relations in Public and Private*. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
- Finch, J. 1989. *Family Obligations and Social Change*. London: Polity Press.
- _____ 1985. "Work, the family and the home". *International Journal of Social Economics*, 12:26-35.
- _____ 2000. *Passing On: Kinship and Inheritance in England*. London: Routledge
- Finch, J., and Mason, J. 1993. *Negotiating Family Responsibilities*. London: Routledge.
- _____ 1999. "Obligations of Kinship in Contemporary Britain: Is There Normative Agreement?". In Graham Allan (ed.) *The Sociology of the Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Finnegan, Ruth. 1994. "Family Resources and experiences", in Ruth Finnegan and Michael Drake (eds.) *From Family Tree to Family History*. Chapter 4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Finnegan, R. and M. Drake (eds.) 1994. *From Family Tree to Family History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Firth, R. 1956. *Two Studies of Kinship in London*. London: University of London, The Athlone Press.
- Firth, R., Hubert J., & Forge A. 1970. *Families And Their Relatives*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Foner, N. 1979. *Jamaican Farewell: Jamaican Migrants in London*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- _____ 1973. *Status and Power in Rural Jamaica*. Teachers College, Columbia University: New York Teachers College Press.
- _____ 1977. "The Jamaicans: Cultural and Social Change among Migrants in Britain". Chapter 5, in James L. Watson (ed.), *Between Two Cultures: Migrants and Minorities in Britain*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Fortes, M. 1949. *The Web of kinship among the Tallensi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Foucault, M. 1978. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1*. Harmondsworth: Pelican.
- Frazier, F. E. 1966 [1939]. *The Negro Family In The United States*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Fryer, P. *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. London: Pluto Press.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Giddens, A. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love & Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilroy, P. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso.
- _____ 1987. *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The cultural politics of race and nation*. London: Hutchinson.
- Gittins, Diana. 1985. *The Family in Question: Changing households and familiar ideologies*. London : MacMillan Publishers Ltd..

- Glaser, B., & A. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Glass, R. 1960. *Newcomers: The West Indians in London*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Goddard, V. A. 1996. *Gender, Family and Work in Naples*. Oxford: Berg.
- Goldberg, D. T. 1990. *Anatomy of racism*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Goode, J. G., Curtis, C., Theophano, J. 1984. "Meal Formats, Meal Cycles, and Menu Negotian in the Maintenance of an Italian-american Community". In Douglas, M. (ed.) *Food In The Social Order: Studies of Food and Festivities in Three American Communities*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Goody, E. 1975. "Delegations of Parental Roles in West Africa and the West Indies". In *Socialization and Communication in Primary Groups*. T. R. Williams (ed.). The Hague: Mouton Publishers.
- Gordon, A. 1964. *Intermarriage: Interfaith, Interracial, Interethnic*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Gordon, S. A. 1987. "I Go To 'Tanties': The Economic Significance of Child-Shifting in Antigua, West Indies". *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 18, 3, 427-443.
- Gorell Barnes, G., Thompson P., Daniel G. and Burchardt N. 1998. *Growing up in Stepfamilies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Goulbourne, H. 1991. *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Post-Imperial Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____ 1998. *Race Relations in Britain since 1945*. London: MacMillan.
- _____ 2002. *Caribbean Transnational Experience*. London: Pluto Press.
- _____ 2001. "Trans-Atlantic Caribbean futures". In Goulbourne, H. and M. Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- _____ 2001. "The socio-political context of Caribbean families in the Atlantic world". In Goulbourne, H. and M. Chamberlain (eds), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.

- _____ 1999. "The Transnational character of Caribbean kinship in Britain". Chapter 7, in Susan McRae (ed.) *Changing Britain: Families and households in the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goulbourne, H. and M. Chamberlain (eds). 2001. *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- Gow, P. 1991. *Of Mixed Blood: Kinship and History in Peruvian Amazonia*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Green, C. A. 2006. "Hierarchies of Whiteness in the Geographies of Empire: Thomas Thistlewood and the Barretts of Jamaica". *New West Indies Guide* Vol. 80 (1&2):5-43.
- Hall, S. 1991. "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities". In A. D. King (ed.), *Culture, Globalization and the World System: contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. London: MacMillan.
- _____ 1990. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in Rutherford, J. (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- _____ 1996a. "Who Needs 'Identity'?" In Hass S. and Du Gay P. (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications.
- _____ 1996b. "The New Ethnicities". Chapter 26 in Hutchinson J., and Smith A. D. (eds.) *Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hanks, Patrick (ed). 1979. *Collins English Dictionary*. London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd.
- Hannerez, U. 1996. *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. London: Routledge.
- Hastrup, Kirsten and Fog Olwig K. 1997. Introduction to Karen Fog Olwig and Kirsten Hastrup (eds.) *Siting Culture: The Shifting Anthropological Object*. London: Routledge.
- Hawkes, Gail. 1999. "Liberalizing Heterosexuality". In Graham Allan (ed.), *The Sociology of the Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Henriques, Fernando. 1953. *Family and Colour in Jamaica*. Eyre and London: Spottiswoode.
- Henry, F. 1994. *The Caribbean Diaspora in Toronto: Learning to Live with Racism*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Henry, W. 2005. "Projecting the 'natural': language, citizenship and representation in outernational culture!" In Besson, J. and Fog Olwig K. (eds.), *Caribbean Narratives of Belonging: Fields of Relations, Sites of Identity*. Oxford: MacMillan Publishers.
- Herskovits, M. 1964 [1941]. *The Myth of the Negro Past*. New York: Octagon.
- Hewitt, R. 1986. *White Talk, black talk: inter-racial friendship and communication amongst adolescents*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, C. 1965. *How Colour Prejudiced is Britain?* London: Victoria Gollancz Ltd.
- Hintzen, P.C. 2002. "Race and Creole Ethnicity in the Caribbean". In Verene A. Shepherd & Glen L. Richards (eds.) *Questioning Creole: Creolization in Discourses in Caribbean Culture*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers: & Oxford: James Currey Publishers.
- Hiro, D. 1991. *Black British White British: a History of Race Relations in Britain*. London: Grafton Books.
- Hoetink, H. 1985. "'Race' and Color in the Caribbean", Chapter 2 in Mintz, S. W. and Price, S. (eds.) *Caribbean Contours*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Holy, L. 1996. *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*. London: Pluto Press.
- Horst, H. & Miller, D. 2006. *The Celphone: An Anthropology of Communication*. Oxford: Berg
- _____. 2005. "From Kinship to Link-up: "Cell phones and social networking in Jamaica". *Current Anthropology* Vol. 45 (5):755-778
- <http://www.100greatblackbritons.com>
- <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/commentaries/ethnicity.asp>.
- Hunt, J. and Hunt, L. 1982. "The dualities of career families". *Social Problems*, 29:499-510.
- Ifekwunigwe, J. O. (ed.). 2005. *'Mixed Race' Studies: A Reader*. Chapter 32, Office of National Statistics: "Census 2001 – Ethnicity and Religion in England and Wales". London: Routledge.
- Ishwaran, K. & Ralph Piddington. 1965. *Kinship and Geographical Mobility*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

- Jackson, J. A. 1964. "The Irish", In The Centre for Urban Studies (ed.) *London: Aspects of Change*. London: MacGibbon & Kee.
- _____ 1963. *The Irish in Britain*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- James, A. 1997. "How British is British Food? In Caplan, P. (ed.) *Food, Health and Identity*. London: Routledge
- James, W. & Harris, C. 1993. *Inside Babylon. The Caribbean Diaspora in Britainn*. London: Verso.
- James, C. E. 1999. *Seeing Ourselves: Exploring Race, Ethnicity and Culture 2nd ed.* Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc.
- Jenkins, R. 1999. "Ethnicity etcetera: Social anthropological points of view". In Blumer M. and Solomos J. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Today*. London: Routledge.
- Johnson, W. R. and Warren D (eds). 1994. *Inside the Mixed Marriage: Accounts of Changing Attitudes, Patterns, and Perceptions of Cross-Cultural and Interracial Marriages*. New York: University Press of America.
- Knowles, Caroline. 2000. "Here and there: doing transnational fieldwork: In Vered Amit (ed.) *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London: Routledge.
- Laslett, Peter. 1982. "Forward" In Rapoport, R. N., Fogarty, M. and Rapoport, R. (eds.) *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Leach, E. R. 1961. "Polyandry, Inheritance, and the Definition of Marriage". In E. R. Leach (ed.) *Rethinking Anthropology* p. 105-13. London: Athlone Press.
- Levitt, P. 2001. *The Transnational Villagers*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Lewis, Oscar. 1961. *The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Lichtenberg, J. 1998. "Racism in the Head, Racism in the World". Naomi Zack, Laurie Sharage & Crispin Sartwell (eds.) *Race, Class, Gender, And Sexuality: The Big Questions*. Mass. U.S.A.: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Little, K. 1947. *Negroes in Britain*. London: Kegan Paul.
- Lowenthal, David. 1972. *West Indian Societies*. London: Oxford University

Press.

- MacPherson W. 1999. *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*. London: HMSO.
- Madood, Tariq. 1998. In Tariq Madood, Richard Berthoud, Jane Lakey, James Nazroo, Patten Smith, Satnam Virdee, and Sharon Beishon. *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*. London: Policy Studies Institute
- Madood, T., Beishon, S. and Virdee, S. 1994. *Changing Ethnic Identities*. London: Policy Press Institute.
- Malinowski, B. 1930. "Kinship", *Man* 30(2): 19-29.
- Mansfield, P. 2006. "Marital Relationships: Someone who is there for me". In Buonfino A. & Mulgan G. *Porcupines in Winter: The pleasures and pains of living together in modern Britain*. London: The Young Foundation.
- Marwick, Arthur. 2003 (New Edition). *British Society Since 1945*. Penguin Books
- Mason, D. "The continuing significance of race? Teaching ethnic and racial studies in sociology". In Blumer M. and Solomos J. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Today*. London: Routledge.
- Maurer, B. 1997. *Recharting the Caribbean: Land, Law, and Citizenship in the British Virgin Islands*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Mauss, M. 1954. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Cohen and West.
- McRae, Susan. 1999. "Cohabitation or Marriage? – Cohabitation" In Graham Allan (ed.), *The Sociology of the Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Merriman, N. 1993. *The Peopling of London: Fifteen Thousand Years of Settlement From Overseas*. London: the Museum of London.
- Miles, R. 1989. *Racism*. London: Routledge.
- Miller, D. and Slater, D. 2000. *The Internet: An ethnographic approach*. Oxford: Berg.
- Mintz, Sidney W. 1996. "Enduring Substances, Trying Theories: The Caribbean Region As Oikoumenê. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Volume 2:289-311.
- _____. 2002. Forward to Besson's *Martha Brae's Two Histories: European*

Expansion and Caribbean Culture-Building in Jamaica. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

- _____. 1974 (1960). *Worker in the Cane: A Puerto Rican Life History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- _____. 1971. "The Caribbean as a Socio-cultural Area". In Michael M. Horowitz (ed.) *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean: An Anthropological Reader*. New York: The Natural History Press.
- _____. 1989. *Caribbean Transformations*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Mintz, S. & Price R. 1992 (1976). *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mintz, Sidney W. & Sally Price. 1984. *Caribbean Contours*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press: .
- Modell, J. S. 1994. *Kinship with Strangers: Adoption and Interpretations of Kinship in American Culture*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Murphy, M. & Wang D. 1999. "Forecasting British Families into the twenty-first century". In Susan McRae (ed.), *Changing Britain: Families and Households in the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nachmias, C. F., & D. Nachmias. 1992. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (4th ed.) New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Nettleford, R. 1978. *Caribbean Cultural Identity: The Case of Jamaica, An Essay in Cultural Dynamics*. Kingston: Institute of Jamaica.
- _____. 1970. "The Melody of Europe, the Rhythm of Africa". In *Mirror, Mirror: Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica*. Kingston: Collins and Sangster.
- Ng. R. 1993. "Racism, Sexism, and Nation Building in Canada", in McCarthy, C. & Crichlow, W. (eds.) *Race Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Norman, K. 2000. "Phoning the field: meanings of place and involvement in Fieldwork 'at home'". In Vered Amit *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London: Routledge.
- Office of National Statistics. 2004. "Censuc 2001 – Ethnicity and Religion in England and Wales (2002)". In Jayne O. Ifewunigwe (ed.) *Mixed Race Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Office for National Statistics. 2002. "Census 2001- Ethnicity and Religion in England and Wales".

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/commentaries/ethnicity.asp>

- Olwig, K. F. 1999. "Caribbean Place Identity: From Family Land to Region and Beyond". *Identities* Vol. 5(4): 435-467.
- _____. 1993. *Global Culture, Island Identity: Continuity and change in the Afro-Caribbean community of Nevis*. Reading: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- _____. 1981a. "Finding a Place for the slave Family: Historical Anthropological Perspectives". *Folk* Vol. 23:245-258.
- _____. 1981b. "Women, 'Matrifocality', and Systems of Exchange". *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 28 (1):59-78.
- Omi, M. & Winant, H. 1986. *Racial Formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge.
- Owen, D. 2001. "A Profile of Caribbean households and families in Great Britain". Chapter 5 in Harry Goulbourne and Mary Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- _____. 1996. "Black-Other: the melting pot". Chapter 3 in Ceri Peach (ed.), *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census Vol 2*. London: HMSO.
- Owen, C. 2004. "'Mixed Race' in Official Statistice". In Jayne O. Ifewunigwe (ed.) *Mixed Race Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Pahl, J. 1989. *Money and Marriage*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- Parry, O. 2000. *Male Underachievement in High School Eeducation in Jamaica, Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. Jamaica: Canoe Press.
- Patterson, O. 1975. "Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance: A Theoretical Framework and Caribbean Case Study". In Glazer N., and Moynihan D. (eds.) *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Patterson, S. 1965. *Dark Strangers: A Study of West Indians in London*. Pelican Books.
- Peach, C. 1996. "Black Caribbeans: Class, Gender and Geography", in *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census*. Ceri Peach (ed.), Vol. 2: 25-43. London: HMSO.

- _____. 1968. *West Indian Migration to Britain: A Social Geography*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Phillips, M. & Phillips T. 1999. *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain*. London: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Phillipson, C., Al-Haq, E., S. and Ogg, J. 2000. "Bangladeshi families in Bethnal Green: Older people, ethnicity and social exclusion", in T. Warnes, L. Warren and M, Nolan (ed.) *Care Services for Later Life*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Phillipson, C., Ahmed, N., and Latimer, J. 2003. *Women in Transition: a study of the experiences of Bangladeshi women living in Tower Hamlets*. University of Bristol: Polity Press.
- Phillipson, C., Bernard, M., Phillips, J., and Ogg, J. 2001. *The Family and Community Life of Older People*. London: Routledge.
- Portelli, A. 1991. *The Death of Luigi Trastulli And Other Stories*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Platt, L. 2002. *Parallel Lives? Poverty among ethnic minority groups in Britain*. London: CPAG.
- Price, R. 1983. *First Time: The Historical Vision of an Afro-American People*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Ragone, H. 1994. *Surrogate Motherhood: Conception in the Heart*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Rapoport, R. N., Fogarty, M. and Rapoport, R. (eds.) 1982. *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Rapoport, R. & Rapoport R. 1982. "British Families in Transition". In British Family Research Committee, *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Rapoport, R., Rapoport, R.N., Fogarty, P, and Rapoport, R. 1982. *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Rattray. R. S. 1923. *Ashanti*. The Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Reary, D. 1998. *Class Work: mothers Involvement in their Children's primary Schooling*. London: Taylor and Francis.

- Rex, J. 1983. *Race Relations in Sociological Theory*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Rex, J. and Tomlinson, S. 1979. *Colonial Immigrants in British City: A Class Analysis*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Reynolds, T. 2001. "Caribbean fathers in family lives in Britain". In Harry Goulbourne and Mary Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- _____. 2005. *Caribbean Mothers: Identity and experience in the U.K.* London: Tufnell Press.
- Richmond, A. 1955. *The Colour Problem: a Study of Race Relations*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Rogozinski, J. 1992. *A Brief History of the Caribbean*. Penguin: New York.
- Röhrig Assunção, M. 2005a. *Capoeira: the History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art*. Routledge: London.
- _____. 2005b. "Brazilian Popular Culture in Historical Perspective or the Curse and Blessings of Cultural Hybridism". *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 157-166.
- Rosen, A. 2003. *The Transformation of British Life 1950-2000: A Social History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Rosenblatt, P. C., Karis C., and Powell R. 1995. *Multiracial Couples: Black and White Voices*. California: Sage Publications.
- Rosser, C. and Harris, C. 1965. *The Family and Social Change*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Root, M. P. (ed.). 1996. *The Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as a Significant Frontier in Race Relations*. California: Sage Publications.
- _____. 1992. *Racially Mixed People in America*. California : Sage Publications.
- _____. 2004. "Within, Between and Beyond Race". In Jayne O. Ifewunigwe (ed.) *Mixed Race Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Samuel, R. and Thompson P. (eds.). 1990. *The Myths We Live By*. London: Routledge.

- Scanzoni, J. 1987. "Families in the 1980s:time to refocus our thinking". *Journal of Family issues*, Vol. 8:394-421.
- _____ 1997. "Changing households in Britain: do families still matter?". *Sociological Review*, 45: 591-620.
- Schmidt, B. E. 2003. "The Presence of Vodou in New York City: The impact of a Caribbean Religion on the Creolization of a Metropolis". In Gordon Collier & Ulrich Fleischmann (eds.) *A Pepper-Pot of Cultures: Aspects of Creolization in the Caribbean*. (pages 213-233). Editions Rodopi B. V: Amsterdam.
- Schneider, D. M. 1968. *American Kinship: A Cultural Account*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall.
- _____ 1984. *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Schwartz, H., & Jacobs, J. 1979. *Qualitative Sociology: A Method to the Madness*. New York: Free Press.
- Schwegler, A. 2003. "The Linguistic Geography of 'criollo' in Spanish America: A Case of Enigmatic Extension and Restriction". In Gordon Collier & Ulrich Fleischmann (eds.), *A Pepper-Pot of Cultures: Aspects of Creolization in the Caribbean* (pages 45-63). Amsterdam: Editions Ropodi B. V.
- Schweitzer, P. P. 2000. *Dividends of Kinship: Meanings and uses of social relatedness*. London: Routledge.
- Scott, J. 1999. "Family Change: revolution or backlash in attitudes?" In Susan McRae (ed.), *Changing Britain: Families and Households in the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Selvon, S. 1956. *The Lonely Londoners*. New York: Longman Publishing Group.
- Shalins, M. 1994. "Goodby to Tristes Tropes: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History", in Robert Borofsky (ed.) *Assessing Cultural Anthropology* Chapter 26 pp. 377-394. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Sheller, M. 2003. "Creolization in Discourses of Global Culture". Chapter 12 in S. Ahmed, C. Castañeda, A. Fortier and M. Sheller, *Uprootings/Regrounding: Questions of Home and Migration*. New York: Berg.

- Shepherd, V. & Beckles H. 2000. *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader*. Kingston: Ian Randle.
- Simpson, Bob. 1998. *Changing Families: An Ethnographic Approach to Divorce And Separation*. Oxford: Berg.
- Smart, C., and Neale, B. 1999. *Family Fragments*. London: Polity Press.
- Smelser, N. 1982. "The Victorian Family". In. British Family Research Committee. *Families in Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Smith, M. G. 1965. *The Plural Society in the British West Indies*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- _____. 1957. "The African Heritage in the Caribbean". In V. Rubin (ed.) *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*. Jamaica, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, pp. 34-46.
- _____. 1962. *West Indian Family Structure*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Smith, R. T. 1957. "The Family in the Caribbean". In V. Rubin (ed.) *Caribbean Studies: A Symposium*. Jamaica, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, pp. 67-75.
- _____. 1987. "Hierarchy and the Dual Marriage System in West Indian Society". In Fishbourne Collier, J. & Y&anagisako, S. J. (eds.), *Gender and Kinship: Essays Toward a Unified Analysis*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- _____. 1988. *Kinship and Class in the West Indies: A Genealogical Study of Jamaica and Guyana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1956. *The Negro Family in British Guiana: Family Structure and Social Status in the Villages*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- _____. 1996. *The Matrifocal Family: Power, Pluralism, and Politics*. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2001. "Caribbean Families: questions for research and implications for policy". In In Harry Goulbourne and Mary Chamberlain (eds.), *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.
- Sniderman, P. M. & Piazza T. 1993. *The Scar of Race*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

- Solomos, J. 1993. *Race and Racism in Britain* (Second Edition). London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
- Spickard, C. H. 1992. "The Illogic of American Racial Categories". In Maria P. P. Root (ed.) *Racially Mixed People in America*. California : Sage Publications.
- Stack, C. 1974. *All Our Kin: Strategies for survival in black community*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Stone, L. 2004. *Kinship and Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Strathern, M. 1992a. *After Nature: English Kinship in the late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____ 1992. *Reproducing the Future: Essays on anthropology, kinship and the new reproductive technologies*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- _____ 1992b. *Reproducing the Future: Anthropology, Kinship and the New Reproductive Technologies*. New York: Routledge.
- _____ 1981. *Kinship at the Core*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss, A. L. 1987. *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, P. 2000. *The Voice Of The Past: Oral History Third edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____ 1997. "Women, Men, and Transgenerational Family Influences in Social Mobility". In Daniel Bertaux and Paul Thompson (eds), *Pathways to Social Class: A qualitative Approach to Social Mobility*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Thompson, P., & Bauer, E. 2002. "Recapturing Distant Caribbean Childhoods and Communities: The shaping of the Memories of Jamaican migrants in Britain and North America". In *Oral History*. Vol 30 (2), 49-59.
- _____ 2000. "Jamaican Transnational Families: Points of Pain and Sources of Resilience". *Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and its Diaspora*. Volume 3 (2).
- Tizard, B. and Phoenix, A. 1993. *Black, White or Mixed Race? Race and Racism in the Lives of Young People of Mixed Parentage*. London: Routledge.

Tonkin, Elizabeth. 1993. *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1998. "Culture on the Edges: Creolization in the Plantation Context". *Plantation Society in the Americas*. Vol. 1: 8-28.
- _____. 1992. "The Caribbean region" An Open Frontier in Anthropological Theory". *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Volume 21:19-42.
- Wallman, S. 1984. *Eight London Housholds*. London: Tavistock Publications:
- Walvin, J. 1973. *Black and White: the Negro in British Society*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Weeks, J., Heaphy, B. and Donovan, C. 1999. "Families of choice: autonomy and mutuality in non-heterosexual relationships". In McRae, W. (ed.), *Changing Britain: Families and Households in the 1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Weeks, J., Heaphy B. and Donovan C. 1999. "Partners by Choice: Equality, Power and Commitment in Non-heterosexual Relationships". Chapter 5, in Allan G. (ed.) *The Sociology of the Family*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Weston, K. 1991. *Families we Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Westwood, S., and Bhachu P. 1988. *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy, and Gender Relations*. London: Routledge.
- Willmott, P. and Young. M. 1960. *Family and Class in a London Suburb*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Wilson, A. 1987. *Mixed Race Children: A Study of Identity*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Wilson, P. J. 1973. *Crab Antics: A Caribbean Case Study of the Conflict Between Reputation and Respectability*. Illinois: Waveland Press Inc.
- _____. 1969. "Reputation and Respectability: A Suggestion for Caribbean Ethnology". *Man No 5, Volume 4*
- Winddance Twine, F. 1999. "Transracial Mothering and Antiracism: The Case of White Birth Mothers of "Black" Children in Britain". *Feminist Studies* Volume 25 (3): 729-746.

Yanagisako, S. J. 1987. "Mixed Metaphors: Native and Anthropological Models of Gender and Kinship". In J. F. Collier and S. J. Yanagisako (eds.). *Gender and Kinship: Essays towards a Unified Analysis*. Stanford University Press.

Young, M. & Willmott, P. 1973. *The Symmetrical Family*. New York: Pantheon Books.

_____. 1957. *Family and Kinship in East London*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Appendix 1

Geographical distribution of Caribbean/West Indians in London 1950s to
1991

ADDRESSES OF WEST INDIANS—MEN AND WOMEN—IN SUCCESSIVE PERIODS
 Address at Year of Interview with Official Agency

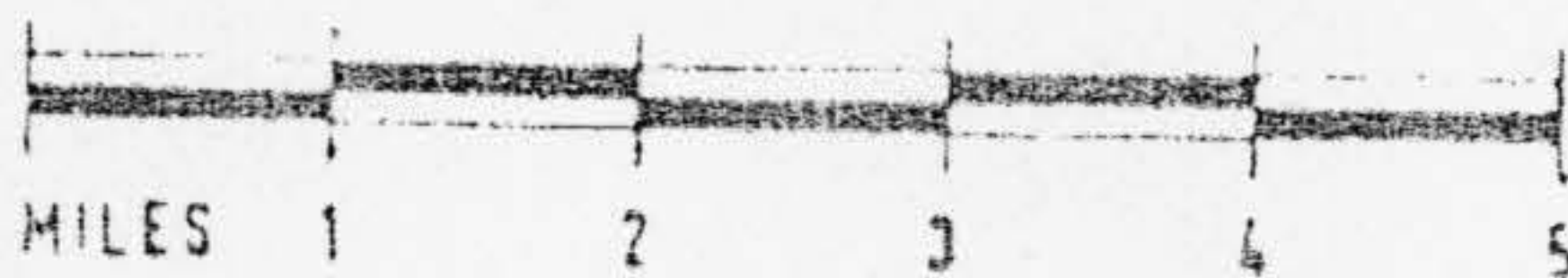
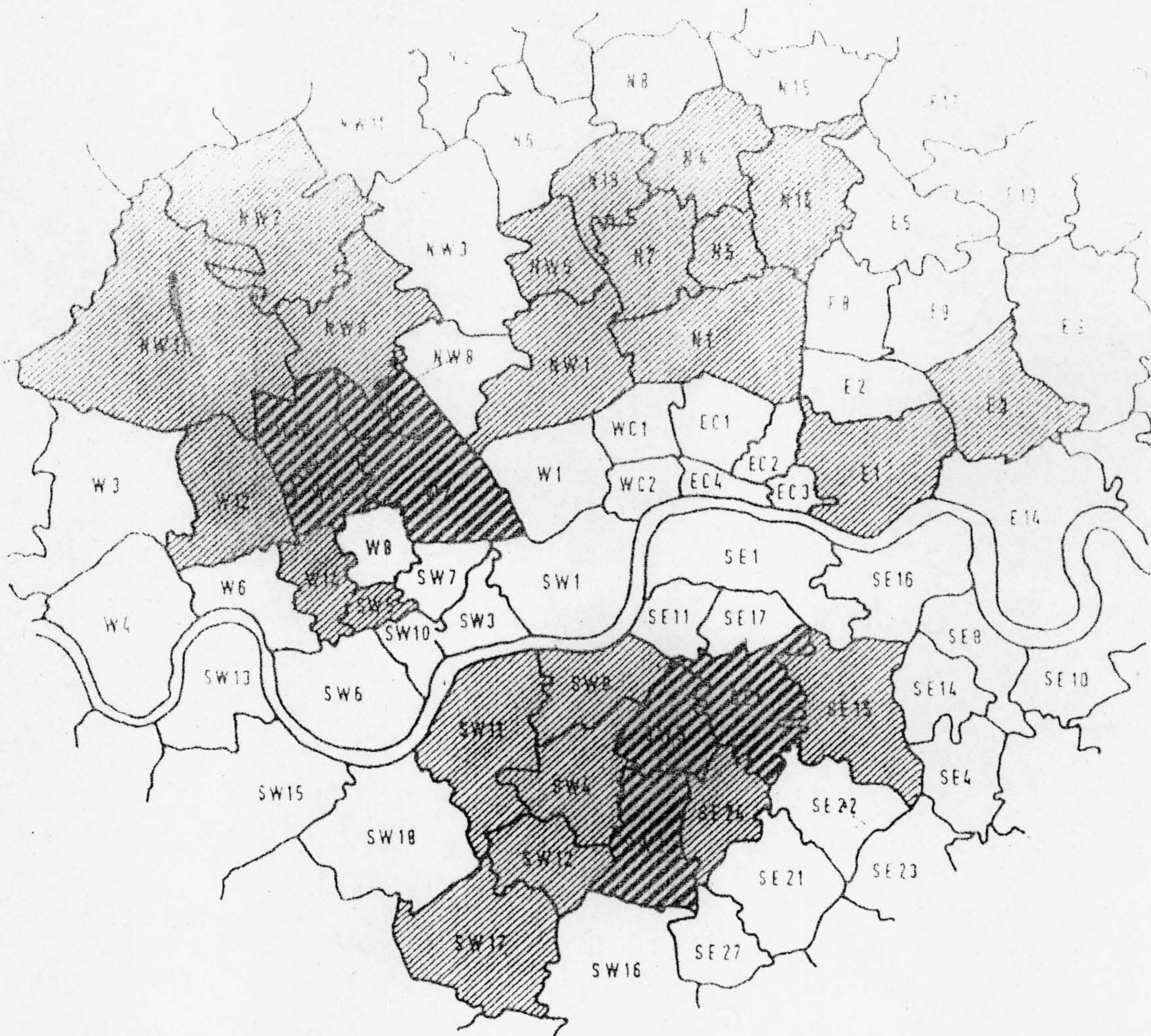
London Sample	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
	Areas of West Indian Settlement	1954-55	1956	1957-58	Total London Sample	Per Cent Increase in Each Area from 1955 to the End of 1958
A. Main Areas						
West	32%	24%	22%	24%	370	
North-West	11%	7%	8%	8%	370	
North	12%	15%	14%	14%	580	
East	4%	3%	3%	3%	370	
<i>Sub-Total: Northern Areas</i>	59	49	47	49	410	
South-West	17%	23%	23%	22%	620	
South-East	4%	9%	8%	7%	790	
<i>Sub-Total: Southern Areas</i>	21	32	31	29	660	
<i>B. Other Districts</i>	20	19	22	22	515	
GRAND TOTAL	100	100	100	100	1,070	485
<i>Per cent</i>	221	255	594	1,070		
<i>Number</i>						




NOTE: As the geographical distributions of West Indian men and women are alike, the figures for the total London Sample are shown. The distributions of the London Sample and of the London Group are identical. The main areas of West Indian settlement consist altogether of 30 postal districts. There are seven districts in the West area, and the same number in the South-West area; three each in the North-West and South-East areas, eight in the North, and two in the East area. The composition of the main areas is shown on Map 1.

(SOURCE: GLASS, 1961:38)

MAIN AREAS OF WEST INDIAN SETTLEMENT IN LONDON

Map 1



-  Postal Districts in which none or less than one per cent of West Indians in the 'London Group' had their addresses
-  Postal Districts in which 1 per cent to 3.9 per cent had their addresses
-  Postal Districts in which 4 per cent to 8 per cent had their addresses

Boundary of Postal District; e.g.

(SOURCE: GLASS, 1961)

Appendix 2

Ethnic group question in the census

Ethnic group

Please tick the appropriate box.

If the person is descended from more than one ethnic or racial group, please tick the group to which the person considers he/she belongs, or tick the 'Any other ethnic group' box and describe the person's ancestry in the space provided.

White	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Black-Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Black-African	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Black-Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>please describe</i>		
<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>		
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Any other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>please describe</i>		
<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>		

Source: 1991 Census of Population, H enumeration form for private households, reproduced in Dale and Marsh (1993), p.367.

What is your ethnic group?

Choose one section from (a) to (e) then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

(a) **White**

- British
- Irish
- Any other White background. Please describe:
.....

(b) **Mixed**

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed background. Please describe:
.....

(c) **Asian or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background. Please describe:
.....

(d) **Black or Black British**

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background. Please describe:
.....

(e) **Chinese or Other ethnic group**

- Chinese
- Any other. Please describe:
.....

Ethnic question for 2001 census for England and Wales
Source: The 2001 Census of Population (1999), Cmnd 4253

Appendix 3

Sample profiles of mixed households

Table 1: Sample profile of mixed family households (W=white; A=Afro)

Relationship Category	Partners	Gender	Ethnic origin	Years together	Children		
					Mixed-race	Black	White
Legally married and together	Dawn Dusty	F M	W-British Afro-Caribbean	51	2		
	Tilly Fred	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	24	3		
	May Dollard	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	26	3		
	Rose Raleigh	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	22	2		
	Babette Owen	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	42	4		
	June Adam	F M	Mixed W-Brit	15	1	1	1
	Verna Ken	F M	Mixed W-Brit	9	2	2	
	Becky Rodney	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	4	1		
	Faye Donavan	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	14	1		
	Julie Sid	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	8	1		
	Anna Carl	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	4	1		

Legally married and parted	Jenny Larry	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	15	2		
	Maggie Duncan	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	14	2		
	Karen Barry	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	9	3	2	1
	Cathy Hubert	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	10	2		
	Paulette Francis	F M	25	6			
	Olive Roy	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	25	6		

Table 1 continued

Relationship category	Couples	Gender	Ethnic origin	Years together	Children		
					Mixed-race	Black	white
Cohabiting	Kelly Patrick	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	4	2		
	Petra Garth	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	3	3		
	Alice Buster	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	4	1	1	
	Pearl Bert	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	12			
	Magda Julius	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	3	1		
	Jane Richard	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	17	3		
	Katrina john	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	6	2		1
	Claris Justin	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	8	2		

Cohabiting but parted	Linda Ralph	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	6	3		3
	Gobi Randal	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	15	2	3	4
	Betty Troy	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	1	1		1
	Pamela Norris	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	3	1		
	Lolly James	F M	Mixed w-Brit	3	1		

Visiting relationships	Carla Joseph	F M	A-Carib W-Brit	14			
	Keeley Robin	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	3			
	Merna Jordan	F M	W-Brit A-Carib	10	2		

Foster family	Jada	F	w-Brit	50		2	8
	Lester	M	W-Brit				
	Harold	M	A-Carib	40			

Table 2: Female-headed households

Female	Ethnic origin	Children		
		Mixed-race	Black	White
Merna	W-Brit	2		
Gobi	W-Brit	2	3	2
Lindsay	W-Brit	2		
Linda	W-Brit	2		3
Betty	W-Brit	1		1
Karen	W-Brit	3		1
Jenny	A-Carib	2		
Lolly	Mixed	1		
Maggie	A-Carib	3		

Appendix 4

Cross generational transmission (a partial sample)

Families	Ethnic Origin	Marriage	Education	Work	Housing	Mixed relationships
<u>Helen</u> parents <u>Owen</u> parents Children	English- English Jamaican Jamaican mixed	Married married married married 2 married 1 cohabit 1 single	Primary Primary Secpmdary Primary 3 college 1 secondary	Homemaker Bakers Electrician farmers 1 butcher 3 semi- professionals	Own 2 own 2 rent	1 son and 1 daughter married to W-Brit
<u>Dawn</u> parents <u>Dusty</u> parents children grandchild'n	Irish Irish Jamaican Jamaican Mixed mixed	Married Married Married Cohabit 1 divorce 1 married 2 married	Primary Primary Primary Primary University University 5 uni, 1 secondary rest at sch	Homemaker Manual Carpenter Manual Professionals 2 prof'nals 1 homemaker rest at school	Own Own Own Own Rent 1 own 1 rent rest at home	Brother Brother 1 marry W- Brit 1 has Irish partner
<u>Kelly</u> Parents <u>Patrick</u> Parents Children	A-Carib Barbadian Antiguan English English Mixed	Cohab Married Cohab Married	College Primary Secondary Primary Nursery	Semi-prof Manual Manual Manual	Rent Rent Rent Rent	3 sisters 1 uncle 2 sisters
<u>Jenny</u> Parents <u>Larry</u> Parents Children	A-Carib Grenadan English English Mixed	Divorced Divorced Divorced Married	University Primary University College, secondary At school	Professional Manual Professional Prof, homemaker	Own Rent Own Own	1 brother current wife
<u>June</u> Parents <u>Adam</u> Parents Children	Mixed Irish Jamaican Welsh Welsh 1 white 2 mixed	Married Divorced Married Married	Secondary Primary Secondary Secondary	Clerical Manual Postman Semi-prof'l	Rent Rent Rent Own	All siblings Father's brother